

**Dr. Martin Luther's**

**Complete Writings,**

published by

**Dr. Joh. Georg Walch.**

Third volume.

**Interpretation of the Old Testament.**

(Continued.)

ST. LOUIS, MO.  
CONCORDIA. PUBLISHING HOUSE.  
1894.

Dr. Martin Luther's

# Interpretation of the Old Testament.

(Continued.)

Sermons on the first book of Moses and interpretations on the following  
biblical books up to the Psalms (excl.).

Published anew on behalf of the Ministry of the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod  
of Missouri, Ohio and other states.

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# Foreword.

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After "Luther's Great Interpretation of the First Book of Moses" has been included in the first two volumes of our edition, "Luther's Sermons on the First Book of Moses" from the years 1523 to 1526, as well as the interpretations of the following books of the Old Testament up to the Psalms exclusive, follow in the present volume. The text of all these writings, which are given in the table of contents, has been improved and corrected to the best of our ability, and in the first note to each writing the necessary information is given about the occasion, time of writing, publication of the same 2c. A special introduction is therefore not required.

Through the Luther finds in the Zwickau Rathsschulbibliothek we were put in the position to make more exact and correct time determinations for some of the writings than could be done in the previous editions, e.g. for Luther's sermons on the first book of Moses, for the sermons on Gen. 3, 15. and on Gen. 22, 18.; for the annotations

to the fifth book of Moses; the dates for other writings, e.g. "Luther's interpretation of some chapters of the second book of Moses", are confirmed by the same finding.

Two major writings of this volume have been newly translated from the Latin, namely (according to the Weimar edition): "Die zehn Gebote dem Volk zu Wittenberg gepredigt" and (according to the Latin Erlangen edition) "Luthers Anmerkungen zu dem fünften Buche Mosis". Although the full, pure light of the Gospel does not yet shine in all parts of the former, it is also rich in salutary teachings and extremely interesting due to the detailed description of customs and traditions in the age of the Reformation, and has great value as a historical document of the Reformation. The old translation of the latter scripture is full of errors that disturb the meaning, which are partly to be put on the account of the translator, and partly probably also of the printer; e.g. (according to the old edition) Col. 2294, § 13 "carnal" instead of: falsely (per-

vorse); Col. 2323, § 30: but the parents who strongly resist her (the virgin], instead of: who strongly resist him (Christo); Col. 2332, § 16: it reads cruelly, instead of: it indicates from cruelty (*atrociter sonat*); Col. 2336, § 26: that the stepmother should not take the son, instead of: that one should not take the father's wife (*uxorem patris non accipere*); Col. 2347, § 8: the law soon to follow, instead of: the law just preceding; Col. 2349, § 13: who is a new plant of faith, instead of: a neophyte in faith. Col. 2349 s., § 13: the children of the bridegroom, instead of: the wedding people (*filiis sponsi*); Col. 2405, §44: "my enemies" instead of: arrows; Col. 2412, §24: "of gold" instead of: of solde (*mercede*); Col. 2418, §4: seduced by false similarity of the little words, instead of: deceived by the similarity of the expression, and the like.

Although "Luther's Lecture on the Book of Judges" 1) recording healthy

1) "Dr. Martin Luther's Lecture on the Book of Judges. From a manuscript in the Zwickauer Rathsschulbibliothek edited by Georg Buchwald, Dr. Phil. Cand. Theol., senior teacher at the grammar school in Zwickau. Leipzig, Julius Dreschers Verlag. Before this manuscript was included in the Weimar edition, Kawerau once again compared the text with the manuscript and improved it. Buchwald himself had placed it 1. e. p. 10 in the year 1529 or 1530, whereas Köstlin in his preface to Buchwald's edition lets the lectures be held in the year 1516 or 1517. The latter. The Weimar edition agrees with the latter assumption, but says (Supplements to Vol. IV) that the starting date assumed by it (1516) is also uncertain. This much is certain, it is a pre-Reformation writing. About the manuscript, the Weimar edition says: "It is a

In the Weimar edition, Vol. IV, p. 527, we have not been able to decide to give this writing a place among the "Luther's interpretations of the Old Testament" because of its fragmentary and otherwise doubtful nature. Should, however, the venerable ministry of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other states desire it, we shall add it to a supplement volume.

In the last writing of this volume, "Of the Last Words of David," a

Clean, but with little understanding, fair copy prepared from a college booklet. The manuscript does not extend evenly over all chapters of the book of Judges; it breaks off in the interpretation of Cap. 18 sCap. 15 and 17, shows gaps and has a fragmentary character; it was probably an incomplete and unevenly made postscript that was available to the scribe. The numerous errors in the manuscript suggest that the scribe himself had not been the listener of the lecture, but only relied on the faulty postscript of another for his work." In another place, under the "Supplements" to the 4th volume of the Weimar edition to p. 569, note I (so to read instead of: "To p. 610, note 1."), it is said about a citation from a letter of Erasmus to Nicol. Everardus, May 15, 1524: "The similarity is so great that it can only be based on borrowing, and this can only be put .... on the account of the transcriber of the judge's lecture, since the lecture itself was necessarily delivered far earlier than this letter of Erasmus was written or published (1524 or 1529). But is the assumption warranted here that the author of the Zwickau copy.... has supplemented gaps in the Collegienheft available to him at his own hand, then it is highly probable that also the multiple pieces borrowed or excerpted from Augustin are to be put on account of this writer, yes perhaps also the passage on p. 538, which sounds so strongly like Luther's V666M praeexta" - We are firmly convinced that the passage just mentioned is borrowed from "Die zehn Gebote dem Volk zu Wittenberg gepredigt". Cf. Col. 1218 of this volume.

of Luther's most important writings, we have been able to correct some passages and bring others closer to understanding by comparing them with Cruciger's Latin translation.

May God in His grace also bless this work, so that through it we may commemorate our dear Savior, the LORD

We know that we can recognize Jesus Christ ever better and, as Luther says (Col. 1959, § 139), "may thus see the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, eternally. To him who has the Son, the Scriptures are open, and the greater and greater his faith in Christ becomes, the brighter the Scriptures shine to him." Amen.

St. Louis, circa Michaelmas 1894.

**A. F. Hoppe.**



# Content

of the

## The third part of Luther's complete writings.

### Doctor Martin Luther's Interpretation of the Old Testament.

(Continued.)

#### I. Interpretations about the first book of Moses.

(Continued.)

Column

- B. Luther's Sermons on the First Book of Moses, preached from March 15, 1533, to the fall of 1534; edited 1527 ..... 1

Inserted into these sermons is the following scripture:  
An Instruction How Christians Should Send Themselves in  
Moses. Preached after May 1525, issued 1526-17

- C. Sermon on Gen. 3:15, delivered April 2  
1526 ..... 650
- D. Sermon on Gen. 22, 18, delivered April 2, 1536 ..... 662

#### II. interpretations on the second book of Moses.

Luther's Interpretation of Several Chapters (Cap. 1 to 18) of  
the Second Book of Moses. Preached by  
October 2 1524-1526 ..... 672

This interpretation is inserted:

Another sermon by Luther on Exodus 3:1-6, preached April  
3, 1526 ..... 744.

- B. Luther's interpretation of the ten commandments from the  
19th and 30th chapters of the second book of Moses,  
preached at Wittenberg in 1526. Printed in 1528.... 1004
- C. The Ten Commandments Preached to the People at  
Wittenberg. Preached from the end of June 1516 until the  
24. february 1517. printed 1518 ..... 1132

- D. The Ten Commandments of God with a brief interpretation of  
their fulfillment and transgression. Made by D. M. Luther,  
Augustinian. 1518 ..... 1352

#### III. interpretations on the fourth book of Moses.

The blessing, which is said after the mass over the people,  
from 4 Mos., Cap. 6, interpreted by D. M. Luther. Preached  
1527, published 1532 ..... 1362

#### IV. Interpretations about the fifth book of Moses.

- A. Luther's Notes on the Fifth Book of Moses. From February  
1523 to 1525. Outgoing 1525 ..... 1370
- B. Luther's Interpretation of Several Chapters [Cap. 1. 4-9] of the  
Fifth Book of Moses. 1529 ..... 1638
- C. Luther's Interpretation of the Song of Moses, 5 Mos.  
32. laid out 1530 or later, issued 1532 ..... 1846

#### V. Interpretations on the second book of Samuel.

From the last words of David, 2 Sam. 23, 1-7. Anno 1543-  
..... 1880





# I. Interpretation of the first book of Moses.

(Continued.)

## B. D. M. Luther's Sermons on the 1st Book of Moses, together with a lesson on how to teach Moses. \*)

Preached from March 15, 1523, to the fall of 1524; edited in 1527.

Martinus Luther to the Christian readers grace and peace in Christo.

1. For a time I preached the prophet Moses here in Wittenberg, mostly for the sake of the spirits of the mob, so that they might pretend to their dreams, 1) so that they would not deceive the common man through Moses. How then the Masonic spirit began to make Jews out of Christians by false glory and misunderstanding of the Old Testament. Of which spirit there is still much effervescence and raving everywhere, and it is still stirring.

2. Such sermons have been collected by other scholars, and brought together here, so that I can well put up with them, and recognize them for my sermons, although, if my pen had had the time, they might have come out more complete and stronger. But enough is given to my sense and understanding here. Order these to be read by anyone who desires to read them, and I am pleased to serve them. No one is forbidden to do better. God's grace be with us, amen.

1) In the old editions: to degenerate their dreams.

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\*Luther began, as Aurifaber reports, on Sunday Lätare (March 15) 1523 with his continuous sermons on the first book of Moses. (Weim. Ausg., Vol. 12, pp. 435 and 704.) On Sunday Judica, March 13, 1524, he was at the 31st chapter (Buchwald, Andreas Poach's Collection, Vol. I, p. XXXIII and p. XX), and on the 19th Sunday after Trinity, October 2, 1524, in the afternoon, proceeded to the exposition of the second book of Moses. All that we know about the occasion for these sermons 2c. is limited to what Luther communicates in his short address to the reader, therefore it is not necessary to say the same again here. By the "Rottengeistern von Münzerischem Geist" are probably mainly the Zwickau enthusiasts to be understood. The reason that Luther calls them by the name of Münzer is that these sermons, which were copied by others, were published only in 1527 with Luther's approval, and it was therefore obvious to apply the name of Münzer, whose kindred spirits they were, to them as well. The text added to these sermons, "Eyn Vnterrichtung wie sich die Christen vnn Mosen sollen schicken, geprediget durch Mar. Luth." appeared (alone) already in 1526 with Hans Weiß in Wittenberg. This "instruction" does not actually belong to the "Sermons on the First Book of Moses" as an integrating part, but Luther preached it, as can be seen from §28 and §30, after the end of the Peasants' Revolt (on May 15, 1525, the Battle of Mühlhausen took place). Therefore, in the Jena edition, it is not printed in the sermons on the first book of Moses, but separately, under the writings of 1525. A Latin translation of the sermons appeared in 1527 at Hagenau by Joh. Secerius under the title: In Oenesin, Mosi lidrum sunotissinnnn, I). Äartini Imtkkri Uecrlnnmitiones. The first single German edition of the whole came under the title: "Vber das Erstbuch Mose predigete Mart. Luther, sampt einer Vnterricht, wie Moses zu leren ist" published by Georg Rhaw (Raus in Wittenberg in 1527. This edition was reprinted in the same year by Friedrich Peypus in Nuremberg. In 1528, another edition was published in Wittenberg by Georg Rau. In the collections: In the Wittenberg (1553), vol. V, p. I; in the Jena (1566), vol. IV, p. 1 (Die "Unterrichtung", vol.III, p. 1761-); in the Altenburg, vol. IV, p. 1; in the Leipzig, vol. I, p. I, and in the Erlangen, vol. 33 and vol. 34. We give the text according to the Erlangen, which brings the original print, comparing the Wittenberg and the Jena. For the preface, see the note in this volume, Col. 18.

# An instruction on how Christians should send themselves in Moses,

preached by Martin Luther.

(Preached after May 15, 1525, issued in 1526.)\*

Dear friends, you have often heard how there was never a public sermon from heaven, but only twice, although God has otherwise often spoken through and with men on earth, as through and with the holy arch-fathers, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and others, until Moses. But by and with these he spake not with such glorious pomp and outward manner, or public shouting and proclamation, as he did these twice, but inwardly enlightened their hearts, and spake by their mouths, as Zacharias the father of John doth indicate in his song, saying [Luc. 1:70.], "As he spake of old by the mouth of his holy prophets."

Now, the first sermon is in the other book of Moses [chap. 19 and 20], when God made Himself heard from heaven with great splendor and glorious power, at the time when He gave the law to the people of Israel with thunder and lightning, 1) with smoke, vapor and very strong trumpets, all of which the people heard and trembled and were terrified.

5. on the other hand God preached another public sermon [Apost. 2, 2-4] by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. For there the Holy Spirit also came with great splendor and outward appearance, so that "a swift sound of a mighty wind came from heaven, and filled the whole house where the disciples were sitting; and tongues were seen to be divided among them, as though they were fiery, and He sat upon every one of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to preach, and to speak with other tongues. This was done with great splendor and glorious power, so that the Apo

They preached so powerfully after that, that the sermons that are now going on in the world are hardly a shadow compared to their sermons, namely according to the outward splendor and character. For they spoke with all kinds of tongues and performed great miraculous signs, as Lucas describes in the stories of the apostles.

(6) But by the present preachers he can neither be heard nor seen; it does not go down publicly from heaven. That is why I said [§ 3] that there are only two special and public sermons that have been seen and heard from heaven. Although God the Father also spoke to Christ from heaven when he was baptized in the Jordan and on Mount Tabor [Matth. 3, 17. 17, 5.], but this did not happen in front of the church.

The other sermon he would send into the world, which before was announced by the mouth and in the books of the holy prophets [Rom. 1, 2]. He will no longer speak publicly with sermons, but the third time he will come personally with divine glory, so that all creatures will tremble and shake before him, and he will no longer preach to them, but they will see and feel him themselves.

The first sermon and teaching is the Law of God, the other is the Gospel. These two sermons do not agree, therefore one must have good sense to know how to distinguish between them, and to know what is the law and what is the gospel. The law commands and demands of us what we are to do; it is directed solely to our doing, and stands in the demanding. For God says through the law, "Do this, leave this, and I will have this from you. The gospel, however, does not preach what we are to do or not to do, does not demand anything of us, but turns it around, does the opposite, and does not say: Do this, do that; but only tells us to hold out and take the lap, and says: Behold, dear man,

1) In the Wittenberg and Jena: "plixen". Erlanger: "Blixen".

2) Erlanger: "their". This is not an oversight, but "the" (which is also offered by the Wittenberg and the Jena) is given as Walch's variant.

\*) Compare the note to 8 28.

This is what God has done for you: He put His Son in the flesh for you, had Him strangled for your sake, and saved you from sin, death, the devil and hell; believe this and accept it, and you will be saved. So there are two kinds of teachings and two kinds of works, God's and man's. And as we and God are separated from each other, so also the two teachings are far separated from each other. For the gospel alone teaches what is given to us by God, not what we should give to God and do, as the law is wont to do.

(9) Here we will see how the first sermon sounded, and with what splendor God gave the law on Mount Sinai. He chose that place especially for him, that he might be seen and heard there; not that God spoke in this way, for he has no mouth, tongue or lips like we do, but he who created and made the mouth of all men can also make speech and voice. For no one could speak a word unless God gave it to him first, as the prophet says: it would be impossible to speak unless God gave it to our mouths first. Thus speech, language and voice are gifts of God, like other gifts, such as the fruit on the trees. He who created the mouth and put speech into it can also make speech, even if there is no mouth.

10) Now 1) the words that are written here in Moses were spoken by an angel; not that there was only one angel, but a great multitude, and an innumerable host, who served God and preached before the people of Israel on Mount Sinai. But the angel who spoke here, and who leads the words, speaks as if God Himself spoke and said: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" 2c., 2 Mos. 20, 2. As if Peter or Paul spoke and said in the place of God: I am your God, who will make you blessed through my most beloved Son 2c. Paul to Galatians Cap. 3, 19. says, that the God

The law was ordered by the angels, that is, angels were ordered to give the law of God to the people of Israel instead of God, and Moses, as a mediator, was to receive it from the angels. I say this so that you may know who gave the law. He did it all because he wanted to force, capture and collect the Jews with it.

011 But what manner of voice it was, think ye well. It was a voice like the voice of a man, so that it was well heard; the syllables and letters sounded so that the physical ear could grasp it. But it was a brave, glorious and great voice, as it is written in the fifth book of Moses, Cap. 4:12, where he says that they heard the voice, and saw no man; but they heard a strong voice, for he led a strong voice, as when we hear a voice in the dark from a high tower or roof, and see no man, but hear only a strong voice of a man; and therefore it is called the voice of God, that it was above the voice of man.

12 Now you will hear how God sent Himself to the voice to move His people and make them strong. For he had in mind to start the outward spiritual regiment. For before [Ex. 18, 14. ff.] the text said how Moses, through the counsel of his adviser Jethro, instituted the temporal regiment, appointed captains and judges. Above this there is also a spiritual government, in which God reigns in the hearts of men; and this same kingdom cannot be seen, for it stands in faith alone, and will endure until the last day. Now these are two kingdoms: [the] temporal, which reigneth with the sword, and is seen outwardly; the spiritual, which reigneth with grace and forgiveness of sins only. And the same kingdom is not seen with bodily eyes, but is apprehended with faith alone. Between the two kingdoms there is another kingdom set in the middle, half spiritual and half temporal, which comprehends the Jews with commandments and outward ceremonies, as they should behave toward God and man before the world in an outward manner.

1) "Nun" is missing in the Wittenberger.

2) Thus the Wittenbergers. Jenaer: in the place of God; Erlanger: in the place of God.

The Law of Moses does not bind the Gentiles, but the Jews alone.

(13) The law of Moses pertains to the Jews, which henceforth binds us no more. For the law was given to the people of Israel alone, and Israel accepted it for themselves and their descendants, and the Gentiles are excluded here; although the Gentiles also have some laws in common with the Jews, such as that there is one God, that one offend no one, that one neither commit adultery nor steal, and such other things; all of which are naturally written in their hearts, and they have not heard it from heaven, as the Jews have. Therefore this whole text does not concern the Gentiles. I say this for the sake of the enthusiasts. For you see and hear how they read Moses and highly esteem him, and bring forth how Moses governed the people with commandments, wanting to be clever, wanting to know something further than is contained in the Gospel, considering faith small, bringing up something new, boasting and pretending that it is in the Old Testament, wanting to govern the people according to the letter of the Law of Moses, as if it had never been read before.

14 But we do not want to confess this; I would rather not preach any more for the rest of my life before I would let Moses in again, and let Christ be torn from our hearts. We do not want to have Moses for a regent or lawgiver anymore, yes, God does not want it himself either. Moses was a mediator and a lawgiver of the Jewish people alone, to whom he gave the law. One must therefore shut the mouths of the red spirits who say: Thus says Moses, it is written in Moses, and the like. So you say: Moses does not concern us. If I accept Moses in one commandment, I must accept the whole of Moses; so it would follow that if I accept Moses as my master and lawgiver, I must be circumcised, wash my clothes according to the Jewish way, and thus eat and drink, clothe myself, and keep all these things, as the Jews were commanded in the Law. So let us not keep or accept Moses. Moses is dead, his reign was over when Christ came; he does not serve here anymore.

(15) That Moses did not bind the Gentiles may be deduced from the text in the other book of Moses, chap. 20, 2. where God Himself says: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. From the text it is clear that even the ten commandments do not apply to us, for He did not bring us out of Egypt, but only the Jews. The spirits of the Jews want to put Moses on our backs with all the commandments; let us leave that alone. We want to consider Moses as a teacher, but we do not want to consider him as our lawgiver, unless he agrees with the New Testament and the natural law. Therefore it is clear enough that Moses is the lawgiver of the Jews and not of the Gentiles. For in this text Moses gave a sign to the Jews that they should take hold of God when they call upon Him, as the God who brought them out of Egypt. The Christians have another sign, in which they take hold of God, as the one "who made his Son for them for wisdom, and for righteousness, and for sanctification, and for redemption", 1 Cor. 1, 30.

16 Item, it can be proved from the third commandment that Moses does not concern the Gentiles, nor the Christians. For Paul and the New Testament abolish the Sabbath, so that it may be understood that the Sabbath was given to the Jews alone, to whom it was a strict commandment. The prophets have also implied that the Sabbath of the Jews should be abolished. Isaiah says Cap. 66, 23: "When the Savior comes, there will be a time like this, a Sabbath on another, a new moon on another. 2c. As if he wanted to speak: There will be a Sabbath every day, there will be such a people, who will have no difference of days. For in the New Testament the Sabbath lies low, according to the gross, outward manner, for it is holy day every day 2c.

017 If therefore any man reproach thee with Moses and his commandments, and urge thee to keep them, say, Go unto the Jews with thy Moses: I am no Jew; let me not be sworn with Moses. If I accept Moses in one piece (says Paul to the Galatians Cap. 5, 3.), then I am obliged to keep the whole law. For not a single point in Moses concerns us.

018 If any man say, Why preachest thou Moses, if he be no concern of ours? Answer: For this I will keep Moses and not put him under the bench, for I find three things in Moses that can also be useful to us. First, the commandments given to the people of Israel concerning outward things I will leave aside; they do not compel me, nor do they press upon me; the laws are dead and gone, unless I will willingly and gladly accept them from Moses. As if I said: "Moses ruled in this way, it seems fine to me, I will follow him in this or that part. I would gladly have the lords rule after the example of Moses, and if I were emperor, I would take from it an example of the statutes; not that Moses should force me, but that I should be free to follow him, and to lead such a regiment as he ruled.

Nineteen: For with tithing it is a right commandment of his. For with tithing all other interest would be cancelled, and it would be more convenient for the common man to tithe than annuity and rent. 2) As if I had ten cows, I would give one; if I had five, I would give nothing; if I grew little in the field, I would give little; if I grew much, I would give much; that would be in God's power. But therefore I must give the heathen interest, and if the hail should strike down all the fruit. If I owe a hundred guilders of interest, I must give it, even if no fruit grows in the field. This is also the pope's decree and regiment. But it would be the same if it were so ordered: if I grow much, I give much; if I grow little, I give little.

020 And it is also written in Moses, that no man should sell any field for an inheritance for ever, but only until the year of jubilee; and when that year was come, every man should return to his field, or to his goods which he had sold, and so the goods should remain in the friendship. So other out of measure beautiful commandments are in Moses more, which one would like to accept, to use and to let go in pregnancy, not that one thereby

should force, or be forced, but, as I said before 18], the emperor would like to take an example from it, to set up a fine regiment from Moses. As also the Romans have led a fine regiment, and as also the Saxon mirror is, according to which this country holds itself. The Gentiles do not owe obedience to Moses; Moses is the Saxon seal of the Jews. But if a fine example were taken from it for the rule, one would keep it without restraint as long as one wanted.

21 It is written in Moses [Deut. 25:5, 6, Matt. 22:24] that if a man died without children, his brother or next of kin should take the woman home and have her for a wife, and raise up the seed of the brother or next of kin who died; and the first child should be counted to the brother or next of kin who died. And this is also a fine commandment. There are many more such commandments in Moses, all of which could be gathered into a fine regiment, and thereby rule the land and people properly and honorably.

022 Now when the spirits of the wicked come, and say: Moses commanded, let Moses go, and say, I ask nothing of that which Moses commanded. Yes, they say, he commanded that one should have one God, trust and believe in him, not swear by his name, honor father and mother, not kill, not steal, not commit adultery, not bear false witness, and not covet another's wife or property. Shall one not keep these things? Say therefore: Nature has these laws also; nature gives that one should call upon God, this also the heathen indicate. For there never was a heathen that called upon his idols, though they lacked the right God, as did also the Jews. For the Jews also had idolatry, as did the Gentiles; only that the Jews received the law, but the Gentiles have it written in their hearts, and there is no difference, as St. Paul also tells the Romans Cap. 2, 15: The Gentiles, who have no law, have the law written in their hearts. But as the Jews are lacking, so are the Gentiles.

1) me them - me them.

2) Gült (Gülte) - levy, tax on goods, land rent.  
(Missing from Dietz.)

3) Erlanger: one.

23 And therefore it is natural to honor God, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to bear false witness, not to put to death; and it is not new that Moses commanded. For what God gave from heaven to the Jews through Moses, He also wrote in the hearts of all men, both Jews and Gentiles, only that He had it written and proclaimed to the Jews, as His own chosen people, for a surplus, even with a bodily voice and writing. So now I keep the commandments given by Moses, not because Moses commanded them, but because they are implanted in me by nature, and Moses agrees with nature in all things 2c. But the other commandments in Moses, which are not implanted in all men by nature, the Gentiles do not keep, neither do they go about them, as, of tithes and others, which are nevertheless also beautiful. I wish we had them also, as I have said 18]. Now this is the first thing that I am to see in Moses, namely, the commandments, to which I am not bound, for if they are implanted in any man by nature, and are written in his heart.

The other piece in Moses to remember.

(24) Secondly, I find in Moses that which I do not have from nature, that is, the promises and assurances of God from Christ. And this is the best thing almost in the whole of Moses, which is not written naturally in the hearts of men, but comes down from heaven. As that God promised that His Son should be born in the flesh, 4ms proclaims the Gospel. And now these are not commandments, nor do they demand anything of us, that we should do or refrain from doing anything, but they are comforting, joyful promises of God, which we should accept, 'and boldly rely on them, against all temptation of sin, death, the devil and hell. And this is the most noble thing in Moses, which also belongs to us Gentiles. The first, namely the commandments, do not concern us; but the other we are to perceive with our hearts, and therefore read Moses, that such excellent and comforting promises are written therein, that I may strengthen my weak faith. For thus

In the kingdom of Christ, as I read in Moses, I find the right reason.

025 And so, in this manner, shall I accept Moses, and not put him under the bench. First, that he may give beautiful examples of the laws that may be taken from it to govern the land and people outwardly in a fine and orderly way. Secondly, in it are the promises of God, so that faith may be strengthened and preserved. When God says to the serpent, as it is written in the first book of Moses, Cap. 3, 15': "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bite him in the heel." This is the first gospel and promise of Christ, which came to pass on earth, that he should overcome sin, death and hell, and save us from the power of the serpent, in which Adam believed with all his descendants, whereof he also became a Christian, 1) and was saved from his fall.

26 Item, Abraham was given this promise by God, as also in the first book of Moses, Cap. 22, 18, 12, 3, when he said to him: "Through your seed all nations on earth shall be blessed. This was the other gospel of Christ, that through Him all men should be blessed and saved, as St. Paul explains to the Galatians, Cap. 3, 8.

27. Item, in the fifth book Moses, Cap. 18, 15. 16., speaks to the people of Israel: "A prophet, like me, the Lord your God will raise up for you, from you and from your brothers, and you shall obey him. As then thou hast asked of the LORD thy GOD in Horeb, in the day of the congregation." And soon after, v. 18, 19, Moses continues the words that God spoke to him: "I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren, and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I shall command him. And whosoever will not hear my words, which he shall speak in my name, of him will I seek." This is all said of Christ, that he should bring a new preaching upon the earth. There are many sayings in the Old Testament

1) In the old editions "Christians" instead of: a Christian.

Testament, to which the faithful Jews adhered, who often led and attracted the holy apostles.

28. But our red spirits go to: Everything they read in Moses, they speak: God speaks, no one can deny it; therefore it must be kept. Then the rabble falls to it: Huh, God has spoken it, who wants to speak against it? Then they are driven in like pigs over a deception. 1) Our dear 2) prophets have thus spoken to the people: Dear people, God has commanded his people to slay Amalek to death; and other sayings more. Out of this came misery and distress; the peasants stood up, knew no difference, and were led into this error by the mad spirits of the mob. If there had been learned preachers, who could have met the false prophets and fought them, and thus spoken to them: Dear spirits of the wicked, it is true that God has commanded Most, and has thus spoken to the people; but we are not the people to whom the Lord speaks. Dear, God also spoke to Adam, therefore I am not Adam. He commanded Abraham to slay his son; I am not Abraham, therefore, to slay my son. He also spoke to David in the same way. It is all God's word, it is true. But, God's word to, God's word to, I must know and be careful to whom the word of God is spoken. It is still far from being the people that God has spoken to. The false prophets speak: You are the people, GOD is talking to you. Prove that to me. So they might have been put down. But they wanted to be beaten, and so the mob went to the devil. 3)

(29) The Scriptures must be carefully handled and followed. The word has been spoken in many ways from the beginning. One must not only consider whether it is God's word, whether God has spoken it, but much more to whom it is spoken, whether it affects you or someone else.

1) Trough - Trough. So the Jenaer. Wittenberg and Erlangen: Trüge!

2) Wittenberger: "ausfrührische" instead of: love.

3) What is said in this paragraph proves that the peasants' revolt was already over, so this "instruction" does not actually belong to the "sermons on the first book of Moses". Cf. § 30.

the other. Then there is a separation, like summer and winter. God has spoken many things to David, has told him to do this and that; but it is not my business, it is not spoken to me. He may speak it to me, if he will have it. You must look at the word that concerns you, that is spoken to you, and not what concerns another. There are two words in the Scriptures: One does not concern me, neither does it affect me. The other concerns me, and on the one that concerns me I may boldly venture, and rely on it as on a strong rock; if it does not concern me, I shall stand still. The false prophets go to and say: Dear people, this is the word of God. It is true, nor can they deny it; but we are not the people to whom he speaks. God has not commanded us to do this or that, which He has commanded Him to do.

(30) The spirits of the mob came, wanting to get something new, and said, "The Old Testament must also be kept. So they led the peasants into a sweat that they will not soon wipe off. Yes, they have ruined the poor people, both in body and goods, in wife and child; as we, unfortunately, have experienced and seen. The foolish people thought that they had been restrained from such a word of God, that no one had told them that they should strike the wicked to death. But it serves them right, they would not follow nor listen to anyone. I saw it myself and experienced how mad, furious and nonsensical they were.

(31) Therefore say to the same riffraff thus, Let Moses and his people alone; they are finished, he is no concern of mine; I hear the word that concerns me. We have the gospel. Christ says [Marc. 16, 15.]: "Go and preach the gospel", not only to the Jews, like Moses, but to all Gentiles, even "to all creatures". It is said to me [Marc. 16, 16.], "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Item [Luc. 10, 37.]: Go and do to your neighbor as it has been done to you. The words also apply to me, for I am one of all crea-

4) So the Wittenbergers. Jenaer: "jn"-you. Erlanger: him.



tnren. If Christ had not added: "Preach to all creatures", I would not turn to it, I would not want to be baptized, and thus oppose it, as I now oppose Moses; to him I turn nothing at all, nor does it concern me, because it is not given to me, but only to the Jews. But because Christ says that the gospel, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," is to be preached, not to one people only, not in that place or in that part of the world, but to all creatures, there is none excepted, but all creatures are included; let no man doubt that the gospel shall be preached to him also. So I believe the word, it concerns me also, I also belong to the gospel and to the New Testament, therefore I dare to take the word, and if it should cost a hundred thousand necks.

(32) Let the preachers who teach other people, and indeed all Christians, know, understand and take the difference to heart. For it is the power that is entirely concerned with it. If the peasants had understood this, many would have been saved, and not so miserably deceived and corrupted. And where we understand otherwise, we make sects and mobs, where we spit and salivate among the rabble, among the mad, ignorant people, without any distinction: God's word, God's word. Yes, dear fellow, not so; it means whether it is told to you or not. God may speak to angels, wood, fish, birds, animals and to all creatures, but it does not concern me; I should look at what concerns me, what is told to me, so that he may admonish me, drive me and challenge me.

Thirty-three Take an example. If a householder had a wife, daughter, son, maidservant and servants, he would say to the servant to start the horses, drive them into the woods, plow the field and do such work; to the maidservant he would say to milk the cows, churn butter and so on; to the wife to tend the kitchen; to the daughter to spin and make the bed. These are all the words of a master, a householder. When the maidservant would lead the horses and go to the woods, the servant would sit under the cows and milk the cows.

The daughter wanted to drive the cart, wanted to plow; the wife wanted to make the bed, wanted to spin, and miss the kitchen; and wanted to speak thus: The Lord has commanded it, it is the order of the father of the house. Then the father of the house should go and take a shillelagh, and throw them all together in a heap, and say: Though it be my commandment, yet have I not commanded thee, but have given every man his own charge; and ye shall abide in it.

(34) So it is with the word of God. If I were to accept that which he has commanded another, and were to say: Did you say it; he should say: Who knows it 1) Thanks to you? but I did not tell you. One must make a good distinction, if the word meets one, or all at all. If the father of the house said, "On Friday we will eat meat," that would be a common word to all in the house. So what was spoken to Moses by God concerning the commandments applies only to the Jews; but the gospel goes through and through the whole world, no one is excluded, but it is presented to all creatures. Therefore all the world should accept it, and so accept it as if it were presented to each one in particular. The word John 13:34, "We ought to love one another," concerns me, for it concerns all who belong to the gospel.

35 Therefore we read Moses, not that it concerns us, that we must keep it; but that it is consistent with the natural law, and is better composed than the Gentiles ever could have done. Thus the ten commandments are a mirror of our life, wherein we see what we lack 2c. The red spirits have also not understood Moses of the images correctly, because it also concerns only the Jews 2c. Secondly, as has been said, we read Moses for the promises of Christ, who belongs not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles. For through him all Gentiles should have the blessing and the giving, as was promised to Abraham [Deut. 22:18].

1) Erlanger: dir.

2) In the editions: gleichstimme.

The third piece, so is to be perceived in Moses.

Thirdly, we read Moses because of the beautiful examples of faith, love and the cross in the dear holy fathers, Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and so through and through. From this we should learn to trust and love God. Again, we see the examples of the unbelief of the wicked, and the wrath of God, how God does not give the unbelievers their unbelief; how He punished Cain, Ishmael, Esau, the whole world with the flood, Sodoma and Gomorrah; and the like punishments more, which He has visited upon the wicked. And the examples are necessary. For though I am not Cain, yet if I do as Cain did, I shall receive the same punishment as Cain. In no other place can one find such beautiful examples of both faith and unbelief: faith and unbelief, than in Moses. Therefore, Moses should not be put under the bench. And so the Old Testament is rightly understood, if one keeps the beautiful sayings of Christ from the prophets, and the beautiful examples are well grasped and remembered, and if we use the laws according to our pleasure, and make the same useful to us.

#### **Decision.**

(37) I have said that all Christians, and especially those who want to teach other people and act on the word of God, should be careful and learn Moses correctly, so that where he gives commandments, we do not accept him in this, except as far as he rhymes with the natural law. Let Moses be a master and doctor of the Jews. We have our Master Christ, who has set before us what we should know, keep, do, and refrain from doing. But this is true: Moses writes,

Besides the laws, beautiful examples of faith and unbelief, punishment of the wicked, exaltation of the pious and faithful, and also the sweet and comforting promises of Christ. We are to accept these, just as we are to do in the evangelists. As when one reads of the ten lepers, it does not concern me that he calls them to go to the priests and do their sacrifice; but the example of their faith concerns me, that I also, like them, believe Christ.

(38) Enough has been said about this, and it is well to be remembered, for there is power in it, and many great, excellent people have failed in it, and now many great preachers are offended by it, do not know how to preach Moses, are not well able to do it, are nonsensical, rage and rage, chatter to the people: God's word, God's word, God's word; seduce the poor people and push them into the pit. Many learned people have not known how far Moses should be taught. Origen, Jerome and their ilk have not clearly indicated how well Moses serves us. 1)

39. This is what I wanted to say about an entrance into Moses, how one should go about it, and how Moses should be understood and accepted, and not even put under the bench, in which such a beautiful order and outward regiment is understood, that it is air, without which he describes many excellent things, as you have heard, beautiful things, as you have heard, which are not only not to be rejected, but also to be highly esteemed, and to be accepted with an earnest heart, as for the advancement and strengthening of our Christian faith, by which, as we, so also the dear holy fathers, have been saved.

1) Erlanger: dienet.

## Preface to \*) the sermons on the first book of Moses.\*\*)

1. Since it is to be so ordered in Christianity that God's Word is always preached and practiced, and is daily kept alive (because all power lies in it alone, and souls cannot live without it), so that among Christians the holy Scriptures, namely both the Old and New Testaments, may become known and current to everyone, so that we may be equipped, hardened, and strengthened in faith by God's Word, to stand against all kinds of temptation and misfortune: I will therefore also take a book before me from the Old Testament, and interpret and explain the same, as much as God will give grace, as we have done so far in the New Testament, so that every Christian may see how the Scriptures everywhere agree, and how all the examples and histories, indeed, the whole of the Scriptures through and through, are directed to make Christ known, of which we have always preached, and still preach.

(2) For although it is true that we have enough to teach faith from only one saying from the Scriptures and God's Word, God has shown us special grace and abundantly showered us with many examples and sayings, so that we may clearly see how faith alone matters, and strengthen our faith through so many sayings, and be certain with ourselves that we will not waver. Therefore, as we have hitherto seen how all the Gospels teach and do no more than one thing in all places, so let us also see the same in the Old Testament, without the Old Testament having anything more about it, that it also instructs the people according to the outward rule, for those who are not Christians; how to keep and govern the same.

shall be in external change, regiment and order.

Let us begin with the first book of Moses, in which it is primarily described where all creatures came from, especially man with sin, death, and godliness, which all the world strives for and writes about, and yet has never attained.

Before we proceed to this, it is necessary to know that the Word of God is acted upon in two ways. First, by those who do not believe righteously, and grasp it externally with the letter alone, according to reason and human understanding, making a thought of it, as the words read. The other by those whom the Holy Spirit teaches, who do not grasp it with outward thoughts, but to whom God gives a right mind and experience in the heart.

(5) The first crowd never really understands it, although many great talkers come out of it, who boast that they have read it and understand it, and think that they can do it better than all the others. Therefore the Jews also forbade (as Jerome writes) that no one should read this book until he was well practiced and had come to his thirty years. Likewise they have also withdrawn some more books not to be read by young people. But now I do not think that such things are set and ordered by gross hypocrites, but consider that they have been done by high people. For it is well written, in the first chapter, that no reason can understand it.

For this is undoubtedly the highest article of faith in which we speak: I

\*) Wittenberg and Erlangen: in.

\*\*This preface and the interpretation of the first chapter (up to § 19 incl.) appeared already in 1524 in several single prints (the Weimar edition lists four of them) under the title: Ein Sermon und Eingang in das erste Buch Mosi, das ist, in das Buch der Schöpfung, darin gründlich angezeigt wird der Artikel des Glaubens, so wir sprechen: Ich glaube in GOtt Vater allmächtigen, Schöpfer Himmel und Erdreichs. Martin Luther. This passage, which essentially corresponds to the text given here, is printed in the Weimar edition, vol. XII, p. 438. Below the line, this edition from the Zwickau Rathsschulbibliothek brings a postscript by Stephan Roth in Latin, which (although it is the longer of his two recensions) probably does not include the fifth part of the German text. The redaction of this section given in our edition is indisputably significantly better than the one given in the Weimar edition.

believe in God the Father, the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth. And whoever believes this righteously is already helped, and is brought back to the place where Adam fell. But few are they who come so far that they completely believe that he is the God who creates and makes all things. For such a man must have died to all things, to good and evil, to death and life, to hell and heaven, and must confess from the heart that he is unable to do anything by his own efforts.

This is the reason why the dear fathers did not let everyone read and act on this chapter. Therefore, we do not want to act it harshly, but, as much as God will give grace, we want to interpret it simply and see that we get to the heart of it, that is, as Moses meant it, even though we do not know how it all happened.

(8) For many people have written so much about it, and given so many different understandings, that I do not know whether they have the right understanding. First, some have said that all things God created were perfect in a moment. And take this from this saying Deut. 32, 4: 1) *Dei perfecta sunt opera*, that is, God's works are perfect and whole." And from this, Sir. 18, 1.: *Qui vivit in aeternum, creavit omnia simul*, "He who lives forever created all things with one another." And many great men, such as Augustine and Hilarius, are of this opinion, that in a moment all things stood as we see them now, the heavens with sun, moon, and stars, the earth full of fruit and living animals, that is, that beginning and end stood at the same time. But we do not want to understand it that way.

(9) For I have often said that whoever wants to study the Scriptures should always see to it that he remains on the simple words, as he always can, and should never depart from them, unless some article of faith compels him to understand them differently than the words say. For we must be sure that no more simple speech has come on earth than that which God has spoken.

(10) Therefore, when Moses writes that in six days God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, let it remain that there were six days, and do not find a gloss on how six days were one day. But if thou canst not understand how it hath been six days, give glory to the Holy Ghost, that he is more learned than thou. For thou shalt thus deal with the Scriptures, that thou mayest think as God himself speaketh. But because God speaks, it is not for you to direct his word where you want to go, unless necessity forces you to understand a text differently than the words say, namely, if faith does not suffer such understanding as the words give.

011 If then it be said, God's works are perfect, it must follow that he did not spend so long in the creation, that is, six whole days. Answer: Yes, they are perfect; but as we see that we human beings are not made soon, but that the child lies in the womb for nine months, and does not become perfect until it is tall and male, even though He could make it perfect in a moment, just as He does with other things, so we must also say that God did not do such perfect works. Therefore, understand it this way: When God has arranged and completed it, His works are perfect; but because He still has the work before Him and is doing it, it is not perfect. Now it is before our eyes that he is always making and creating. Therefore, just as when a man makes an image, it is not yet finished while he is still working on it: so also God's work is not perfect until it is made. For so it is in the whole world, that God has determined from the beginning to create so many people, and yet creates daily, even though he could make all people at once. Therefore, this saying does not conclude that they want to prove it.

12 Likewise their opinion also does not follow from this saying: "God has created all things with one another" 2c. For he only wants to say this: There is one who lives forever, who has made all things, all that there is in one heap; and no one else. Therefore

It is just that which Moses says and tells here, how God began to create the world, and made six days over it, and did just as he still does when he creates a man in his mother's womb. And even though he hastened here more and more, it still happened with leisure, and finely one thing after another was done, until it all became perfect. Therefore one should remain with the words here, because faith does not force one to understand it differently. But if there were a saying of the Scriptures, which clearly compels, that all things were made at once and at one moment, then we would have to understand this text also differently. That is a piece that we wanted to say to the preface.

The other is, as we have said [§ 4], that each one should grasp these words with the spirit and take so much from them that God does, creates and works all things in heaven and earth, as the text also wills. Whoever understands this will soon realize that he cannot stir a vein or have a thought, God must work it; that his life is not in his own hand, but only in God's hand. For if I believe that he made the whole world out of nothing, but that everything was made solely out of his words and commandments, then I must confess that I am also a piece of the world and of his creation. From this it must follow that it is not in my power to move a hand, but that God alone does and works everything in me. That is where it wants to go, and that is where it must be directed, so that reason is right.

(14) When you feel this, you will be frightened, for nature cannot suffer it. But it is comforting to those who stand in faith, for there is nothing that can strengthen and comfort them, except that they know how they stand in God's hand, so that he works even the smallest thoughts in them. Whoever has such faith can fear nothing and rely on nothing, neither in heaven nor on earth, neither in life nor in death, neither in sin nor in piety, but only on God. Therefore, even if the whole world stood against me and attacked me, so that I was in their hands, I know that they can do nothing, except as far as God wills. And if

If the enemies are as many as the sands of the sea, they are God's creatures, so they cannot have a thought without his will and care; let alone that they can harm me, if he wills. But if he will, good for me, for I know that it is his gracious will and fatherly love.

Therefore such a believing man stands in such joy and security that he does not let himself be frightened by any creature, is master of all things, fears no thing that may be at his disposal, but only God, who is in heaven. Again, if he were a great lord in the world, and were set over all kingdoms, that all pleasure and joy on earth should be given to him, he would take nothing for himself; nor would he ask anything if all these things were taken from him again. For he does not put his trust in any creature, but in God alone.

(16) But where faith is not, since man judges according to his reason and conceit, and this reason is also revealed, there is also hell itself, and man cannot have greater torment. For as he stands there in faith without fear, and is master of all things, and gives himself into God's hand alone, so it is here again; if he does not believe, and yet sees that all creatures stand in God's power, there is no creature that does not frighten him, that he must be afraid of all. For since God is against him, all things must also be against him.

(17) Thus it is, as Moses wrote [Deut. 26:36], that even a rustling leaf falling from a tree terrifies the wicked. The heart cannot be so full of courage that it can stand against such a small rustling leaf: what should it do when death comes? Wherever he goes or sees, God is against him, and thinks to strike him before the head. Therefore, these words are nothing but a thunderclap and lightning. Therefore Moses says: "God will give you a despondent heart, and you will pine away for sorrow, and you will never be sure of your life. In the morning you will say, 'Who knows if I will see the

In the evening you will say, "Oh, how I wish I could live in the morning!"

So here in Moses, on both sides, is hell and heaven. Those who grasp it with faith learn to trust God and give themselves completely to Him, and become so stouthearted, 1) that they do not fear anything, for they know that God is with them. But those who grasp it with reason, without faith, and feel that their conscience tells them that God is hostile to them, they can have neither peace nor joy. The other group, or those who do not grasp nor feel such reason, can do no more than say, "God created the heavens and the earth; come to them," for they have no peace of mind.

1) In the editions: hearted.

but not to the heart, but only keep the words on the tongue.

(19) These are the two things which we have to say for the preface, namely, first, that the words may be kept in the simple, bad mind; and secondly, that the words and the substance may be rightly grasped, and felt in the heart. Those who cannot do this are forbidden to read, so that they do not attack it, for they do it without fruit. By this our works, merits, free will and reason have already come to powder, because no creature can do the least work by itself. Now let us turn to the text and see how Moses describes the creation one after the other.

## The first chapter.

**V. 1. 2. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was desolate and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the wind 2) of God swore upon the face of the waters.**

1 This is the beginning of this book, and it has truly begun on a high note. But we do not want to go too deep into it. It is enough if we can teach faith from it and understand God's work. First of all, everyone should get used to the idea that he should not regard the words differently than if they were written yesterday. For it is such a short time in the sight of God, just as if they had been written now. Therefore, there is a new thing, and this beginning is still going on.

2nd On the other hand, the beginning is also to be understood in the most simple way, that before it there was nothing, neither hour, nor days, nor time. But this is also a high understanding, that before time there was no time, and yet God was. Therefore divine and eternal life is much different than this life, which always goes from day to night. Therefore, if one clings to it, one cannot think what eternity is. In the sight of God, the beginning of the world is as near as the end; a thousand years...

2) Wind or Spirit (In the old editions in the margin).

as One Day; and Adam, who was created first, as the last man who will be born. For he looks at time as the eye of man brings two things together in a moment, which are far apart. I say this so that no one may have a foolish mind and speak of the beginning as if something had existed before, but that time and creation have begun which did not exist before.

But what is it that he says: "God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was desolate and empty"? This is what I said before, that the Almighty God did not create the world in one fell swoop, but took time and a while to do so, and dealt with it just as He now makes a child. [He] first made the smallest things, heaven and earth, so that it was still uncreated, desolate and empty, since nothing had yet been created or grown, and had not been created or shaped, nor had it been brought into a form.

4 Here, however, one should not think as the philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, did with their ideals, but in the simplest way, that heaven and earth are righteously united.

3) Weimarsche: haw.

The first creature was the first being, as he himself calls it, and the first creature; but neither of them was prepared as it should be. Just as a child in its mother's womb is not nothing at first, but is not prepared as a complete child should be. Just as smoke is not nothing, but it has neither light nor lightness: so also the earth was not made into anything, and had no form, neither in width nor in length, and there was neither grain, nor trees, nor grass on it, but bad, barren earth, as a land or desert, where no one is, and nothing grows. So the sky was also shapeless, and yet was not nothing.

5 Moses indicates this by saying that the earth was desolate and empty, and darkness was on the deep, and the wind of God was hovering on the water. The darkness, depth, water, desolate and empty earth, is nothing else (as Peter explains [2. Ep. 3, 4. 5.]), because the earth was made up by God's word in the water. Around the earth it was like a dark night or fog, and humid air or waters that smoked alike, and there was no light. So the world started.

Now this is the most simple understanding of how the words read that God created the heavens and the earth, but not as it is now. For that one should not take the earth in such a way, the article of faith urges, of which one would have to say that it would have been adorned with tree, grass and all kinds of plants. Therefore he explains himself that neither plants nor living animals were on it, but was desolate and empty, and bore nothing. But afterward, on the third day and afterward, he prepared it to bear all kinds of things. Above it was covered with the deep, which he afterwards called water; which was a moist, thick air, as though it were a cloud; in it lay the earth. But that which was above the earth, the same was heaven, and was the deep, wherein the earth lay, and so that it was compassed about; and where the deep was, there was as yet no light, but the wind, or Spirit of God, floated upon the face of the waters.

In the Hebrew language, "wind" and "spirit" are the same as one name, and you may take it here as you wish. If it is a wind

it is that the air weaves among itself 1) on the deep, as it is wont to do; but if you want to call it a spirit, you may do so. For I do not know how to say it, but if it were called a spirit, it could be understood that God had taken the creature he had created under himself, as a hen takes an egg under herself and hatches the chicken. But I would rather leave it that way, that it is called a wind. For I would like the three persons in the Godhead to be shown here in order one after the other, first the Father, then the Son, then the Holy Spirit, of whom we will say after this. So we have now how first the world was created, and how God attacked it. Now follows one after another, how he distinguished all things.

## The first day.

**V. 3-5. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light. And God saw the light as good. Then God separated the light from the darkness, and called the light Day, and the darkness Night. Then the evening and the morning became the first day.**

(8) Here a great question arises: whether one should count the things that precede this time as the first day, or whether one should only understand the preceding as a preface? So it sounds as if the first day began when God said, "Let there be light." We 2) have said before [§ 2] that nothing could have been before the beginning; so 3) the beginning must ever have begun at night, and the morning must have begun when God created the light. For he said that it was dark. So the night is the first part of the day, which the Scriptures also hold otherwise. For according to the Jewish language, the day is reckoned to begin at night, when it has become dark, and lasts until evening again; which we now reverse. Therefore, since we have it clear from the text that there was no light at the first, but

1) Weimarsche: wehet.

2) In the editions: "And we". We have deleted the "and".

3) "Must" is set by us according to the Weimar edition. In the other editions: müßte.

Since night and darkness have lasted until morning, and God has separated night from day, it must be reckoned, as the text says, that evening and morning, that is, night and day, have become one day.

9. <sup>1)</sup> Now these are the first words of Moses, so that he begins this book; they are to be understood, as [§ 2] said, in the most simple way, as they are set, that there were six days differently one after the other, and that Moses at the first described heaven and earth with names, and these were still rough and raw and not adorned, as afterwards, as he then explains himself, when he speaks: "The earth was desolate and empty"; that is, that there was neither strength nor sap in it, so that something could have grown out of it, but lay in the water that went around it; which he also calls here the deep, that is, a dark, thick mist or air, from which the water came.

(10) Further, in these words the three persons in the Godhead are also touched and secretly indicated; but especially the first two are expressed in the clearest way, on which many high people, but St. Augustine most of all, have broken. But this is the sum of it: At first, when Moses speaks: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth" 2c., no person is particularly named or expressed. But as soon as he says further: And God said: "Let there be light"; [there] he expresses that with God there was a word before the light came. Now the same word that God speaks could not be anything of the things that were created, neither heaven nor earth, since God, by the very speaking that he did, made heaven and earth together with light and all other creatures, so that he did nothing more to create than his word. Therefore it must have been before all creatures. If it was before time and the creatures began, it must be eternal, and a different and higher being than all creatures; from this it follows that it is God.

(11) But when God speaks, and the word is forged, he is not alone; neither can he himself be the word that he speaks. Therefore, because the word is also God,

it must be another person. Thus the two persons are expressed: the Father, who speaks the Word and has the essence from Himself; the Son, who is the Word and comes from the Father, and is eternally with Him. 2) Hence St. John took his Gospel, which he begins thus: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word" 2c.

Now here a carnal man must take off his shoes. For these high and excellent words are not written nor set forth for children, but are intended by men of understanding in the Scriptures, who are accustomed to them; otherwise it is childish to say that the Lord speaks one word, and by the same creates all creatures. Now let it be held, as the text compels, that it is such a word, which was before the light and all creatures, because by it all things are made. But the word is not made, for you do not hear here that he makes the word, but only speaks it. With this, Moses wants to teach that it is inexpressible and unfathomable how God creates the creatures. We can say that God created all things freely, from nothing; but it is incomprehensible to us, without our being able to repeat the words.

(13) Moses says this much about the light: God has a word with Him, and by it He made the light at the first, and needed no more for it than the word. Thus he determined that the light should be made on the first day; and because he had thus determined it, it also happened thus. Therefore it follows that the Word is like God, and must be God Himself, since it is not a creature, but that from which all creatures spring. But if he who speaks and that which is spoken must be two things, then they cannot both be One Person, and yet must be One God. Thus, from this is founded the article of faith that there are two persons in the Godhead, yet One eternal 3) God. For Moses has with

2) Here, in the Weimar edition, there is another execution (of two paragraphs), in which essentially the same thoughts are given that we encounter in 8 14.

3) So the original, the Wittenberg and the Jena. The Erlanger has, just as Walch: a some. The latter reading is also found in the Weimar one.

1) This entire paragraph is missing from Weimar's.



He has given so much to these short words and speaks in such a way that it is impossible for a human being to speak in such a way and to grasp so much with such short words, if he already had the intellect. It is so highly, so actually, briefly and deeply spoken that it surpasses all reason.

14 The third person, the Holy Spirit, is secretly indicated and understood in the words when Moses says: "God saw the light as good," that is, he was pleased with it. For there was pleasure in that which he had made by the word; which pleasure is nothing else than that God sustains the creatures 1) as he made them, and assists them. This is actually attributed to the Holy Spirit, that He is the life and preservation of all things. Therefore the Scripture speaks of him as being the bond that holds all creatures and gives them all their exercise and effect. Thus the Holy Spirit is called the good pleasure of God the Father, as the Word is His eternal counsel.

15) But here is 2) a question: why Moses did not put thus at the beginning: In the beginning God said: Let there be heaven and earth, but says: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth", and only afterwards says: "God said: Let there be light. Answer, in the first place: If we do not know the cause, let us give glory to the Holy Spirit, that he knows better than we. But as far as I can think, it is because of the cause. For if he had said, In the beginning God said, Let there be heaven and earth, it would almost sound as if the word had not been before the beginning, so that one could not know whether it had begun or had been from eternity. Therefore it could not well stand that he said: In the beginning God spoke; lest someone thought that it had begun at the very beginning, when time and the creatures began, as the heretics Ariani have said. So the error is met with it before. This is one cause, as far as I can judge.

16 The other is that he has to indicate the three persons properly one after another.

1) Weimarsche: "erhebt" and immediately following: "erhebung" instead: Preservation.

2) but - again.

3) "the" is missing in the Erlanger.

First, the Father, saying, "God created"; second, the Son, saying, "God spoke"; then the Holy Spirit, saying, "God saw it good." The seeing that God did was not after the speaking, but at the same time; and His speaking and seeing did not begin there, but His creating began there. Even though the three were at the same time, he still had to write it one after the other, because he could not comprehend it with one word at the same time. As the three persons go one after the other, and we have to put the words one after the other, if we want to talk about it, and cannot say it all at once with one word, so he could not say it at the same time: God created, spoke, and saw; and does not want to deny with it, but to confirm that all three persons are the same, and all were there on the first day.

(17) For since he says that by the Word God makes light and separates it from darkness, surely the Word was before light and darkness. For how could he make them light and separate them from one another by the word if they were not there before? So it goes together that the Father does the work through the Son, who is the Word, and in the Holy Spirit, who is the divine good pleasure, and to each person is given its characteristic, so that one can grasp a difference that three persons and One God remain; and although they are at the same time, they still have to have their different description.

(18) Now what he could not do the first time, that he put the word first, he afterwards turns back again, and puts the word first, when he says, "God said, Let there be a feast," after which follows: "Then God made the feast, and it came to pass." He actually made this change in order to prevent the word from being placed not after but always before the creatures, even though on the first day he was unable to place it first for a reason, as he does afterwards. And all this was done with diligence and careful counsel, so that the article of faith might be rightly established, that the Word existed at the same time that God created all things. Thus we have the first day, when the earth together with the heavens was rough and raw,

and created the light, which he called the day when the night had gone before. Now what this day and this darkness were, we shall hear further on the fourth day, when they will clash with each other. Now follows

### **The other day.**

**V. 6-8. And God said, Let there be a firmament between the waters; and let it be a difference between the waters. Then God made the stronghold and separated the water under the stronghold from the water above the stronghold. And it came to pass thus. And God called the firmament Heaven. Then the evening and the morning became the other day.**

(19) Here we must always be careful to remain in the simple mind. Therefore, just as on the first day he made a desolate and empty earth, and the sky with a dark mist or dark waters, so here especially on the second day he took the sky before him and made a firmament; that is, the raw, dark waters, which before were nothing but a floating and weaving thing, he made firm here, and made it so that he set the firmament between two waters. For before there were waters all around the earth. But now he reached into the midst of them, and divided the waters into two parts, keeping one above and the other below. In the midst of it he makes a ring, which we call heaven, and calls it a firmament, so that it does not waver and move to and fro, and is inconstant, like the air and the water, and like it was in the beginning, but stands firm, and goes in a straight course, and yet has under it the air, the water and the sea. But before that, before he was thus made ready, he also went unstable.

(20) But what kind of water is above the stronghold, we cannot well know. Therefore, as I have said [§15], we must give room to the Holy Spirit and say that he knows better than we understand. In this way, God can certainly preserve the water above the sky. I wanted to make the air out of the water above the firmament, but it still remains under heaven forever. Therefore we must be captive, and remain that the heaven is made in the midst of the waters.

21. there we have now, as he did for the first time

He takes away the inanimate nature of heaven and gives it a secure nature, so that it is properly prepared and placed in the two forms, so that the darkness and floating disappear, that is, that it is no longer dark on the deep, and the wind no longer floats on the water. And when it is thus prepared, only on the next day does God give it its proper name and call it heaven. On the first day it was heaven and earth, but it did not yet have a proper name. For it was not yet completely prepared and fixed, so that it could be called.

So we have, I think, the most simple and right understanding of the text. But we do not want to set a goal for the Holy Spirit. If he gives us a better one, then we also want to have it gladly. So Moses now decides that again evening and morning have become the other day. So he has made over this work also a day and night.

(23) But here a question arises: Why does Moses not add, "God saw it good," and take away the blessing, and not write that God was pleased with it, since he remembers it all the other days? People were also very concerned about what he meant by this and thought about it in many ways. But I think it remains well hidden. That is why I do not know how to explain it. They say that the second number is a division out of unity, which 2) means love; as the same number in Scripture has a great sacrament and secrecy. But we will leave that aside. Be it as it may, there is no doubt that Moses did not forget to add it, but it was done out of deliberate counsel. So now heaven is prepared, that it is no longer dark, nor shaky, nor wavering, but stands firm, and has its space and place. Follow

### **The third day.**

**V. 11-13. And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, and herb yielding seed, and fruitful trees, every one of them.**

1) Wittenberg and Erlangen: den.

2) Erlanger: "and" instead of: which.

**after his kind bear fruit, and have his own seed with himself on the earth. And it came to pass thus. And the earth brought forth grass and herbage, every herb after his kind, and trees bearing fruit, 1) and having their own seed by themselves, every one after his kind. And God saw it good. Then the evening and the morning became the third day.**

(24) After the heavens have been prepared in the two days, God takes the earth before Him on the third day and prepares it properly. For before it was covered and lay in the water, and there was no one on it, but was completely desolate and of no use. But now, when he speaks the word: "The earth comes forth, and the waters under heaven are divided, here into the sea, there into pools or lakes, so that the land and islands are seen, so that here a piece and there a piece of the earth comes forth: Now the earth ceases to be so desolate and clumsy, and comes to light and takes on a true form, so that it is something different from what it was before; so that it is never empty, but is given a power that it should have in itself, so that it gives forth and brings forth grass, herbs and trees, and all kinds of plants. This is what happened, and it pleased God well, and then he gave it a proper name. From this it is clear that he did not give her the right name on the first day. For now it is worthy of its name, because it is no longer desolate or empty, but is prepared and worked as it should be, and receives its strength so that it produces all kinds of growth.

(25) Now these are all excellent words for Moses to shut the mouths of all philosophers, and those who have studied in the high schools, and called themselves doctors and magistrates, and have taught the natural art, even natural folly. They have discussed much and have held many delusions, from which the earth and all things have come, and yet no one has hit it. Therefore, here Moses puts all this down in a nutshell, saying that by the eternal word of God it was decreed that on the third day of the world the earth and all things would be destroyed.

Days the earth should come forth and be dressed.

(26) Now, if we compare everything with each other, we see that the creatures do not have their essence from themselves; and even if the essence is given to them, they have no power from themselves. For the earth and the heaven, being desolate, empty, and dark, could neither give nor bring forth anything of themselves, but were a poor, miserable, mere being. But if it should become light, then God had to give it and create it, from themselves they could not. Therefore it was neither the power nor the ability of heaven that it became firm. In the same way, the earth has none of its own, but everything had to be planted anew in it, so that it would bear grain, grass, herbs and trees; as we see when we dig it up, that it brings forth all kinds of growth, even that which is neither sown nor planted. It is indeed her ability, but she did not have it from herself, but God implanted it in her through the Word, so that no one can see or understand how it happens, and yet see how it grows; just as we cannot understand how she was created. Therefore we must shut up our reason and only believe, as Moses teaches here, that God thus creates it through the Word, that it grows without ceasing, and yet we do not know how. So it must also be said of heaven, whence it has the light and stands firm, which it has none from itself. For God could well make it heavier, neither the earth, as the clouds hover above, which are heavier neither the air. That it is nothing Aristotle says: What is light, that goes up. You cannot understand any of these things unless you believe.

27. and beware when you hear these words, "And God spoke," that you do not think of them as transient words, as we humans speak, but know that they are eternal words, spoken from eternity and will always be spoken. As little as God's being ceases, so little does the speaking cease, without the creatures having begun through it. But he still speaks, and continues to speak without ceasing, for no creature is able to have its being from itself. Therefore, as long as a creature lasts.

As long as the earth bears or is able to bear, the speaking continues without ceasing. So understand Moses, how he holds up God to us in all creatures and leads us to God through them. As soon as we look at the creatures, we think: Behold, God is so, that all creatures in their nature and works are driven and controlled by the Word without ceasing.

(28) For it is well to be tested that the earth alone has its strength from God's word, that one still sees earth, on which nothing grows; nor is it earth and dry land, but it is empty, for God does not give his word or commandment there, that it might bear and something grow there. Therefore, the fact that all land does not bear fruit in the same way is because such property is not from the land, but from God's word. Where this is, there also follows the power to be fruitful, so that the whole world is full of word, which drives all things, gives power and sustains them. That is why God says to Adam afterwards [Cap. 3, 17. 18.]: "The earth shall not give you its wealth", since he puts a curse on it; he takes away the word and leaves it in its nature. So we have the earth, prepared that it is never desolate and empty, but full of sap and power and ability, not from its nature, but by God's giving and speaking.

029 Besides this, thou must also be accustomed to the language, that the text saith, The gathering of the waters was called the sea." For the Hebrew language calls all things sea where there is water, even lakes and pools; therefore many seas are now and then in the Scripture; but where there is dry land, it calls all things earth.

(30) So the earth is adorned, and the waters are separated from it, which before went round about it, so that it floated in the midst of them. See how easy it would be for God to drown the world, for it is its nature for water to go around and over it; but by God's word and command it is preserved contrary to its nature, otherwise it would remain unrestrained, and all would go in one lump. So he says in Job [Cap. 38, 8-11]: "Who closed the sea with its doors when it burst forth as from its mother's womb? When I clothed it with clouds, and wrapped it in darkness, as in swaddling clothes. Since I gave it the course

broke with my dam, and set a bar and a door upon it, and said, Thou shalt come hither, and no further. Here shall thy proud waves lie down." When the waters beat down, no one protects that the sea does not drown everything, because God's word, which has 2) everything powerfully in its hand.

(31) Thus the holy Scriptures paint God and the creatures, that they may cast down reason, which thinks that he is away from the creatures, and has nothing to do with them. There is not one little stick or drop that God does not have to do with, and that he does not do.

Thirty-two But here we are to beware lest we run aground. For it is also dangerous for an unclean soul to fall on it, and to seek it highly, lest it perish. Therefore, the piece does not belong to children. To those who taste what Moses says: "God saw it as good," 2c. it is useful to them to strive for it and to write poetry. 3. They are the ones who recognize God in the creatures, so that they must say: Well, what a kind, fine God this is? He is nothing but sweetness and goodness, so that he feeds us, sustains us and nourishes us. These see nothing else in the creatures, but that God sees in them. But he sees nothing in them but good. Therefore they have all the air and joy of it. But the others, who have evil consciences and do not believe, should be frightened by the slightest rustling leaf, when they feel that God is so near, and they do not like to suffer any creature, as it always is. Therefore it is a high and great thing who comes to this core and understands it. Of which is also said above [§ 14 in the preface], and therefore I have repeated it here, that one may always need it, and remember it through this whole chapter.

(33) In the first three days he adorned and decorated the heavens and the earth; the heavens with feast and light, the earth with grass and herbage, and all kinds of wood or trees. Will now follow, as God did in the other three days, both heaven and earth,

Wittenberg and Erlangen: bracht.

2) So the Jenaer. Erlanger: "the it". Wittenberger: which one.

3) "it" is missing in the Erlanger.

more, further, better adorns and makes rich. And he keeps the same order as in the previous days, that he first 1) decorates the sky with lights and stars; then the earth, that he puts in it all kinds of animals, birds, fish and men.

## The fourth day.

**V. 14-19. And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven, dividing day from night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years, and let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven, that they may shine upon the earth. And it came to pass thus. And God made two great lights, a great light to preside over the day, and a small light to preside over the night, and stars also. And God set them in the firmament of heaven to shine upon the earth, presiding over the day and the night, and dividing the light from the darkness. And God saw it good. Then the evening and the morning became the fourth day.**

(34) This is the work done on the fourth day, that the sun and the moon, with all the stars, great and small, were created and fixed in the heavens, and that they should preside over the day and night, and give light to the earth, and that we should have hours, days, and seasons. But this is not to be understood in such a way that God created the sun and the moon beforehand, and then attached them to the heavens as one attaches a clasp, but because our language is so strained that it must make one word after another, and two things that happened at the same time cannot be spoken of and grasped at the same time in one word, he must say of them how they were created, and then how they were attached to the heavens, although they both happened at the same time, so that in making them they were also attached to the heavens. So that one knows that God has made a day of it; how long or short, many or few hours, stands with him. It says that he was slow in doing it, not because he could not do it in a moment, but because he wanted to take a day to do it, as he did on the third day above all the grass, herbs and trees, all the heaths, meadows and fields. And hath verily-

1) In the old editions of first.

He made a lot, even if he didn't spend an hour on it.

(35) So he may have made a whole day of the celestial body from evening to morning, which is so much that no one can count it, as the Scripture [Gen. 15:5] says. Even as now: when he makes the sun rise, he drives it so that it runs from morning to evening, so that it could go in one hour from morning to evening, yes, in one hour in both places. But he does not do it, but gives space and time for it. As he does now here with the sun, as we see before our eyes, so he does with all creatures. Thus he makes grass and herbs spring up in the springtime, so that everything is green and blossoms as long as it is summer; all this can happen in an hour, or, if he wants, in a year or two. He makes it so long according to his will and pleasure, and neither shorter nor longer.

(36) I say all this so that we may remain in simple words and understanding, and not rise up and speculate. Even if we are lacking in this, it is still without a ride. But this is what we are to learn from this, as I also said above [26], how no creature has either its essence or power from itself, and it is not in its power how long it should last and remain, but everything has its order from God, how long he wants it to last, so that we can ever see how God holds the whole world in his hand so powerfully that nothing can move except what and when he wants. This is the first part.

Moses further says that God made and ordained the sun and the moon to preside over the day and the night. The sun is a master of the day, the moon is a master of the night. The moon does not make the night, but its light goes and shines nevertheless in the night. So also the sun does not make the day, but it goes and shines in the day. For we have heard before that God created the light, and called it day; but the darkness he called night. There was neither sun nor moon, and yet there was day and night, and would have remained so. So, even though the sun does not make the day and does nothing to make it, it rules by day as the moon does by night.

38 Therefore we must leave the text in the simplest terms, that the two lights are ordered to rule day and night, not to make day or night. As we say of a man, he shall rule over the land; which is not so much said, that he shall make the land, but that he shall find it, and his rule shall be upon it. If the sun and moon had not been created, there would still have been day and night, light and darkness, but there would have been no government. So one reads also in the Psalter now and then, as [Ps. 136, 7-9.]: "He has made great lights, the sun to preside over the day; the moon and stars to preside over the night."

39 Thus we see that everything proceeds from God's order, and no thing has its essence or rule from Himself, but everything from God's hand, counsel and will, so that one should see God in all creatures, we open our eyes or ears, and thus give thanks to Him. And, as I have said enough above [Preface, §§ 11. 12], we are not to think that God created the creatures then, and has gone away afterwards, and lets them act themselves henceforth; but that he made them, and still makes them, and sustains them through the Word. So, the word drives the sun still today and forever from morning to evening. For the fact that it goes around in the sky once every day is not its own nature or power, but that of the Word by which it was created.

Item 40: God also says that these two lights are to be used as signs, times, years and days, that is, so that one can count and know the time. We do not yet have thoughts to do this from our art, but everything is thus ordered by God. So now with these lights one measures both day and night, that one divides the sun's light into twelve hours, and also teaches to count the year with the sun's course, because it comes around once every year, and with its course brings the seasons, summer and winter, with it.

41. they shall also serve that one knows to count the newspapers thereby. The word newspapers is called XXXX in Hebrew. So the scripture names the special feasts in the year,

and is the same as one divides a day over the twelve hours into four parts, morning or forenoon, noon, afternoon and evening; which is at our discretion, how we want to divide it. Now as one divides the day, so one can also divide the year into as many parts as one wishes. As, first, into four parts; then into twelve months, at which time a certain time may be appointed; as, when I say, in the fourth or fifth month. Item, further one can divide each month into half, or fourth part; that is Hebrew: *festa vel tempora*, that is, such times, which are determined in the year. As according to our calculation are Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, or Michaelmas 2c. How to divide and divide the year, that is called times, for which the sun and the moon are created.

(42) Further, first of all, God says that they shall be "signs. Then the stargazers and natural masters have gone up to heaven, and have drawn on their lies that which he says here of signs, that they say: Whoever is born in this or that sign of the stars, he shall be sent thus or thus. He that is born under the sun must become a wooer or a wise man. Whoever is born in the Mercurio, he will become a good handler, and so henceforth he will be otherwise or so. But we let go of these crude lies, and stick to the simple understanding that they are signs, as the mariners need them, and judge themselves by them on the sea. Item, as a sign is, when the sun or the moon loses its light, so that God may indicate something, namely a future misfortune and punishment over the world.

Therefore we say that they are only signs and have no special power or effect. That they say that the lights and stars have three effects on earth: first, that they shine; second, that they move; third, that they have an influence, is all folly. That the light works down, that one grasps well when the sun shines. So it is also true with the movement; for we see, the farther it comes away, the colder it becomes. But the third, that they say that every sign and star has its influence, especially on men, that whoever is under a

If a man is born with such a sign, he must be born like this, live such a life, die such a death, so that they can advise everything, how it should be for everyone, this is false and fictitious. For they were not created to rule me, but for my use and service. Over day and night they shall rule, but over my soul they shall have neither rule nor power. The heavens were made to give light and time; the earth to sustain and feed us. That is all they can give or do.

(44) About this also the fools want to argue, why each country bears something special, as that this bears gold and silver, another grain 2c., and lie with force about such things, as they want, like the old people and countrymen 1), that they have no reason nor cause. But if they ask us why grain grows in one place, and ore, saffron, ginger and other things in another, which are not found in other places, we will answer, "Thus it is written in this first chapter, v. 12, about the third day, that on that day God caused to spring up from the earth by his word 2) grass, herbs, trees and all kinds of plants, each according to its kind.

Therefore, none of the things that grow out of the earth are created by the influence of heaven, but by the word of God. And even if they do not want to admit this, they must nevertheless confess that all grass, herbs and trees were created before the sun and moon with the stars. And, of course, this is why it was done and written, so that the fools are not believed as if it came from the influence of heaven, but was a special divine order. Stay with it, and keep your faith pure. The sun and the moon shall not create nor have more power than is written here. If God had given them more, he would have written more, because in this chapter all creatures are included, almost with all their works and abilities. This is the fourth day. Moses now continues:

1) Old lenges lie from what lies according to the time, landers from what lies far away according to the space. Landfahrer (Landferer) - travelers, who come far over land (Cf. Walch, St. Louiser Ausg., vol. XI, 301, 8 18); also by water (Walch, old Ausg., vol. III, 96k, Z 34).

2) Wittenberger and Erlanger: go out.

### The fifth day.

**V. 20-23. And God said, Let the waters be filled with living creatures that weave, and with fowl that fly upon the earth under the firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that weaves and stirs the waters, every one after its kind, and every feathered bird after its kind. And God saw it good, and blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters of the sea, 3) and let the fowl multiply upon the earth. Then the evening and the morning became the fifth day.**

(46) Then he took the heaven again, and gave it another ornament. Until now he has given him light, feasts, sun, moon and stars, so that he has everything he should have. Here he gives him to the birds, which kingdom is in the air. And here you see that the Scripture calls everything that is above heaven, also the air in which the birds hover; item the clouds; so that water and heaven, or air, are almost one thing in the Scripture, for heaven came from water. And we see that also some birds live in the water. That is why he includes here both the birds in the sky and the fish in the water, and starts again at the water.

(47) Now notice here that no creature can be alive by itself; that no bird, though it is small, can have its own feathers or plumes, but God gives them to each one, so that it is impossible to count the number of feathers and to see how they are made. Besides, you hear that both the birds and the fishes are made of watery nature, just as the sun and the moon, that is, are made of the sky, which is made of water, just as the grass and trees are made of the earth. For the two creatures have given all the others.

48 Now the first time God the Lord gives a blessing, which he has not done before. For the blessing is only upon that which lives, that it may multiply or be fruitful. For he hath given to all the nature and ability in their bodies, that they may bring forth fruit, and bear much; which still indicateeth that which I have said [§26],

3) Erlanger: of the seas.

that none of them came from Himself. For the text first says that God called them to come out of the water and to be stirred up, and thus created them and gave them life; but they could not yet be fruitful until he spoke the word over them and blessed them, and called them to multiply. Now this is an implanted nature, as he planted above [v. 11. 12.] in the earth the power to bear the grass and trees. Where he had only brought them forth, they would not have had the power to multiply. Therefore it is not their nature to beget young, but a special work of divine majesty and his word or blessing, planted in nature.

49 I know nothing special to say about the whales, without knowing that he is also a lord of the sea, and makes many powerful, strange and monstrous animals in it. I also think that it is much more abundant, and that there is a greater quantity of fish in the water than of other animals on land, and of course the water is the richest element. So we have everything that water has given. Now follows:

### The sixth day.

**V. 24-27. And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures, every one after his kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth, every one after his kind. And it came to pass thus. And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and all the creeping things of the earth after their kind. And God saw it good. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him, and He created them male and female.**

(50) So far we have heard all that God made in the five days. First, the heavens and the earth; then all the plants on earth, the stars in the sky, the animals in the water and in the air. Now on the sixth day he creates all kinds of animals that live on earth,

wild and tame, and also man; and besides, with other beasts, he is told that they shall be fruitful, and multiply one among another.

In the first place, as I have said above [§ 3], so I also say here that on the sixth day not everything was made in one go, because Moses writes here with few words about it, and runs over it in the very shortest, that God made man, an image that was like him, and they created a male and a female. But how the same thing happened, he is silent here, but will explain it later in the other chapter, and this day's business further. As he is also in the habit of writing a thing roughly and at the top, and of going over it roughly, which he then better emphasizes. Well, there would be much to talk about what God meant by this work. Let us see a little of it.

(52) This is the most important thing to consider here, that man is not created like the other creatures, although he is counted among them and is also placed on the earth. For God decides beforehand with deliberate counsel and says, "Let us make man." For "let us make" is a word of deliberate counsel, which he did not say before. So that he wants to indicate that he has wanted to create man with special diligence. This is already a great honor of the human creature, that God has applied so much more diligence to him than to other creatures.

(53) And from the words it is again evident that in the Godhead there must be more than One Person, because he says: "Let us make"; item: "An image that is like Us. For the little word "us" indicates that [the one] who speaks is not alone, although the Jews mock the text, so that there is a way of speaking, even if there is not more than One Person. We let them go, the word will remain before them.

(54) Here our teachers, both old and new, have broken themselves greatly in interpreting what the image of God is, according to which man was created, and have said that there are three powers in the soul, namely, memory, understanding, and will, so that it may be like the holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They wondered about this.



They have to break, and have come into so many questions that they can never be worked out. Let us leave the sense and stick to the simple sayings and speech of the Scriptures, and so let us speak of the image that is like God, as Paul speaks of it when he says: "As the earthly man is like this, so are the earthly ones; and as the heavenly man is like this, so are the heavenly ones. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly." And to Ephesians Cap. 4, 22-24: "Put away from you therefore, according to the former manner of life, the old man, which is corrupted by the lusts of error; but renew yourselves in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, which is created after God, in righteousness and holiness."

55 Paul sets two images, earthly and heavenly. Adam is of the earth and earthly, and all who come from him bear the image. But what kind of image is it? Adam, from whom we come, is a sinner, his reason was blinded, his flesh corrupted with evil desire and love for gross sins and unbelief, disbelief and despair. So he became after the fall, and so are all those who bring the flesh from him. But he was not so created. Again, the heavenly image is Christ, who was a man full of love, mercy and grace, humility, patience, wisdom, light and all good things, so that all his being was directed to serve everyone and be harmful to no one. We must also bear his image and be conformed to him. In the image also belongs how he died and suffered, and all that is in him; his resurrection, life, grace and virtue, are all directed that we also put on the same image. Now all heavenly people, that is, all believers, are of this kind. So you see what "image" means and what "likeness" means. Therefore, you must put out of your mind that sense which the doctors have given, otherwise this mind will only become darker.

In Hebrew, the words are thus: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," that is, an image that is similar and like us. Man must be

to be an image, either of God or of the devil; for according to whom he conforms, he is similar. So much is said here that in the beginning man was created in the image of God, full of wisdom, virtue and love, and in short, drowned in goodness, and without all evil lusts, like God, so that he was full of God. This is also what the wise man means [Eccl. Sal. 7, 30.]: "GOD created man sincere." This sincerity was natural in body and soul, and if Adam had remained in it, he would also have begotten such children in whom there would have been no evil desire, but would have been kind and helpful to everyone, as God is. Thus, we would all have been like God. This would have been called hereditary righteousness, as if it had been brought and inherited from Adam by birth. Now he did not remain so, and the image perished, and we became like the devil through this birth, as we will hear hereafter. Now follows at the end of this chapter:

**V. 28. And God blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it. And have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.**

Thus God blessed the living animals and man. If Adam had remained as he was created, the birth would have been fine, would have been conceived with full joy and without all evil desire, so that one would not be aware of some evil inclination. Even as now, where there is any man full of faith and spirit, it seems as if he were drunken, that his works depart from him before he considereth it, as if his nature carried him away to good works; as is seen in all the works of Christ. Otherwise, where there is no such spirit, one thinks and breaks himself, as one would do; there goes much counsel, that one does one thing with pleasure, another with displeasure, and is so drowned in it, that one can never do a righteous good work.

(58) But true faith always does good works, so that often it does not think about them or realize what it is doing.

He is even drowned in the spirit. And such are also the best. Otherwise, when they feel and see it, they usually become hopeful. So it would have been, if we had remained pure, that we would have been so deeply immersed in the good, through which we are like God and his image. But now it is over, the blessing is gone; the image that was supposed to be has been torn apart; but the fruitfulness has remained.

(59) Understand, then, what God's image is; not a thing painted dead, but living and righteous, as God is, who makes it righteous, so rational and full of wisdom that it can govern fish, birds and all the animals of the earth, as God governs with right piety. There the work would have gone in full love, joy, humility and all good, also in the children, which man would have begotten and raised.

(60) There is much to be said here about marital status, and it would be good to have someone experienced to speak about it. But let us say something about it, and I mean that I do not want to miss far, because the Scriptures will not lie to us.

In the first place, we have heard how God divides man into two parts. Therefore we conclude: as other works of God are not in man's power, so also not that a man is man or woman. The sun cannot say, I will be the moon; again, the moon cannot make itself to be the sun, but each must remain as it was created by God. So also a man must remain that he is, and cannot be a woman; again, the woman must remain a woman as she is made, and is also not in her power to change such.

In another way God said to man when he was created: "Be fruitful and multiply. This saying is a thunderclap against the pope's law, and gives leave to all priests, monks and nuns to become legitimate. For as the sun must shine, and cannot abstain, for it is thus implanted in its nature by the word and commandment of God: so also is it implanted in man's nature that he must be fruitful, whether male or female.

63. that God therefore consumes some, as the corrupt and unfit bodies, and

Some high spirits, that belongs to other miraculous signs; but nature in general is in no man's power to resist or hold, but must have its course and breed itself. Therefore it is not in my will to pledge such things, for it is not possible for us to keep them. Therefore no vow is valid against it. For this is decided right away, no one can prevent the work that God has done.

64. What would it be for the sun to vow not to shine anymore? So much is it if you vow not to be fruitful, nor to beget or bear children. Vow or vow not, you cannot make yourself other than as God created you. If thou wilt or wilt not, then thou must do as nature is, or else go other ways, that such misery follows from it as is not to be called. And it shall also be so, where one wants to hinder and hinder God's work. Would you like to vow that you do not want to be a man, and yet you have to be, and trample your vow underfoot.

So you see how the vows and Pabst's commandments strive straight against God's order and appointment. Therefore there is almost no abomination on earth, for it is called *coelibatum*, that is, our spiritual chastity. If then thou wilt escape the abomination, only trample under foot the vow and the shameful estate, if thou art therein, or beware lest thou fall therein. If thou hast vowed, know that it is neither valid nor binding. For how can you vow that which is not yours, nor in your power to gain or keep? It is therefore ordained of God that thou shalt be married; there 1) is no free will. You cannot put a cubit, not even a finger, to your measure, as Christ says [Matth. 6, 27.]; so little can you deny flesh and blood its power and nature to inseminate itself, which is implanted in it by God.

(66) But I do not mean to detract from the high virtue of virginity, for God Almighty has retained for him his power to act over nature. Therefore we should leave the same to him, but where we see that he does not work the supernatural power,

let the natural work go, to marry as he created it. Where Adam had not fallen, neither man nor woman would have remained barren; not that it was commanded, but that it was planted in nature, and thus must go unhindered and unstopped. But now God has put his work into it. Because some are unfit, He gives them a special, high grace, that they live without it [Matth. 19, 11].

(67) Whosoever therefore shall be delivered by such grace, let him give thanks unto God, and let him follow it; but to whom it is not given, let him enter into the common married life. If he does not, he will make it much worse. As is now the case in the world, which has now become full of fornication and adultery, and has now been torn down by the priesthood, which the pope has erected for worship, and brought to the people: whoever wants to deal with God and spiritual things must not be a married man or woman; and thus young people are frightened away from the married state, so that they are only drowned in fornication. These are true doctrines of the devil [1 Tim. 4:1, 3], so that none more harmful could have come on earth.

(68) Hence it came about that they did not consider the married life to be a Christian state nor a good work, and did not see that in the Old Testament the highest patriarchs, who served God most highly, were married and often had many wives. And the priests were specially commanded by God to have wives and yet serve God. Which he did, that he might let the creatures go in their course and order, as he had made them, that they should not do other things contrary to his word and order.

Thus we have a clear text that absolves all monks, nuns and priests from their vows. These are two of God's sayings, and it is not proper to do, speak, vow or take anything against them. For God shall be right in His words and works. Therefore, if you are a woman or a man, and if you are fertile, only enter into marriage freshly and joyfully, at the word of God, who has blessed this state.

From this we also conclude that it is not possible to know what a woman or a man is, except in faith. For GoT

tes words and works are described here, but no one can understand either word or work except through faith and the Spirit. It may happen that one has an evil desire for a man or a woman, but this is not called knowing a man or a woman. For he who is to know what a woman is must be so skilled that he considers her to be God's work, which only faith does. For reason cannot do it, it is too blind, it thinks no more than: If only I had this one or that one; it does not see whether it is God's work or a creature, but only goes on in its mad lust, never lifts its eyes so high that it recognizes God in His works.

This is why she despises the marital state, because she finds and sees nothing in it but misery and unhappiness, which follows from necessity, where one does not know the other. For where there is no faith and knowledge of God and his work, there can never be peace nor rest. Before one enters it, one thinks that it will be full of joy. When one is inside and thinks he has found what he was looking for, and his lust is a little satisfied, then there is nothing left but unpleasantness. This then is the fault and cause, that thou hast not taken a husband or wife as a husband and wife, but as the old evil nature and evil lusts have driven thee. But if we remained spiritual in unchanged nature, as Adam was at first, then also every man would know a man as a man, and again; so it would be full of good, and no unkindness would follow.

Thus man and woman, begetting children and bearing fruit is surely God's work. Why then is it so difficult for us that we cannot suffer it? Because the work of God cannot be borne except by those who believe. If we were Christians, we would be able to recognize it. Now the whole world is vain unbelief, therefore it attacks it so that nothing good follows. Therefore the fault is not of the creature, nor of the estate, as the heathen complain, but of unbelief. Everything in him is good and delicious; but because you are in unbelief, the saying in Psalm [Ps. 18, 27.], which God says: "With the perverse you will

you will be perverted. Because thou art perverse, God pervades all things with thee, that it is vile affliction and misery; as we shall hear that Adam shall be.

(73) Now therefore know that these words are words of faith, that no one can understand them except by faith, which is everywhere in all things and in all business. Adam, when he was still standing, was full in all good things; all that he would have begun would have gone out with pleasure and joy. But when he fell, he still had to have a wife. There it turned around now that all work was vain misery and displeasure for him. Therefore it follows that all misfortune on earth is the fault of unbelief alone. But unbelief is not understanding what God's works are. This is the part that God sets up man and woman to beget children, so that one may learn that it is God's work, and thus must be, and that nature wants to be unchanged. Now follows the last part of the first chapter:

**And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb that groweth upon the face of the whole earth, and every fruit-bearing tree, and every tree that bringeth forth seed for your meat, and for every beast of the earth, and for every fowl of the air, and for every creeping thing that hath life, to eat every green herb. And it came to pass thus.**

This is a fine, kind father. When he created all living animals and men, he also provides them with everything they should have. We now see the common cases in the world, why the conjugal state becomes difficult, and no one likes it, that everyone fears he could not feed himself. That's why it remains so full of knaves and fornication. The blame lies solely in the unbelief that naturally clings to all of us after Adam's fall. We must remain in it until God makes us different people and puts faith in our hearts.

Now these are the words of faith. For before Adam says a word, nor asks, yes, before he thinks where to feed himself, God comes before, and gives him all the herbs that pollinate, that is, all kinds of grain, wheat, rye, barley, oats, millet, rice. 2c.

that he may feed on it. Therefore we also have our food. Whether Adam did not prepare it in the same way as we do, let it go its way.

And here you see once again how neither grain nor leaf grows for us, for God grant it, since the text clearly says: "I have given you all kinds of herbs" 2c. But no one understands this except faith. Item, secondly, he gives not only this, but also all kinds of trees and fruits, apples, pears, grapes, figs, oil 2c., from which not only food but also drink is made. So he provided food and drink for man, but where did he leave the clothes? He had no need of them, for he would have gone naked; but after the fall he had to have them for shame, as we shall hear.

Now see if Moses does not masterfully teach faith in this first chapter. On the last day he makes man, but before that he builds him a hall; he makes him light in the heavens so that he can see; he separates the waters from the earth so that he has room to dwell on them, and for his sake he adorns them with all kinds of plants; in addition, he gives him the rule over everything that lives; that we may see that God does not forget us, but as our dear Father provides all things, and prepares everything before he makes man; and when he has made him, he also commands him, and orders him to feed himself from the earth.

(78) And truly, whoever fasts this chapter alone would have great teaching enough about faith, from which we trust in God and see how he gives us everything we should have; nor does unbelief have all the heartache. That we do not feed ourselves is not lacking in creatures, for everything is full, and all have enough; but faith alone is lacking. Therefore we grate and scrape so much that we may not believe; from this we also have so much unpleasure and trouble for wages. These are the works of God, which he created in the six days, therefore he now concludes, saying:

**V.31. And God looked at all that He had made, and behold, it was all very good. Then the evening and the morning became the sixth day.**

79. The reputation, we have heard above [§14], is God's good pleasure and air, which He has in [the] creatures. For He has continued to confirm it as He began it, so that not only is Adam commanded to beget children, but it is also considered good by God, that it is pleasing to Him, and still 1) must always be so. Therefore, we are also to regard it as God's...

The work will be regarded as a good work and considered good. But no one will do this but faith.

80 So far it has been described recently where all creatures in heaven and on earth come from; and finally this has been the conclusion that all creatures are created by God's word, so that they are neither of themselves nor of their own powers, nor are they able, but as God gives, so it all goes freely without hindrance.

1) Erlanger: according to.

## The other chapter.

**V. 1-3. So the heavens and the earth were finished with all their host. And so on the seventh day God finished all his works which he had made. And rested on the seventh day from all his works which he had done. He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on that day he rested from all his works that God created and made.**

1. First of all, since our Latin text has: *Perfecti sunt coeli et terra, et omnis ornatus eorum*, "so the heavens and the earth were perfected, with all their ornaments", according to the Hebrew it means thus: *Et omnis militia eorum*, that is, "with all their host," and is better thus translated, for the sake of the prophets, who introduce, and therefore establish, this word of Moses, from which one would not otherwise know where it came, which is also sung daily in the Mass: *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Ze- baoth*, that is, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord, a God of hosts, Isa. 6, 3. Moses uses the same word here, and calls sun, moon and stars an army of heaven; and again, men, animals, birds, fish, and what grows from the earth, he calls the army of the earth. Just as a prince with his army, so he fights with all his might, and has all his power and strength with one another.

(2) Now why God needs this very word, we must leave it to Him; for it is not without cause. For it is true that all creatures that God has created are an army, so that they may use their power and their strength.

The words in the Scriptures are directed to the conscience of man, and are daily in conflict, so that they serve the good to the pious and the evil to the worst. Where there is a good conscience, it supports everything like an army; again, where the conscience is evil, everything opposes it; so that the words in the Scriptures apply to a man's conscience, that they serve it or oppose it. And thus from the saying come many sayings of the Scriptures, which otherwise one does not know where to draw them.

3 Another thing to note here is that he says, "God rested on the seventh day from all his works that he had done, and not only that, but also blessed and sanctified the same day. This is also a great thing, of which many have spoken and written, but few have understood. Sabbath, the Hebrew word, means rest or celebration, so that one keeps still and stands still from all words and works, and only hangs on God's works. But how this happened, that God rested from all his works, is of course a high question, although Moses describes it badly and simple. As is his way, that he often enters in such a way, and speaks in such a way, that everyone understands it, and again, puts the words, that the whole world does not understand it.

4 We see daily that all things are still being created, everything that is planted on earth, all fruit and all animals, and yet it is a work that actually belongs to God; as Christ Himself says John 5:17: "My Father works until here, and I work."

also." How then are we to put the two together, that the Scriptures testify and we see before our eyes that God creates and works without ceasing until the last day, and here Moses, on the other hand, says that he rested on the seventh day from all works? I am concerned that it is higher than one could give it for the common man; but we must speak a little about it.

When one looks at the creature, one against the other, it has a much different look than when one looks at it before God. Above [Cap. 1, § 2] it is said that before God the beginning of the world and the end are the same as at one moment, and the first moment and the last at the end of the world are the same. But if we look at it among ourselves, one thing always comes after another: the Son after the Father, one year, one day after another; but all this, as it goes after another, is before God as a moment. Which reason cannot well comprehend, for it is a comparison of temporal and eternal things. Because God is eternal, all things must be the same before and after Him. For what is eternal, all creatures are present to it, none first nor last, and nothing can ever be before it or after it. Now if you look at the world from the beginning to the end, before people one thing goes after another, but before God everything goes together. So grasp these two sights.

(6) Now that Moses described six days, this is actually what happened; but this is also true: what makes six days before our eyes is all one day, even one moment, before God. So it will rhyme that, since the seventh day has begun, it will always last until the end of the world, yes, after that it will really begin. But it is written for our sake, that it may be understood by our understanding that it has thus begun.

(7) But it is written for our sakes only, and not for the sakes of angels or other creatures. For the sun does not celebrate a day, but shines as brightly one day as another, and goes on its course forever; but something is indicated to us here, namely, in the most simple way, that God has wanted to govern man, whom he created in his image to be like him.

Because God creates and works such days, and celebrates them on the seventh day, he has written that we should do as he does. For this is God's image, which is even so minded, has such understanding and light, and does such works as God does, and always takes after Him. 1) That is why he commanded that we also work six days and celebrate the seventh. And therefore it was done, that the world might be ruled cleanly. For it is ever a fine, sweet, kindly government, that men weaken not themselves, but keep themselves fine, and yet walk not idly. Therefore, when they have worked the six days of the week, on the seventh day they shall rest from labor, for themselves and for the cattle; and especially that there may be time to hear the word of God.

But how? since this is written before man fell into sin, since this is already ordained, and the Scripture records the Sabbath much earlier than when Adam fell into sin. Is the same time also already decreed that he should work six days and celebrate on the seventh? There is no doubt, as we will hear, that he was to work in paradise, and to preside over fish, birds and animals on earth. Therefore God did not want him to go idle, and yet he would have remained to work and rule, without being displeased, and would not have been sore with sweat and fear; nor would the earth have borne thistles, but would have come forth with the most delicious growth, as he would have wanted; nor would any animal have done anything disobediently, and everything would have gone as he would have wanted.

9 So the work and the regiment would have remained, but without trouble and misfortune; just as the women would have carried children, but not with fear, sorrow and distress. But on the seventh day all would have stood still and rested. Let this be said of the Sabbath or seventh day; but what it signifies I will leave undecided. For we must remain here with the simple text. Now it is a different Sabbath, for it is the seventh day.

1) In the old editions: "sich nach jm omet", i.e., to be directed and formed after him, to imitate him.

where Adam had remained; and is now pointed to Christ, who kept the right Sabbath and celebrated it in the grave; as we have also said elsewhere. Moses now continues:

**V. 4-6. This is the birth of the heavens and the earth when they were created, at the time when God made the earth and the heavens, before any shrub was on the earth or any herb grew in the field. For God the Lord had not yet caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to build the land. But a mist came up from the earth and wetted all the land.**

This is a strange speech. For there is nothing lacking in the chapter, except that one is ignorant of the language; he who does not know it, will singe 1) and break, that he does not know where to go in or out; as also happened to Augustino. This is Mosi's way, that he often repeats a thing, and says it again, that it is also sheer vexation. Therefore, what follows is only a repetition and explanation of what he said before. For in the first chapter, v. 27, he spoke it all in short words: "God created a man in his own image. Item: "He created them male and female"; this does not yet express how all this came about. That is why he brings it up again in this chapter and uses many words to explain how it happened one after the other.

(11) That Moses speaks here is therefore easier to understand if one makes the words in the Latin text all in praeterito plusquamperfecto; but that he calls the birth of heaven and earth is spoken so much: Since heaven and earth were created. But why Moses speaks just thus, that go his way, he has his own mysteria. Now all this is said: God created and established the heavens and the earth, as has been said; but in such a way that no creature did anything to it, nor could have done anything to it, but only a mist or dark cloud arose, like a dew, and made the earth wet. All this happened

1) "Sülen" here will probably be as much as "to work off". So it may also be taken in our edition Vol. VII, 1847.

without man and other creatures. That is Summa Summarum of it: It was created, before ever a man was there, yes, before it rained once or a little bush would have stood. And says further:

**V. 7. And God the Lord made man of the dust of the ground.**

I have said above that God created man male and female; now I will tell you how it happened. De limo terrae, we have in the Latin text, that is, from the mud, is called Aphar in Hebrew, and is the very word that he subsequently interprets pulvis, since he says: Pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris. But it actually means such earth that is dug up, and a little thrown up, like a land that is plowed, or from a grave; but not yet dust that flies into the air. From such loose earth he took a roll, and made man of it. What more?

**And blew into his face a living breath.**

We must get used to these words, because they are not spoken in German. But it cannot be understood better than by looking at a man. The breath that God has given him is found only in the face, and in no other place, and especially in the nose. Therefore the word Aph, which is written here, means both the face and the nose. But that we have spiritum vitae in our text does not mean a spirit, but that God has given it such life, not as fish have, but as animals have, as a cow, horse, deer, and all such things that have breath. And by this is signified that our breath also is not in our power, neither that we can snort of ourselves, nor fetch breath; and by this breath we live. For when it is stopped up, we are dead. Therefore he calls it a living breath, that it keeps a man alive, and is a sign that a man lives.

**And so man became a living soul.**

14 Paul refers to this saying in the first epistle to the Corinthians, Cap. 15, 45: "Thus

it is written (he says): "The first man, Adam, was made into the natural life. We must also learn to understand the word "soul" correctly. In our language we call it a soul, which, as soon as man dies, departs from the body. But Moses and the Scriptures call it soul, everything that lives in the five senses; as, it is also called soul, that a fish lives in water, as he called it above in the first chapter, v. 20: *Producant aquae animam viventem*, and I have rendered it "living animals. Item, as the birds live in the air, and the animals on earth, that it is actually called a life of the body or a living body. So that the saying actually goes to the mind, that man is created in the bodily life, which we call the natural life.

(15) So understand the saying of Paul: "The first man is made into the natural life. For there he contrasts the bodily and the spiritual life. The bodily life is that one hears and sees, smells, grasps, tastes, builds, takes to himself and casts out, begets children, and what the body has for natural being and work; this is called the "soul" in the Hebrew language. So we read in the other book of Moses [Cap. 1, 5]: "Of all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob, there were seventy," that is, seventy children born of Jacob. Now this is almost common in Scripture through and through.

16 Item, so also understand that Christ says Matth. 10, 39. 16, 25: "Whoever finds his soul will lose it", that is, his natural life. For he does not only mean the parting of the soul, but wants to say that for the eternal life of the body and the life of the body 2) one has to put himself together with the bodily and natural life. Therefore, the word soul cannot be better used than the bodily life, or a man who lives in the bodily life. So Adam was made into the natural life; but Christ, who is the last Adam, Paul says [1 Cor. 15, 45. 1, into the spiritual life; that is, he has a spiritual body, so that he no longer eats, nor drinks, nor sees, nor hears, as we do, pure.

1) Erlanger: "him" instead of Jacob.

2) "in Fahr Leibes und Lebens" is missing in the Erlanger. In the Jenaer these words are in brackets.

The Lord is not a bodily thing or work, but is a different being, and yet a true man, as we shall be in that life.

**V. 8-14. And God the Lord planted a garden in Eden toward the east, and put therein the man whom He had made. And God the LORD caused to grow up every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food, and the tree of life in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And there went forth from Eden a river to water the garden, and there it divided itself into four principal waters. The first is called Pison, which flows around the whole land of Hevila, and there is found gold, and the gold of the land is precious; and there is found Bedellion, and the precious stone Onyx. The other water is called Gihon, which gushes out over all the land of the Moors. The third water is called Hiddekel, which flows before Assyria. The fourth water is Phrath.**

The Latin text has made here right: *Plantaverat*, he had planted. So it should also say before, *formaverat* and *inspiraverat*, so that one would know that it was a *repetitio*, as I said. But there we have a strange text: The Lord, he says, had caused to grow all kinds of beautiful trees in the garden that he had created, but especially the tree that is called a tree of knowing what is good and what is evil. So in the Latin text we have: *Plantaverat Paradisum voluptatis a principio*. But I do not think that it is right. For if he had wanted to say a *principio*, in the beginning, he would have used a different word. Therefore it sounds in Hebrew thus, as we have made it: "A garden Eden, against the morning", or before.

18 The word Eden means pleasure. That is why they made *Paradisum voluptatis*, that is, as we say, a beautiful garden of pleasure, in which were all kinds of trees, pleasant to see and pleasant to eat.

3) Wittenberg and Erlangen: an.

4) As an aside, Pison is the great water in India called Ganges, for Hevila is India land. Gihon is the water in Egypt, which is called Nilus. Hiddekel is the water in Assyria, which is called Tigris. Phrath is the nearest water in Shria, which is called Euphrates.



The trees in the middle of the garden toward the morning: a tree of life, and a tree by which one learned what was good and what was evil.

(19) Now here is the question: where is paradise in the world? That it is on earth, one must admit. For there is the text: "God has planted a garden in Eden, towards the morning," so it must be natural trees, like ours. Therefore it is nothing that our sophists said, how it lies high above the earth, hard under the moon. It must be here on earth, and must also be the trees that God created in the first chapter, v. 11. On the other hand, Adam was created on earth and ordained to be on it, and is therefore placed in paradise to build and preserve it. Thirdly, four waters are mentioned here, which are still known to flow out of the garden. All this proves sufficiently that it must be on earth 1).

20 Now this will become a strange thing. Origen and others have tossed about it; but Augustine has acted wisely and said: Whoever cannot understand this and other things, let him give glory to God and command him. But this is the remedy on that side, that Moses does not say that the four waters were in the garden, but only one stream of water, from which those waters are derived.

Twenty-one: What then shall we make of it? So I have said more, and I still say it: It is possible that it was so at that time, that God made a garden, or limited a land; but according to my liking, I would like it to be understood that it was the whole earth. But it is in my way that the text sounds that it is something else, namely a special place and space, just as even funny gardens do not comprehend a whole country. That is why I do not know how it was. I have to give myself up, because the four waters, as [§19] said, are still well known, which come out of it.

22 Therefore I would say that the pleasure garden is some place toward the morning, which is now hidden or perhaps torn apart.

that God knows well. But it must have been almost a wide space, because the waters lie mighty far from each other, even almost against each other. Therefore, I will give my reason captive, and stay with it, that it was a right, natural garden, as still would be a pleasure garden.

(23) For since Adam was a man in the flesh, and led a bodily being, the garden also must have been so, that it was felt, tasted, and smelled. For afterwards it is clearly stated that he broke and ate from the tree that taught what was good and what was evil. So that it must have been a natural bodily fruit, or Adam must have been a spiritual man. Let the garden be what and where it will, we give it home to God; although the Scriptures afterwards make a spiritual mind out of it, as they also do more of the same, as Christ [Luc. 23, 43.] says to the thief: "Today you will be with me in paradise."

024 And what tree is this in the midst of the garden, that he calleth it a tree to learn good and evil? Of course, he called it that for the sake of many things to come, and especially for the sake of the case that Adam would learn from it; just as the Scriptures in other places use to give some things the name for the sake of future events, per anticipationem. When, 1 Sam. 4, 1. the text says: "Israel 3) camped at Helfenstein", it calls the place Helfenstein, which at the same time did not have the name, and only in the seventh chapter, v. 12, it is said how it gets the name from the event that happened after it.

**V. 15-17. And God the Lord took the man, and put him in the garden of Eden, to build it, and to keep it. And God the LORD commanded the man, saying, Thou shalt eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil shalt thou not eat: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.**

25 Here see why God gives the commandment to Adam before He creates Evam. He has

2) The story - the thing that happened, event.

3) "Israel" set by us instead of: "The Philistines" in the editions.

1) Erlanger: of the earths.

without doubt written from the Holy Spirit, and St. Paul [1 Tim. 2, 13.] also touches it. The woman did not have to hear God's word without means, but had to learn from Adam, so that even before the fall the rule and authority was with the male person.

(26) Now this is the very first commandment, but it was not given to Adam to make him righteous, for this commandment must be set far apart from all the commandments that follow, for Adam was still without all sin. But God gave him this commandment only as a sign, because he had to keep it against man, so that he would know and think that he had a sovereign.

(27) So he could not become godly by it if he had kept it the same way, but he could become a sinner. This is already a great proof that no law can make one pious, but rather worse; but it is given to him to practice and prove that he is pious and walking in God's obedience. So the law does not give piety, but those who are pious do the law. This is the cause of the commandment of man half. But why God gave it for his person, since Adam was created in such a way that he did not need a commandment, we cannot and will not explain.

(28) The other thing is that God showed us what fools they are who are and have been subject to help people with many laws and teachings. Therefore, look at this example, even though it is simple. What do we poor people want to do with laws, vows and humanity, when we see that it did not help that God gave a commandment to the innocent man? And we, who are now corrupt, that there is nothing good in us, shall keep so many laws? If Adam, who was full of righteousness, lacked to keep it in such abundance and supply that all the trees were full of fruit, and he could have whatever his heart desired, yet let his wife deceive and persuade him that he did not keep the one commandment: what then shall we keep, when so many innumerable commandments, always one above another, are laid upon us? Therefore, let this be a great, mighty puff against the fools who would-

We must refrain from coming before God with laws. For he has never had it in mind that he would make anyone righteous, but actually that he would teach us to renounce our pretensions. As if to say, "If the first man, who was pious, did not keep the laws, what should you keep, since there is nothing good in nature?"

29 Do you say: Why then did he afterwards, through Moses, lavish the people with laws and commandments 1)? Not, of course, because he wanted to make us righteous, for he knows our hearts better than we do ourselves, but because we think we can make ourselves righteous with commandments, so that in the end we have to give them up and realize that they are of no use. He has given us so much for this very reason that we should confess our wickedness and the infirmities of human nature, 2) that it neither wants nor intends to do anything good, and is evil from the top of its head to the bottom of its feet [Rom. 7, 18. 19. 2 Cor. 3, 5. Is. 1, 6].

Therefore, let all prelates and bishops who want to govern consciences understand and consider this text. It is the duty of the secular authorities to defend with the sword, so that no one steals, 3) murders, or commits adultery 2c. But that they want to make the world pious with laws, and rule the consciences thereby, we do not want to have their law, since they do nothing, and no one keeps the laws.

The third part is that God shows His mercy here by letting Adam fall, but soon restoring him. For it is certain that he was created righteous and just, as said. It was all good that God was pleased with him and had no shortage of it. On the other hand, it must also stand that when he ate from the forbidden tree, he fell from the state that pleased God the most, to the very worst state, which did not please Him; for He has no pleasure in death [Ezek 18:32]. But this is also clear, that he takes him again to grace, has mercy on him, and gave him a gracious absolution, and brought him again into the state of grace, though not so perfect as before; yet it was

1) "Laws and commandments" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) "Affliction" is missing in the Erlanger.

3) "yet" is missing in the Jena.

The same, as we will hear in the following chapter, v. 15, where God says to the serpent: "The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head. The saying is the absolution, so that he has absolved him and all of us. For if the seed is so strong that it crushes the serpent's head, it also crushes all his power; then the devil is overcome, and all the harm that Adam had is gone, and he comes to the state where he was before. He gave him comfort and grace to raise him up again, and to help him from where he had fallen.

(32) Now this is the first example of God's mercy, that God does not want us to despair, nor to despair if someone has fallen, because we see that Adam falls from the highest position, and yet does not remain so. Thus it is decided that God lets fall, and also helps up again. This is what has recently been said about the play.

(33) But here is a question: How it came to pass, because God says, In the day that thou shalt eat of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, thou shalt surely die, that he died not; for after the same sin he lived nine hundred and thirty years. How then is God's word true? Answer: We must leave it at that, that Adam in this commandment, as we shall hear, sinned against us all at once [Rom. 5, 12. 1 Cor. 15, 21.], for we are all planted in him, and his blood and flesh, that it must go with us as it went with him. For God has ordained that from this one man all men must come, and we are all his children. Therefore, as he has done, and what is laid to his charge, the same thing befalls us all, so that we must be counted with him for one cake and dough; lately, all that are men. Therefore also the Scripture gives one name to the first man and to all of us, that whatsoever is man is called Adam, from this first Adam, that is, from the first man, from whom we are all made. Therefore no ass may call the other (as one speaks) a sack bearer. That is why all arrogance is laid down here with all its force, that one man wants to raise himself above the other. We are Adam and remain Adam.

34 Why then did God say, "The hour you eat of the tree, you will die"? Some have interpreted it to mean, "You will be mortal" or, more sharply, "You will be guilty of death: You will be guilty of death. This I also consider to be the right understanding. For since we are all in sin, we are also in the curse and punishment, until such time as the seed comes to take them both away. It is true that Adam and Eve did not die so soon, nor did they feel death so soon, yet they felt so soon that they were naked, and made them aprons; but after that, when he heard the voice, he felt death [Gen. 3:8]. For this is also true, when God spoke to Adam, he was in agony. That is why we want to understand it in such a way, "you will die of death", that it is so much, you must die, and you will feel death; although the time is not actually determined. Now Moses goes on to say how the woman is made.

**V. 18-20. And God the Lord said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper for him. For when God the LORD had made of the earth all manner of beasts of the field, and all manner of fowl of the air, he brought them unto man to see what he should call them: for as man shall call all manner of living creatures, so shall they be called. And the man gave his name to every beast, and to every fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field: but the man found no helper for him.**

35 Then Moses repeats, and this is the summary: When all living things were created, God brought them to Adam to name them, but among all of them he found no helper around him. And this much is said: God saw Adam that he alone was a man's image. Now he had created all the animals, both she and he, then he brought all the animals, she and he, to Adam, but his she or companion 1) he did not find.

Our text reads: *Adjutorium simile ei*; but it should read: *coram eo, id est, adjutorium ad generationem*. There was no animal that would have joined him; they went and were counted, as they still do, but

1) Wittenberger: "gegaten".

None of them adhered to him as his companion. He called each one as he wished; as well as, as one calls the animals, so they must be called. This is a sign that man is the master of all animals.

**V. 21-23. Then God the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall on the man, and he fell asleep. And he took one of his ribs, and closed up the place with flesh. And God the LORD made a woman of the rib which he took from man, and brought her unto him. And the man said, She shall be bone of my legs, and flesh of my flesh. She will be called a woman because she was taken from a man.**

(37) These words are not the words of men, therefore I would not want them to be considered small and mocking. God speaks and does it Himself. Therefore it is a serious matter, and blaspheme God, who have made a jig out of it. So he wants to say: God let Adam fall asleep; that is, when he works where there is no sin, he works so neatly that the creature does not feel it. But he does not deal with sinners in this way; they must feel it, that [it] hurts them. If Adam had been awake, he would also have felt pain; but when he was asleep, he did not feel it, and when he awoke, he sees them standing before him, never having seen the image before among the others. Now the spirit was in him, as Christ interprets it [Matth. 19, 5.], that these are God's words, which Adam speaks here. Therefore one can conclude that Adam was full of God at that time, or that God spoke through Adam's mouth; therefore one should not let it be a mockery. And notice this: when God made the woman from the man's rib, the text uses the word "build": "He built a woman", just as if it should become a house. We will hear about this later.

38 This is now the opinion, as Paul interprets it [Eph. 5, 28. ff], that there is no greater union than man and woman, and would have remained so everywhere if Adam had remained in innocence. Now it is corrupt that there is also seldom unity among the married. Therefore, says Moses, Adam knew that his image was like him, because before there was no animal that was like him.

as if it wanted to help him to give birth, according to the word of God [Gen. 1, 28]: "Be fruitful and multiply. This is what God planted, that man must be male and female, and neither can bear fruit without the other.

(39) And it is concluded that the woman was created to be the help of man, not for pleasure nor for evil, but that the saying might continue. Just as Adam could not refuse to be a man, so also God took a rib from his side and made a woman out of it; and just as it is not in her power that she should come from the rib, and not from anywhere else, so also that she should not become fertile from the man.

(40) But it was of no avail; they preached to the whole world that one should vow virginity. It is good and right whoever can keep it, whom God especially tempts to stay that way. After all, he has the power to do as he pleases, he could also make a woman out of a man, and again. If we had not fallen, it would have been so that all would have borne fruit; for the blessing was spoken that it should be without woe and evil desire. But this is now broken; so God has caused some to be consumed, that they should not be fruitful. In this let the Holy Spirit do his work. But those who have not gone forth in this way, let it be done as it should be done. For as we all should have borne fruit, if nature had been unchanged, how much more must we do it, now that it is corrupt, and much more leavened? He who is healthy can eat if he wants to; a sick person must be forced to do so. That is why it cannot be resisted; but if it is resisted, it is made worse. Women are not created for any other purpose than to serve their husbands and to be their helpmates. To beget fruit.

41 Now see how Adam gives her a name, and calls her a woman, "because," he says, "she was taken from a man. In Hebrew, the little word *Isch* actually means a man among men. Because *Sachar* is called it also under other animals. So he calls her from his name *Isha*, that she has the name from and after him, as it is still called.

So far it remains that the woman is called after the man's name. Now the word Jshah is as much as we may say a woman, because she comes from man and is made. Just as that which is made of wood is called wood, 1) so she must have the name from him, that he may give it to her and keep the rule.

**V. 34. Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife, and shall be two in one flesh.**

These words are not to be understood as referring only to flesh and blood, but to everything that belongs to the outward, bodily life. Thus the Scripture calls "flesh" everything that belongs to the flesh, which one must have, household, children, money, fields, meadows, property, honor, or poverty, shame, sickness and health. Honor, or poverty, shame, sickness and health, and so on, what may fall to the flesh, so that flesh means an outward life in the flesh. This is how it should be now, that it is all of them at the same time, and they take on everything at the same time, and one brings the other body, good, honor, shame, poverty, sickness, and what it is more. This is such a life, which is in the flesh, that is, in the fleshly being, and what belongs to it, all shall be common; without the man having the rule, and she having the name from him. If he had said it should be one spirit, it would have been better; now it is indeed one flesh and blood, but various soul and spirit.

**V. 25. And they were both naked, Adam and his wife, and were not ashamed.**

1) In the old editions: hülzten.

(43) We see this in all animals, that they are not in a state to sin; so it was also with man. But now it is finished, as we shall hear, that we must be ashamed and embarrassed. We must suffer shame until the last day, after which it will again be so that none will be ashamed before the other. So much joy will be in heaven. So again, in hell the torment will be so great that one will forget what is man or woman. The misfortune will probably drive away the tickle. So it will be again in that life, as in the first, that one will not say: Behold, this is a she, this is a he; but now nature is so corrupted that one cannot look at the other without shame.

44 Now I should also introduce the spiritual interpretation here: how Adam Christ fell asleep on the cross, and there from his side Christianity, his bride, was taken; which is a great comfort, defiance and glory for us. But it would be too much; therefore we will leave it to the scholars and idle spirits to act further.

So far, in the two chapters, we have heard the works that God created in the six days, and especially how in the last day man was created, both male and female, and how God gave them together, and before he created the woman, commanded Adam that he should eat of all kinds of trees in the garden, but only of the fruit of the tree, by which was learned what is good and what is evil. Now follows the third chapter, in which is described the sorrow and heartache that soon after came upon human nature and still continues.

## The third chapter.

**V. 1-6. And the serpent was more cunning than all the beasts of the earth, which God the LORD had made, and said unto the woman, Yea, should God have said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? Then the woman said to the serpent, "We eat of the trees.**

**Fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden God said, Eat not of it, neither touch it, lest ye die. Then the serpent said to the woman: You will certainly not die of death, for God knows that which day**

**If ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be open, and ye shall be as God, and shall know what is good and what is evil. And the woman saw that the tree was good to eat of, and pleasant to look upon, that it was a goodly tree, because it made one wise.**

The first thing that Moses describes here is how the serpent spoke to the woman. There we cannot pass by, we must, as I always say, let the scripture remain in a simple, plain sense, as the words give, and make no gloss. For it does not behoove us to interpret God's word as we please; we are not to direct it, but to let ourselves be directed by it, and to give it the glory that it is better set than we can make it. Therefore we must let it stand that it was a true, natural serpent, which the woman saw with her eyes; and therefore it is written, that the history should be written in a light understanding. For if he were to write in this way, that the devil had spoken to her in his own person would not be appropriate. Therefore he had to speak through the serpent, and is thus described as if the serpent himself had spoken here.

(2) But he has shown enough that the serpent was natural, but the devil dwelt in it, therefore he says that it talked with it. For speech is not given to any animal except man. Therefore he makes it clear enough that the devil spoke to the serpent through his tongue. And this should not surprise anyone, because the devil is a mighty spirit [Luc. 11, 21. Eph. 6, 12.]. God did not prevent him from dealing with bodily things; as we still see that he is lord and prince of the world [Joh. 12, 31. 14, 30. 16, 11.], and not only speaks through animals, but now most of all through men.

3) Secondly, it is 1) also a sign that it was the evil spirit that he speaks so highly of God's commandments. For no animal is so clever that it knows what God's commandment is or is not. Therefore, there must have been such a mind in it, which is above the serpents' nature, yes, also above human nature: it must have been an angel.

1) "it" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Erlanger.

But because he acts against God's commandment, he cannot be a good angel.

4 Item, Eve was a woman of the world. For she stood talking with the serpent, and was not afraid of him, and regarded him as another animal, for she was a lord over all, as we have heard that God says to man: "Rule over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over all the creeping things that creep upon the earth. She was not afraid of any poison, nor of death, and there was nothing that could harm her.

(5) But she did not fail to see that the devil was there. For so Paul says 1 Tim. 2, 14: "Adam was 2) not deceived, but the woman was deceived, and brought in transgression." This much is said: Eve was not so understanding as Adam; as also it is said above [Cap. 2, § 25] that God spoke to Adam himself, and gave him a commandment which he was to teach Evam. Therefore he will speak: Adam knew it well and understood it, but she was more simple, and too weak for the cunning devil, and did not fail herself; but Adam did fail himself, who should have been able to resist, if he had wanted to do it.

6 So you see here how the devil can disguise himself so that he is not known, and how he drives all temptation. Let us take special note of this. For as he did then, so does he still in them that are Christians. Therefore it is necessary that they watch diligently, and take heed lest he deceive them. For his own, whom he has possessed, he does not touch.

7 First of all, he attacks the human being, since he is the weakest, namely the female person, that is, Evam, and not Adam. For all his temptations are so directed that he breaks in where we are weak and not well guarded. If he had attacked Adam, he would have given him a different answer. He was afraid of that, so he thought: I want to attack you first, maybe I also want to bring him down by them afterwards.

8. now we have his own color off-

2) In the editions: was.

paints. Where he sees that you are weakest, where you are most inclined to pride, avarice, anger, or unchastity, or the like, he touches you; and tickles you most, because you are ticklish; attacks you, because you are soft. Therefore we should be prepared and brave to know his wickedness and beware of him, as Paul says [2 Cor. 2:11], "lest we be overawed by the devil, for we are not unaware of what he has in mind." So God has betrayed him to us, and warned us that we should be careful of deceitfulness and mischievousness toward him.

9 Secondly. Further, see how mischievously he attacks the woman. So he starts talking against her: "Yes, should God have said that you should not eat from all kinds of trees in the garden? With these words he throws God's commandment to the winds, and speaks of it so lightly, as if to say, "Do you think that God is so foolish that he should have forbidden this? I cannot give the Hebrew well, neither German nor Latin, it is just the word Aphki, as if someone turns up his nose and laughs at you and mocks you. With this he wants to move her around, so that she should think: Well, it must still be true. So he moves and pulls her away from the word of God, which is standing right there. So it is lost. As long as the word was in her heart, she lived and remained standing.

(10) Therefore he thinks, I must take the word from her above all things; and he uses deceit to make such a delusion in her mind that she thinks it must not be so. Do you think, he says, you fool, that God has commanded it? He says so cunningly, as if to say: There are so many hundred trees in the garden, and he has not forbidden you to eat from any of them, should he have forbidden that very tree? Should he forbid you a single tree, if he gives you so many hundreds? So he leads the woman to think that Adam does not understand.

This is the right black, yes, the white color of the devil. For he is a bright, light devil, who does not attack us with gross sins, but with unbelief. For when he has overthrown faith, he has won. Man must have God's word and cling to it with faith:

As soon as he lets the same thing ravish him, 1) there is no longer a shell. So here the devil takes away his word and faith that he falters, and thinks: Who knows, it might be

cannot be true. As soon as this is ordered in doubt, so that one thinks whether it is right or wrong, then it is lost. God does not want a wavering soul to say, "Yes, if it were true.

12 Therefore notice how the devil does, that he only attacks the faith. He does not attack the heathen, unbelievers and unbelievers, they cling to him like scales; but when he sees those who have God's word, faith and spirit, he cannot go to them; he knows well that he cannot win when they already stumble. He knows that he cannot win if they stumble. He sees that even if someone falls into grave sin, it is not lost, because he can always get up again. Therefore he thinks he must do things differently and take the main thing. When he has come to the point of doubting whether this is God's word, then the game is won.

(13) Therefore it is necessary that we look to this very thing. Paul [1 Tim. 6, 20] and Christ [Matth. 7, 15. 16, 6. 12] have warned us enough; in addition, all of Scripture, in which there is no greater warning than to beware of false teaching. For God can consider everything good, as we stumble, only that we remain with the pure, loud word of God, which says: This is right, this is wrong. The devil knows this, that is why he creeps in at first; as soon as he snatches it away, man himself cannot resist him afterwards, he must fall into all vices; as you see that he does here, when he wants to move them around.

(14) She will do better, saying, We will not eat of the tree in the midst of the garden, lest we die (as we have always done better than God commanded); and she adds to it: Neither shall we touch it. With this she already begins to waver. When the devil sees this, he continues and pulls her to the point that she blasphemes God and stands straight against him. For when he brings man to this

1) rapture - to snatch away, to rapture.

If the man who has been commanded doubts, he soon causes him to blaspheme, saying, "God has not commanded it, or if He has commanded it, He does not mean it rightly.

15 Therefore he continues, and says to her: Yes, "you will be like God, and know" 2c. These words have so much in them that there is not enough to say about them. For it is all so pictured, as he drives with all men whom he attacks. Therefore, beware that you do not think that this happened to Eve alone, nor that you think the story is an old tale, but think as if it had only happened this hour. For this is what Satan is still doing today, from the beginning of the world to the end. Thus we shall see, and already have before our eyes, how he deals with the Gospel, and how many souls he will snatch away from it, attacking it in such a way that from the beginning he puts God's word in doubt, and then goes on to deny it, and especially brings in, as he does here, that God is not friendly. This is the most poisonous challenge that can befall a man, that he looks at God with such eyes; which is nothing other than a hatred of God, for which we have mighty cause, especially when we begin to speak of the understanding why God chooses one and not another. This is what the devil does all the time.

(16) He also gives the woman evil thoughts, which are much worse. For by leaving the name and appearance that it is not against God, he first leads the woman and us poor people to think that they do not sin in it, and yet in essence they deny and hate God. For this we must still look at the examples we have before our eyes, otherwise we will not understand. So now he goes on, pretending to the pope, bishops, priests and monks that their conduct is right and not contrary to God; so they remain under the delusion that they are right; and yet God's word stands clearly before their eyes, that they should not do what they are not sure is God's word. Saying nevertheless: We know well that God has commanded that one should not do what he has not commanded; but

1) "Delusion" put by us instead of: "word", which does not seem to fit us. Because of our correctness compare § 21: "they stand out of your delusion" 2c.

but one may well do a little more and higher service to God, that it may be done to his praise and honor. This means, first, *negligere mandatum Dei*; then, *eligere mandatum hominum*. Therefore, this is not an old challenge, but will last until the end of the world.

Now see what happens next. When Eve stands in the wavering, and he has decided that it is not against God, then he has won; the faith is out and strangled, the word she has lost. Then the text says, "And the woman looked," first, "that the tree was fine to eat of;" second, "and lovely to look upon;" third, "that it was an airy tree, because it made wise." These three unfortunate desires she did not have before everywhere, has now already fallen into evil air and love, which she had none before.

18 Therefore, when faith and the word of God are gone, it is not to be thought that one could then endure the evil desire and love; the arrogance is there, and vain sinful, evil inclination. Before, when she stood in faith and was full of God's love in her heart, she did not see that the tree was particularly funny, or that it made her particularly clever, but one was to her like the other; but now there is a difference, that none is so beautiful as this one. What God has commanded, she does not want; but what he has forbidden, that she wants, and would now like to become wise.

**And broke off the fruit, and ate, and gave her husband also of it, and he did eat.**

19 Now the work follows. She would not have eaten if she had not been dead before. The faith was already gone, and was full of sin and evil desire. But this is the pity that she also gives Adam and he eats with her. For there would have been no need for him to stay, God would have created another wife. "Adam," says Paul [1 Tim. 2:14], "was not deceived, but the woman." But that he also transgressed makes the sin especially grave and horrible. She was a fool, easily seduced, and knew it no other way; but he had God's word before him, he knew it well, and should have punished her; so he stands there, watches, and also eats, willingly consenting to the devil's counsel.

2) Wittenberg and Erlanger: er.



**V. 7. Then both their eyes became alert. 1)**

020 Now the gross sins follow. First, as the devil had said, their eyes will see and feel that they are naked. Now it was impossible to resist all the limbs they had, nor to control the evil lust. They both looked at each other with evil lust and unchaste desires when they were naked, which were unknown to them before. They had fallen away and disobeyed God, so that everything in their bodies became disobedient as well, so that they could not tame them, neither thoughts nor limbs. This is now inherited by us, and remains so; as they were, so are all their children. Where there is no faith and Christianity, it is impossible for them to be without evil desires and lusts, especially to resist the limbs that serve for anger and unchastity: Eyes, ears, tongue, and all other limbs.

21 So Adam and Eve, with all their fruit and children, are condemned, in sin, and none of them are exempt. We are all like father and mother, and bring the same plague and disease with us. This is how the devil deals with us even today, so that he leads us into the main challenge concerning faith; if he wins the word and faith, he has it all. As we see where priests and monks do not live in the faith, as they almost all are, there is none stingy, unchaste, angry people, and none so full of vice. For they are under the delusion that they want to help the cause with works, they do not see their unbelief and sickness, they do not know what they lack, they go on, and they also want to make aprons for them, so that they cover themselves; but they cannot resist their nature, it breaks out nevertheless that it comes to light what they are, and they themselves must confess it. When it is said to them that they lack God's word and faith, they do not believe it.

22 So the two go to the place. Seeing that they are naked, feeling the foul air in their flesh, and not being able to help them, they go and make them aprons.

or woven girdles of leaves, which they girded around themselves and covered the body. Now this means nothing else than what we have often said, how the same saints, when they have lost faith and see that they are in sins, want to help them, cover themselves and adorn themselves with works that they can devise. But it is beautifully expressed here that it does not help, even though they make aprons. When they saw that they were naked and felt the evil desire and love, they still could not resist it, nor dampen it; they thought they wanted to attack another way, but it did not help; they could well get out of each other's sight, so that one did not see the other; but the desire ceased nothing the more.

(23) It is the same with monks and priests. People who felt their sin and could not get rid of it thought they wanted to help the cause with a strict life, and locked themselves up in the monasteries all their lives; but as long as they are in them, they feel that it helps nothing, and only gets worse. So it seems that people think they are pious and holy, but this is nothing, because they cover themselves from the people; before God they remain just peelings in the skin, as before. Where we are not helped again by God's word, all is lost.

(24) So we have the miserable fall that Adam and Eve did, in which we are all stuck, so that no one can prevent it. For though the sword of the world, and the father and mother, may prevent the work, yet the foundation of the heart is not prevented, but the word alone must come again, from which we have fallen, and raise us up.

025 Wherefore this temptation is written for a warning unto us, that we may take heed, and not be carried away from the word, as they have done: for all things together are for the word and for the faith. Now that they have been deceived by the devil and have fallen into sin and death, and feel their unbelief and disobedience in all their limbs, body and soul, so that they had to cover their shame with aprons and leaves, here is how God has restored them and given them grace.

**V. 8-13. And they heard the voice of God the Lord walking in the garden, when the day 1) had become cool, and Adam hid 2) himself and his wife from the presence of God the Lord under the trees of the garden. And God the Lord called Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said: I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid; for I am naked, therefore I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou not eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat thereof? And Adam said, The woman whom thou gavest me, she gave me of the tree to eat of. Then God the Lord said to the woman: Why hast thou done this? And the woman said, The serpent hath so set me up, 3) that I did eat.**

(26) Now it is sufficiently said that the supreme sin in this case was that Adam and Eve were led away from the word of God by the cunning deceit of the devil. When this was snatched away from them, life was no longer there, for where the word is not, there is also no life. When life was gone, they felt the fruit of death, that they had gained evil desire.

(27) Now you see again in this piece that God restores them from death to life through the word. For there comes another word of God that saves them again; but not before they feel death before. And the text is well to be remembered, for it is not to be thought as if it were a thing that had passed away, and would never so happen; for where it does not so happen, there no Christian ever becomes. Let us see this.

28) Since the two were dead, having lost the word of God, and were in sin, yet they did not feel it so soon, but went, as the text says, girded themselves and covered themselves, not yet feeling how evil they had done.

They were full of the fruits of death and evil desires and love, and the tickling had not yet passed away. But when they heard the voice of God walking in the garden, says Moses, when the heat was over and cool, at the time of vespers, they hid themselves, not wanting to be seen; then the tickle was driven away from them, so that they felt such sorrow and distress that they forgot whether they were naked or not.

(29) For, as we shall see, when a man is condemned to death, such fear comes under his eyes that he does not know whether he is a man or a woman. And so it happened to them, when they had almost covered themselves and made aprons: as soon as God lets Himself be heard, their consciences are frightened, they want to hide and run away, and the garden becomes too narrow for them, so that they do not know where they should stay. Then they felt what they had done, saw sin, death and hell before their eyes; there was all sorrow and heartache. They wanted to flee and crawl, where they could find a hole, 4) where they could stay before God; but there is no room. The more they hid, the closer God came, and so close that He said, "Adam, where are you?"

(30) They could not stand this, and at that hour they were both in the midst of mortal distress that God should deal so unkindly with them, and not want to know them any more; as if he wanted to say: Before you were my child, now I have lost you. When they hear that he is so strange to them, they are certainly in hell. For thus their heart was: Behold, God is hostile to thee, but because God is hostile to thee, all creatures are hostile and against thee. Then everything became too narrow for them. In the same way, every day when God wants to convert a person from sin, He first leads him into such terror and fear.

Now behold, what should Adam do? When he sees how he has been fooled, he goes on, wants to make himself beautiful, and only fools more crudely, so that there is enough to see, if there were no other examples of how foolish nature acts without God's word. Believe this without doubt: if they had been able to do everything that could be done, they would have dared to do it with three necks. And if free will stands there

1) Marginal gloss: Day was cool. This was around evening, when the heat had passed; it means that after a sin the conscience suffers anguish until God's gracious voice comes, and again cools and refreshes the heart; although even the stupid nature is terrified and shies away from the gospel, because it teaches the cross and dying.

2) Marginal gloss: Adam hid. Adam means man in Hebrew, therefore one may say man where Adam stands, and again.

3) put on - deceive, seduce (illudere).

4) Erlanger: find.

The highest, that he can never do what he did not do this time. For there they stood in hell, trying their best and highest to get out; but there is no help nor counsel to be found. See how he does it. He is not so pious that he could give glory to God and say: Oh, Lord, I have sinned, and would have asked for mercy and help; but only the heart thinks, Oh, that it did not know the sin! would gladly adorn it and help it; therefore he says, "I heard your voice in the garden, and was afraid," as if to say, "I feel well that before you no apron or covering is valid, nor does it help; I am utterly naked. Therefore he says: 1) You fool! Is this the way to act before God, to flee from Him, so that one should crawl to Him with all fours? .

32 Then God starts with him and pushes him even deeper into hell, so that he perishes. "Who told you," he says, "that you are naked," since you were naked before? This was asked too deeply that he could no longer answer, and was now decided and stood in the depths of hell, indeed condemned by God. For thus he concludes a verdict: "Because you feel that you are naked, and are afraid and afraid of me, you must have acted against me, and be disobedient, so that you and I are at odds. But what does he do? He goes on, and does not want to put the blame on himself, but on the woman, even on God himself. As if he were to say, "Oh, if you had not given me the woman, I would have remained pious. That is so much talk: If you had been so wise and so pious, you would not have created the woman. What else is this said, but so much: You have sinned yourself? So he answers the divine majesty.

Now no one speaks such words against God except a blasphemer who feels that he is condemned. For where there is a right heart, it confesses sin and gives God so much honor that it does not punish him. But this one goes to him and punishes him, blames him. As if he should say: If I am to be condemned, then you are guilty. Because Eve was God's work, it must take it upon itself. But he should have said: You have given me a wife

that I should have ruled, and not her, but she should have obeyed me; that I did not do. So he turns it around and puts the blame on God, making it much worse now than before, when he ate from the tree, that he would be worthy that God would have cast him eternally into hell. Now see what free will and reason do when it comes to a meeting, especially in mortal distress, how finely it can help itself, how it quarrels with God, what honor it gives Him, and how kindly it speaks to Him, so that the longer it goes on, the deeper it sinks into hell.

Now God has left him in such distress, and he will probably sink into hell; for he is completely of one mind, cannot feel or think otherwise than that he is eternally damned; he has no help nor comfort.

But where is the woman? She must also pass through. Therefore he starts again and asks: why she did it? still postpones the consolation, does not let himself be heard that he wants to help. Now she is just as foolish as Adam, and does not want to bear the guilt either. It is a high temptation, in which the mistake is accused in the most secret way. The serpent has set me up, she says. As if she should also say: Why did you create the snake? Since you were such a wise God, and knew such things, could you have accommodated it? This is horrible and frightening to hear.

36 So now they are both condemned. But now comes comfort and God's word again; Christ descends from heaven and helps; another word comes, as follows:

**Then God the Lord said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you are cursed before all cattle and before all the animals of the field. You shall walk on your belly and eat dust all your life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bite his heel."**

37 First, that he says to the serpent, You shall walk on your belly, is already half comfort; that is already as if he should let it be known that he does not want to condemn it forever. As if he should say: I still judge you.

not even to death, but it grieves me that you did it.

038 But the right consolation cometh, saying, I will put enmity between thy seed and the seed of the woman: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bite his heel. This saying is worthy to be diligently cut out. For therein is the word of life, whereof they shall live again; therein it is promised them in plain, clear words, that the woman shall bring forth a seed. But woman's seed, as the Scripture speaks, means a natural child born of woman, a child that brings flesh and blood from its mother. Therefore he wants to say: I will create a natural fruit, born of the woman. Does not express whether it should be a man or a child, but only that the mother might say of it, this is my child, and again the child might say, this is my mother. The same shall bruise the serpent's head; that is, the harm it has done, he shall suppress, trample underfoot, and crush. When Adam heard this, he came out of hell again, and he was comforted.

(39) Now this is the faith that the seed should take all the power of the devil and tread it down, so that it perishes. So Adam took these words and thought, "This is what God says, he does not lie; so we can hope for a man who will trample on the head 1) of the serpent who trampled us. And the fathers who came after them all waited and believed, and always preached that a fruit would come and crush the serpent's head. And included in this short saying is everything that the gospel and our faith contain, such as that a resurrection and another life should come after death; item, that one becomes pious and blessed through faith alone (Rom. 3, 28. Gal. 2, 16.); after that, that it is attached to this, that no man becomes righteous before God through his works; also that no monk or nun is blessed.

40 For the saying includes so much in itself. Your apron, your fortune will all not

1) Erlanger: the snake head.

For the devil has brought you completely under himself; so now there is no help, but all is lost. But if you want to be helped, there is no other remedy than the seed of the woman. It is a strong saying that destroys everything that is preached otherwise; it has already been decided that one must despair and give up all hope, and cling to the seed that alone does it. For if there were any other way to salvation, the text would have to be wrong.

41 Therefore see how the Old Testament speaks so bravely of things. It says that Adam was a Christian long before Christ was born, because he had the same faith in Christ that we have. For time makes no difference in faith: faith is the same from the beginning of the world to the end. Therefore he received by his faith the very things that I have received. He did not see Christ with his eyes, as we also do; but he had him in word, so we also have him in word. This alone is the difference, that it should have happened then, but now it has happened. Faith is the same; so all the fathers, like us, were justified by the word and faith, and died in it. This is the main saying in this text. But I will leave it here as it is said: "The serpent will bite him in the heel", because it will follow afterwards; item, whether the serpent also crawled before, and that he now eats the earth. For we must stay with the main part, where the power lies.

**V.16. And to the woman he said, I will cause thee much grief when thou art with child; thou shalt bring forth thy children with grief, and thou shalt bow down thyself before thy husband, and he shall be thy master.**

So God continues, and attacks the woman, and punishes her also. And there is a fine order. First, he claims Adam, then the woman, then the serpent; here he reverses this with the punishment. To the woman he gives her plague, but he goes carefully and spares her, absolves her from the sorrow of the soul, puts the punishment on the body, as also Adam,

2) Jenaer and Erlanger: beautiful.

saying, "I will cause thee much grief when thou art with child"; after that, "Thou shalt bear thy children with grief"; thirdly, "Thou shalt cower before thy husband, and he shall be thy master."

(43) In these three pieces you see nothing but what concerns the body; the soul has already been saved and become God's child. Therefore he turns the eternal punishment into a temporal and bodily one, puts away the iron rod and gives a fox's tail instead.

44 The punishment now goes over all those who become daughters of Eve; it is not spoken to her alone. He also speaks as if they were all to become pregnant, but those whom he chastises with mercy have their portion. Otherwise in the congregation, as for women, he puts them to grief, so that they have much grief when 1) they are with child; he does not take from them what he gave before, that they should be fruitful. This is both God's word, which no one can change. In addition, he commands her to abstain from the man, that is, not to live her free will; otherwise it would have happened that they would have gone away from each other, one here, the other elsewhere, but with breeding. But now the woman can do nothing without the man; where he is, she must go with him and bow down before him. Now he comes further from the woman to Adam, also imposes a punishment on him, and says:

**V.17-19. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed be the field for thy sake; thou shalt feed thereon with grief all the days of thy life; thorns and thistles shall it bear thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread, until thou return unto the ground from whence thou wast taken. For thou art dust, and shalt become dust.**

This is also a gentle, merciful punishment. But I think that the text alone makes the country full of whores and knaves, since otherwise there would be many pious boys and maidens who would enter into marriage together. Since 2) will never-

1) Erlanger: because.

2) Erlanger: There, there.

man. It is not laid upon a man that he should have heartache with childbearing; that belongs to the wife; but there is another, that he must provide and nourish wife and child; there belongs to toil and labor; there everyone shrinks from it, no one wants to bear it, and yet it must be borne. For if you do not take a wife and eat your bread by the sweat of your brow, God takes the punishment that he has laid on the body and lays it on the soul. This is not well changed. He wants to be merciful to the soul and help it, but he wants to afflict the body. Therefore, where there are people in the faith, they are quite prepared and gladly bear this burden, take wives, work and make it sour for them. It is not a good thing according to the flesh, but a good state according to the soul. The whole world still cries out about marriage, how evil it is. But whom do they blame? God alone, that he does not say, "You shall sit on a cushion, live in ease, and have no misfortune.

46 Therefore I conclude: Where there are married people, so that the wife is not unhappy with children and the husband is not angry, it is not right. Right married woman and man shall not have good days, there must be misfortune and trouble, or [it] is not right in the sight of God. If God gives you a rich wife or husband, so that you have good days and there is no trouble or work, then you are already absolved from the sentence and are not well. The world is so foolish and foolish against God that it thinks to live in wedlock and to enter into such a state that it may have good days and live well. Therefore, whoever wants to live conjugally must consider the sentence, or consider that he is going to the devil. You will not do better than God has done; if you want to follow the world and hear what it says and thinks of God's word and works, you must stay with it and not come to God. Therefore, send thyself in; God will not change it with thee, but he will do a miraculous work.

47 If this is the way things are in marriage, in sorrow and work, take comfort in this, and think that this is how it must be.

3) Erlanger: beautiful.

God has appointed and ordained that I should be married; therefore I will put on my body, and take upon me the burden in God's name, and enter into it willingly and cheerfully. But if thou doest not so, and wilt do better, thou shalt cause the soul to perish, though the body prosper.

For this reason, God still shows mercy to the world by marrying several of them against their will and giving them toil and work, if only they understood. For everyone would like to live in good days, that is what we all strive for; so God must come and salt it, so that 1) it does not go according to our will.

For this reason God curses the earth, so that it does not bear half of the grain, but most of the thorns and thistles, which otherwise would not grow, since man should not work. Now he mixes it so that it bears almost most of the thorns and thistles. Therefore this is the summa, that he thus wants to keep us in check, so that he may drive away the tickle. These are the three punishments laid upon sin: one abominable upon the serpent, and two consoling upon man and woman.

50) So now 3) it is written for the first time, how Adam was summoned and called before the court, that God said, "Adam, where are you?" The words are all short, but almost rich. So much, however, have 4) taken from it, who wrote on it that no one should judge anyone, unless he is first heard and overcome, because God did not want to condemn Adam (if He knew well that he had transgressed His commandment) before He had summoned him to court and heard his answer; and thus forbade all judges to judge before they hear the self-guilty. This is to be preached to those who have power to govern, that everywhere the manner and form of the law should be let go. We will now let this go.

51 But this is also indicated here, that when a man has fallen into sin, God is still such a man, who does not follow with the punishment as soon as it comes, but postpones it, and acts as if He knew nothing about it.

For although Adam has fallen here, and lies there in sin, nevertheless the right judgment, so that he has forfeited, is not yet there. For the text says that God will not come until evening and call them. Now I have said before that all this happened on the sixth day, but that man did not stand long, but soon sinned at noon, and the Lord then came at evening.

52) This is all the meaning, which is all directed to the future being, which should come into the world through the gospel and spiritual rule, that first man must come to the knowledge that he knows what he lacks. Because he sins, he is not despondent; but afterwards, when his conscience strikes him, and God comes to summon him, his eyes are opened, then he first becomes aware of how terrible, how great a sin he has committed. This is what Moses means by saying that they heard the voice of God when the day was cool and almost over, that is, when the evil desire passed, God came, leaving them enough time and space before.

53. item that Moses so diligently describes that God summons Adam to judgment, and leaves out that he summoned Evam. For when he came forth, she left afterward. Where was she to go? She was bound to him, where he came, she had to go. Therefore he was silent about it. But he did not call the serpent at all, because, I think, it was not there. With this, I say, the Holy Spirit indicated that God commands the office of ruling, teaching and preaching to the man-person. For the summoning of Adam is nothing other than a preaching of the law, so that he may know what he has done and what he owes to God. The preaching is commanded to the man, not to the woman; as Paul also teaches [1 Tim. 2, 12], as far as Christian matters are concerned; otherwise it can happen that a woman gives better counsel, as one also reads in Scripture. Otherwise, the office of leading, preaching and teaching God's word is given to the man.

54) But the fact that the serpent is not called, but the judgment goes straight over him, is that God has already condemned the devil, that he has

5) Wittenberger: "he" instead of: him. In the Erlanger, "him" is missing.

1) Erlanger: da.

2) "not" is missing in the Erlanger.

3) Wittenbergers: are.

4) "but" is missing in the Erlanger.

can neither hear the law nor the gospel nor preach. Therefore he calls the serpent to walk and crawl on his belly; he is already lost, that no preaching will help him, and there is no hope that he will be able to come to grace.

55 Now see how God attacks. First he calls Adam, then he punishes the serpent. It is just the other way around. St. Peter said [1 Ep. 4, 17] that the punishment starts at the house of God, but the end goes over those who do not believe. This order is also kept here, since Adam and Eve are also punished, but the serpent remains damned. This is why he says: "I will put enmity between you and the woman" 2c. There it separates itself in the last punishment, and becomes so soon merciful, that it changes the eternal into a temporal, as a merciful and friendly father. Those whom one thinks he will not punish, he punishes most cruelly; again, those whom one thinks he will punish most severely, he punishes most mercifully. It seems as if he has attacked Adam the hardest, and yet spares his the most.

Thus, his work is different from everything else in the world. Those he should attack first, he keeps until the last. [First he attacks man, so that one would think he was worse than the serpent. Then he turns it around, puts the greatest plague on the serpent, then on Eve, the least on Adam. For to the woman it is life, but not to the man, but toil and labor. The serpent has its part, that it is eternally damned; the woman in the body. The woman in the body; the man in the work, that he may not die over it.

This is God's work, and we must learn to know it. For he acts in the same way when it comes to punishments; when one thinks that he is most merciful, he is most angry, and again. Thus he inflicts much punishment on the faithful, and attacks them severely; the punishment goes only over the body and goods, the soul he saves; but the unbelievers he condemns eternally.

58. So then, the sentence was: Cursed be you on earth 2c. There the spirit is damned, and no more grace.

And this is not enough, but also puts enmity between the serpent and the woman's seed, which bruises his head. This 2) is the gospel preached, by which Adam came to life again, and the spiritual punishment is applied to the body. With this, death, sin and hell, all power and ability of the devil are abolished. That means he crushes the head, the tail and belly he leaves.

This seed, as I said, is Jesus Christ, a natural child, born of woman [Gal. 4:4] and nourished like others, who has crushed the head of this serpent. Adam also waited for this, but did not know when it would happen or how it would happen. They are dark words, but almost rich. It is well understood how it should happen, but the spirit had to teach and explain it. This much they took from it, that from this woman, she be who she wants, a natural child would be born, who would bring this about; although it is understood that he had to come from a virgin [Is. 7, 14], because he assigns him to the woman, and calls him only a woman's seed. But both of them did not understand it that way, as we will hear [Cap.4, 1.], when she says: "Now I have come over the husband of the Lord."

(60) Now God subjected this seed to the devil, thinking that he would devour it, so that he took from it its life, honor, good works, and nothing remained in Christ but death, disgrace and dishonor: so he took everything from it. But what happened? The seed was God, therefore he could not be defeated. The devil wrestled with another creature, because he thought that God was not there, the Lord of the devil and of all things. Therefore God gave this judgment on him: "Because you have attacked the man [1 Tim. 2, 5], the innocent blood [Matth. 27, 4], my only Son [Rom. 8, 32], you and death shall be damned. You knew that you had nothing in him; therefore you must pay, or again be subject to him and lie at his feet [Heb. 2, 8.]. So sin and 4) death must also be under-

2) Erlanger: Da.

3) "and" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Erlanger.

4) "the" is missing in the Erlanger.

than be because they ran to him and have no right; likewise also disgrace, dishonor and dishonor 2c. 1) Then all that had run to this person fell and lost the battle. He is an eternal king [Jer. 10, 10. 1 Tim. 1, 17. Luc. 1, 33.] and Lord of life [Apost. 3, 15.], grace and all honors [Ps. 24, 7. 8.], eats disgrace, death, sin and hell [1 Cor. 15, 54. ff.], it must be captive and subject, or be loosed. 2) Now none of them can break away, because it has done against God; therefore it has lost all strength and power and must now lie under his feet. Who would have thought that Moses, who spoke in such a simple way, would have grasped such great things, in which the overcoming of death and all heartache is written, even everything that is written in the Gospel?

Now, to whom is all this preached? No one but Adam and Eve. Now God's word does not go in vain nor without fruit; therefore it must have brought Adam back together with the woman and comforted him again, that he stood on it and relied that a man would come who would overcome death and sin. Then he believed, and recovered, and thought, here again is grace and peace, life and comfort. So you see how God can speak in such short words that one word cannot be spread out sufficiently if one preaches about it for an equally long time. In these words, Christ's future from the Virgin, suffering, death and resurrection, His kingdom and Gospel are understood and written. Who could summarize it in such short words, or find it in them? Therefore it is called the word of God, that it speaks differently and higher than the word of man.

The other part of this saying, "You will bite him in the heel," has been sufficiently interpreted by St. Paul. Although Christ crushed the serpent's head and took away the power of death and the devil's authority over all who believe in him (Heb. 2:14), the devil is not left dead or idle, so that he does not create anything. What does he do? He still has to bite his heels, that is, he is always challenging. That is why the

1) "2c." is missing in the Wittenberg and Erlanger. 2) "lösen" - to buy loose.

The gospel ministry is not established at once, at a moment's notice, as has been preached up to now, but proceeds in this way: When God has established a man, he does not leave him idle, but keeps him in constant training, so that he always has to work. Therefore, when one begins to believe, it is not perfect; but if he bruises his head, the devil bites him in the heel, so that he has to fight without ceasing. Adam and Eve heard this, therefore it also produced fruit.

63 It is still the same. If we recognize Christ and know that he has overcome sin, the devil and death for us, it is still not dead and does not cease as long as we live on earth. The main thing we have overcome is the devil; 4) but because we are here on earth, God and the gospel should have so much to do, that we should always fight against sin, and resist the devil who bites us in the heel [Eph. 6, 12]. The serpent's tail remains in the flesh and blood, so that we feel unbelief in the heart, hatred, envy and avarice, and what more are the sins that reigned before and were the head.

This was often taught by St. Paul to the Romans, when he says: "Do not therefore let sin reign in your mortal body, to render obedience to its lusts" 2c. We still have evil lust stirring within us [Rom. 7, 8.], but the Spirit drives it back, so that an eternal strife remains in Christians [Gal. 5, 17.]. For something always remains in the flesh; sin contests without ceasing to be felt, but is subdued by the fact that Christ is there, and reigns stronger than the devil and sin [Luc. 7:22]. But in those who do not have faith, the devil reigns even, is still alive with the head [Eph. 2:2], that one follows him and does not resist [Jac. 4:7]. This is the beautiful sweet saying given here to Adam, by which God takes eternal damnation from him and gives him eternal blessedness.

What did Adam do to deserve this? With great, mighty sins. To the first.

3) "Devil" is missing in the Erlanger.

4) Erlanger: that overcomes the devil.



that he wanted to flee from God's eyes; then, that he still had to justify himself. That in this way one may see clearly what God gives, that he gives it freely, not for the sake of any merit, yes, even for the sake of evil merit, and that one may learn from this how God does to us, so that we may do likewise. He gives us his grace and all goods out of pure goodness and love: so we should also be gods to our neighbors, so that we love even the worst enemies, and the worse they are, the more we should serve them and do good [Matth. 5, 44]. How happy do you think Adam was? that his faith undoubtedly broke forth and showed itself, thinking: "Because God the Lord so graciously accepts me and shows me such abundant mercy, I who have so violated and blasphemed Him, will again do all good from the heart, even to the worst enemy I may have on earth. Such is the fruit of the gospel, when it comes into the heart, that a man becomes full of joy, and serves everyone with love, gladness and joy.

When the serpent was cursed, and the gospel of the seed of the woman was promised, the punishment nevertheless followed, laid upon the womb of both Adam and Eve, of which enough is said: that the woman must have trouble and heartache when she conceives and gives birth; the man toil and labor with food, until the man again becomes the earth, from which he is taken. For the part goes both to the man and the woman; though the woman recover from childbearing, that she may escape, yet she shall not escape death. In the same way, even if a man works and toils for a long time, his reward will be that he dies at last and escapes misfortune in life.

(67) Though this be hard spoken in the sight of the world, yet, when the spirit looketh upon it, it is a true and great mercy. For if the punishment were not laid upon our necks, we would all be the worst of boys, and no one would remain pious. Therefore all this is a loud gospel, and just as much spoken: I will forgive you your sins, and bring your souls into grace; but I will give the body restraint, that it be not too fierce and wicked, neither the flesh too proud.

(68) For if death were not, sin would never perish; therefore, by this very means, sin is finally stopped, and there is no other way to get rid of it. He gives us such a merciful and salutary punishment that sin is strangled by death. Therefore we should receive and bear this with joy, as from a gracious Father, as believers do. For so good is the Father, that even death must serve to kill and destroy all evil.

69 For this reason death is nothing but a pure grace, even a beginning of life. For after he makes the soul recover, the bodily being, what there is, sickness, danger, toil and labor, must all serve for the best, so that nothing better could be desired. Where the spirit is, it finds so much evil desire in the flesh, which does not want to be tamed, that if it blues itself for a long time, [and] yet nothing helps, it must itself wish that the body were dead [Rom. 7:24]. That therefore death is given for a remedy, which devours itself, strangles sin, and helps the spirit to be saved. Therefore, as before he threatened Adam with death, saying, "If thou eat of the tree, thou must die," so now he reverses it, and comforts him with it. As if he should say: If you want to get rid of all misfortune and live forever, die. These are the powerful comforting sayings, since our gospel is written completely inwardly, although not as clearly as it is preached and spread out to us. They had the Spirit more abundantly than we, but we have it much more surely; for they could not know who the Christ and Savior should be, whom we now know. Now follow on:

## **V. 20. And Adam called his wife Heda, 2) because she is a mother of all the living.**

So far we have heard how God Almighty raised Adam and Eve from their fall, and through His divine Word and Gospel restored them to the hope of life after death. 3) Now it goes again to the

1) Jenaer and Erlanger: not.

2) Marginal gloss: Heva. Hai means life, hence Heva or Hava, life or living.

3) Erlanger: escape.

Life, brings them together to sit down at home and in the state he has put them in. But first he tells how Adam gives his wife a name after life, and the reason why he calls her that. For the word Heva means life in Hebrew. As if he should say: He called her life, so that what should live, must come from her.

71] There is only confirmed what is written before [v. 16], that the woman should be subject to the man; for so much dominion is given to him over her that she must let herself be called by him. Therefore women are still called after men, and not again. Now this also happened out of God's gracious will, so that the woman would remain without 1) rule, who, as a weak creature, cannot rule herself, nor is she fit for rule. This is one reason why this is written.

But there is also another, namely, that Adam already begins to feel a taste of life, because he gives the woman the name, that she should be the mother of all living, and speaks, of course, of bodily life. But, because he has heard that a seed is to come, which is to suppress the serpent, he lets himself think that he will have children from now on, who will enjoy the seed, he thinks that this woman should bring the seed, but it is far away. She also thinks the same, although she will realize it later. But this shows that they have taken the words of God with pleasure and receive them with joy. Therefore he speaks of it, and gives his wife such signs and names of the saying, and wishes all days that the seed should come; as also the patriarchs [Gen. 49, 18. Ps. 14, 7. Ps. 53, 7. Isa. 45, 8. 64, 1.]. Therefore the sayings of God are certain, but yet dark, so that the person, 2) time and way, how it should go, is restrained to the man. It was certain that he would be born, but it was dark and hidden which woman's seed he would be, what time, and how he would be born.

Thus God still makes certain promises, but keeps them from time, person, and manner; as He did with Abraham. He has the promise that from his seed the child should be born, in whom all the world should be blessed [Gen. 15, 4. 17, 5. 6.]. Now he could not know how it should happen; he was sure of his body, but he did not know the wife; he thought it should be Sarah, and waited sixteen years, but nothing came of it. Then she thought it was not she, and gave him her maid, which bare a son [Gen. 16:2, 3]; then she thought it should be he, but they were both absent: yet they were sure that the seed would come of Abraham. After that, in the thirteenth year, God came again, probably after twenty years, when He first indicated the person that it should be Sarah [Gen. 18:14]. This is how God works to keep us in the faith, lets His word be sure, but does not want us to agree on a certain time or person, lets us think about it, but also often misses it, like Adam, who says to Heva that she should become a mother of the living, but nothing comes of it, because she remains a mother of Adam's children.

#### **V. 21. And God the Lord made Adam and his wife skirts of fat, and clothed them.**

(74) Hitherto they have gone covered with aprons, not yet wise enough to know how to make garments; therefore God now lifts up and puts on furs for them, that they may be completely covered. This is a piece of comfort, and a sign of mercy, that he is so kind to them, and also provides them with clothing. For the food and nourishment he gave them before, saying [v. 19], "In sweat shalt thou eat thy bread." 2c. Here we see the fatherly faithfulness that he does not leave us, even though we are sinners, provides food and clothing. As we see before our eyes that the saying is so strong that even those are fed and clothed who have no care for it; as one finds many a desolate child who neither thinks nor respects what grain or wool is worth.

The desperate unbelief is still so deep in us that we are always worried that we will not be fed. That makes alone,

1) All editions offer "im", but it seems to us that "on" (i.e. without) should be read, although according to § 77 the woman "shall rule the house". But that is not what is meant here.

2) "Person" is missing in the Erlanger.

We want to know for sure how God will feed us, so that we have a house full of grain and a chest full of money, so we want to bind God to house and chest: so he will be free and unbound, neither to time, person, place, nor this or that. Let him take care how he will feed us, he will give grain and money, the time and measure well; that you only think: I will work today, will well fehen, from where he gives it; tomorrow again; so you would realize that he feeds you without your care.

For he will not let anyone die of hunger who relies on him [Proverbs 10:3, Psalms 84:12, 13], as Christ said [Matthew 6:25-34], "Do not be careful for your life what you eat or what you drink, nor for your body what you put on. Is not the life more than the food? and the body more than the clothing? Look at the birds of the air, they do not sow, they do not reap, they do not gather into the sheds, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more than they? Who is there among you who can add a cubit to his length, though he cares for it? Why then do you care for clothing? Look at the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither work nor spin. If God so clothes the grass of the field, which stands today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, should He not do this much more to you? Therefore shall ye not be anxious, saying, What shall we eat? what shall we drink? wherewith shall we be clothed? The Gentiles seek all these things, for your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Therefore do not worry about the morrow, for the morrow will provide for its own." As if to say, "Let each man work the day he lives; tomorrow he will not know whether he lives. If he lives, then he works. What will he provide today for tomorrow?"

Therefore, let him not worry. The labor and toil you do is not against faith, but is useful to tame the flesh; but worry is against God.

The woman shall wait for the children, govern [the] house, and wait for what God will do with her. The man of the same shall work, and command himself unto God: he shall not leave him, for he hath promised strongly enough: for before Adam or Eve thinketh of it, or careth for it, God cometh first, and clotheeth them, and maketh them to eat. Therefore we do no more with our cares than to hinder him and lie in the way.

Now what this means, that Adam calls his wife; item, that God puts on them the furs, I will command idle spirits. Adam is a model of Christ; the wife of his bride, the Christian church, which he calls by his name; of which it is otherwise said. It is enough for us that we teach and establish the faith from the text.

**V. 22. And God the Lord said: Behold, Adam became as our one, and knows what is good and evil.**

79 Then again he tickled the conscience of Adam and Eve: for these words are spoken maliciously and mockingly. As if to say, "How well you have done! I have said, Ye shall not eat of the tree: so have ye obeyed the serpent, which saith, Ye shall be as God, and know what is good and what is evil. How fine is it now? These words, however, are not to be thought that God said them as if he had a desire to mock altogether in the greatest sorrow and misery, but that this is indicated by the fact that his conscience told him so, when the sorrow in which he had fallen struck him in the face, that he had to feel it daily. So it still happens to us, too, that we have to beat our conscience when we have fallen, and our heart says to us: "How well you have done it!"

(80) Therefore it is not more than said, that a man all his life bears remorse for the foolishness he has committed. As if he should say: Yes, I mean, we have now become gods! Oh, how we have become such poor, laborious people; we have no one to thank but the serpent. They have had weeping and wailing, and all must have it if we are to be saved. For the fall that Adam made, we must all weep and lament, and say like him, "Oh, how I am!"

fine we have now become gods! Thus shall one be witty who forsakes God and follows the devil. These are, I think, the words interpreted in the most simple way. What does he feel now?

**But now lest he put forth his hand, and break also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.**

The words, I say, are all spoken as Adam feels in his heart, for that is where God speaks the most; when the conscience hears, it hears rightly. And so much is spoken: Adam has been sentenced to death; now there is a tree of life in the middle of the garden; therefore I will prevent him from breaking and eating from it, and he will live forever. How does this work? According to the lamentation, whereof it is said, that they must cry and weep for sin, because the devil hath deceived them so.

(82) So we also find and feel that there is no counsel in the matter; we must die, for there is no one to protect us or to hold us out; we are sentenced to death, so severe and strong that no one can defend us; we must go up, so that we can never come to the tree of life, that we may break from it and live forever. Now this does not only apply to those who are in sin, but also to the faithful, because it still remains in them that they feel sin and complain about death. Thus, in short, it is canceled with the saying that we all must die; only dead, dead, and no other.

**V. 23, 24: Then God the Lord sent him out of Eden to build the field from which he was taken. And he cast Adam out, and pitched before the garden of Eden the cherubim, and a shining fiery sword to keep the way unto the tree of life.**

There we come again into a wild forest. Above [Cap. 2, § 19 ff.] it is said of the spouse or paradise that this text is still dark, and illuminated by no one, what the garden is. In some places it is said that it was nothing but the whole ground at the time when they had not yet fallen, when it still bore good fruit, but after that it was cursed. That is one opinion. But I hardly trust it to be preserved, although it is great.

It seems that many words in this and the previous chapter sound like this. Again, this is also strong, that God made a special place, which he called a garden; and it is especially expressed [Gen. 2, 8.] that he planted it in Eden toward the east; and here it is repeated that it was driven out of the garden of Eden, and fell into the field, so that the field was not the garden. Also the word Eden will come more afterwards, that it must be a name of a country towards the east, and not the whole earth.

So the text forces against it, that it is a special place, planted as a special pleasure garden in a funny place (because the word Eden also means pleasure in Greek), that man lived there before all animals on earth. There we must stay. Although we cannot be sure, the safest thing is to stick to the simple words; we are too small for the matter. For above [Cap. 2, 8.] he said, "GOD had planted." We must let the words stand, that of course he planted, as one otherwise plants; so that he says: He has made grow out of the earth all kinds of things; also does not suffer that one dreams [Cap. 2, § 19], that it is above the earth, not far from the moon. We give glory to God, if we do not know it, and do not do like the high schools, who think it would be a shame that they should not know something, or could not say anything about it.

So the text is clear that Adam could not come to the tree of life, because the heart told him that there was no counsel for life; therefore he was cast out of it, and came again to the land and worked. This is all so much: God has set him so far from life that the heart says: Nothing else will come of it, we must die on earth.

86) But that God camps the cherub before the door of the garden toward the morning, and a shining fiery sword, which turns to and fro, and shines like a flame, he has done for this reason, he says, that he kept the way, so that no one would come to the garden; is all spoken, as enough is said, that man feels in his heart and gives the experience that death is not to be resisted and no help is against it.

But here the fool, the reason, must blind her eyes, which almost worries what the cherub and the shining sword are. Cherub, what kind of animal is called, is still unconscious today; but up to now it is considered by our high schools that it is one of the nine choirs of angels in heaven. In the Hebrew language one finds no more of it, than that it has wings; it is for a beast, what it wants. Thus we read in Exodus 25:20 that Moses was to make two cherubs on the ark of God, which were to cover the mercy seat with their wings and 1) turn their faces toward each other. From this it is clear that the cherub must have wings like the birds. But what kind of faces they have, I do not know. Therefore they thought that they were angels, as painters paint them with wings, according to this word. The text does not conclude that the cherub had and held the sword in his hand, but only states that it was placed in front of the garden next to or with the cherub.

(88) But as to all this, let us first of all keep the simple mind, how that Adam and all his descendants were shut up from help, comfort, and all the ways that life might be saved or stopped. Therefore the cherub is there, and the sword that flasheth and terrifieth, and if any man would go thither, that it might slay him; which he felt all about him.

1) The bracketed words are inserted by us for the sake of what follows.

has. For this reason, I am not displeased that this is interpreted in the spiritual sense, that it is the evil conscience. For cherubim actually means the preaching office or word, and the oral speech, which is compared to a fittig; just as the pagans did when they wanted to paint the word. That is why they painted their Mercurio, who does the talking, with fittig, and the poets say of the word, how it flies along like an arrow, and cannot be revoked. So Cherubim here means the preaching of the law of God, which has next to it a shining fiery sword, that is, a severe judgment of God, which is terrible to the conscience.

89. is now the opinion: God has set Adam a word, which was: "You shall die"; item: "In the sweat of your face you shall eat your bread", and "with sorrow you shall feed" 2c. These were fiery swords, severe judgments, so that he saw and felt that he could not overthrow them, nor could he get past them, he had to despair of returning to his former nature on earth. This is the interpretation that rhymes well with the bad, simple sense. Whether one now understands that it happened bodily in such a way, I also gladly allow, because I did not want gladly that one deviates from the words. Whether we cannot cover everything is not important; it is enough that we have as much as we have said about it. Thus we have the third chapter, how man was created, fell, and was raised again, and the whole of human life.

## The fourth chapter.

**V. 1.2 And Adam slept with Eve his wife, and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said: I have overcome 2) the man of the Lord. And she went on, and bare Abel his brother. And Abel became a shepherd, and Cain became a husbandman.**

2) Marginal gloss: UeberkommeW. Cain means that one gets or overcomes; Eve means that he should be the seed, since the Lord had said that he would crush the serpent's head.

(1) Now there are also histories and examples in which we see that it is as it was written before. In particular, here is a beautiful history in which we are told what the whole Christian life is like, almost in relation to each other, about the two brothers, Cain and Abel. First of all, someone might ask: What did Moses desire to write to us about how Adam lay with his wife? Therefore it happened that one must read this in

before all the world, as the two have marriage with each other, that the law is begun, which Moses manifoldly indicates afterwards, that before Christ's birth virginity must not remain, yes, was also condemned, because God had said that from the woman should come the seed. As long as the seed had not come, and it was not specified which woman should be the one to bring the seed, no woman had to remain a virgin, but all waited for God to bring the seed.

002 And it is written in Genesis, Cursed be he, or she, that bringeth not forth fruit, or leaveth not seed behind her. Therefore it was a great shame if a woman was not fertile, and was considered a great punishment and plague [Gen. 16:1, 4, 29:31, 30:1]. There we will hear many strange things about the holy wives, that they had the necessary cause that they had to have children. Otherwise there would have been quite a few who would have liked to remain virgins, but they all had to wait for the seed, so that it would not be prevented by someone. Should anyone have gone forth, God had to do it by a special infusion of the Holy Spirit. As one reads of Jeremiah [Jer. 16:2], who did it because God said that he should not have a wife or children; otherwise he should not have remained without marriage.

(3) Now this has served to avoid many sins that would otherwise have occurred, and has undoubtedly been a more chastening life, even among those who have not believed, than now. Christ [Matt. 19:10, 11] left it free, but we have made it mean, and have beaten commandments upon it. What virgins would be, Christians alone should be, for they alone may have such grace; to the rest of the multitude it is not given, they should remain under the commandment, for the sake of many sins and shameful conduct. For those who accept this freedom, if they are not Christians, do it only to escape the punishment that God has laid upon man [1 Mof. 3, 17. 19.], to feed himself in the sweat of his face. But what it helps, you can see well; if you run away from the rain, you come into the middle of the water. It has been good for that, and would still be good,

That a boy and a maid should not go without marriage. But who will do it? Who can now see who are Christians or not Christians?

4 Item, it is also useful that the marriages of the dear fathers and mothers are described, so that the mouths of the future heretics may be shut. For the Holy Spirit saw beforehand that some would come and stand up, some of whom would condemn the marital state, some of whom would forbid it [1 Tim. 4:3]. Like the first Tatian heretics, who saw that the people were corrupt, but that virginity was 1) a precious thing, therefore they wanted to make it 2) so holy that they should live without marriage; pretending that whoever was in the marital state would be condemned. The same was to be met herewith, that Adam and Eve, who were now alive and holy again, nevertheless remained with each other, and begat children naturally.

5 After that, those who forbid marriage appeared, that is, Squire Pabst and his group. He has appointed and confirmed several estates, in which marriage is not permitted, and they are to be a special people of God. Thus he made the world full of spiritual people, that is, of harlots and knaves, and brought about so much that man and woman was not man and woman. They have made it so that it was almost a disgrace for a maid or a boy to marry one another, as if it were not Christian.

6 This is also denied here. No man shall be forbidden conjugal life and virginity; both shall be free in the New Testament, but only to Christians. In the Old Testament virginity was forbidden and marriage compulsory; but where there are not Christians, there is not the Holy Spirit, only do not think that there is chastity, unless there is a natural infirmity.

(7) So Eve becomes pregnant (says Moses) and gives birth to a son. Then she becomes happy, thinks she now has enough, and says: "Now I have overcome the man of God", or with God. She had grasped the word of the seed, which is the devil.

1) "but" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) Wittenberg and Jena: they each other.

She was to tread it down; it tasted her in her heart, she lived on it, all her desire was for it. Therefore a great comfort befell her here, that she should have a son; then she thought: This will be the man who will set right what the serpent has corrupted. Therefore she gives him the name Cain, which means "come over". As if she should say: Now he has become mine, or: Now I have won or got the noble jewel. Gives him the noblest name she can always give him. Soon after that she gives birth to another son, whom she does not name in this way; then she worries. 1) The first one took her mother's heart away, he was the dear child; but this one she does not care for so much, does not say what is to become of him, but calls him Abel, which means misery, woe, lamentation and sorrow; the same as the antithesis. Perhaps she will have suffered and become angry at birth that he had to bear such a name.

008 Now behold, how they brought up the two sons, that Abel should be a shepherd, and Cain a husbandman to till the field. It is reasonable to think that Eve and Adam had an eye on the first son and raised him as if he were to do so; they also preached to him the word that God had spoken about the seed. The holy fathers diligently practiced the gospel and taught their children. So Adam had to practice worldly and spiritual ministry. That is why his two sons were also priests, as we will hear.

(9) So the first son, Cain, was raised in such a way that he thought to become rich, and to sit down and to send himself into the regiment, as was fitting after the first birth; as Moses wrote afterwards [Gen. 49:3] that the first son was always entitled to two parts of the inheritance before the others, first of all the regiment and priesthood, so that he would be lord of the other brothers; so that [the] priesthood, to sacrifice and preach, would also be the spiritual regiment. Cain inherited 2) first of all, that is why he is so far preferred.

(10) Now behold the work of God, of which I have often said how he rules, that he lets holy men go in their delusion, and yet brings it out in a different way than they think. There goes the saying of Solomon [Proverbs 16:1], that man proposes something to him, but God leads it out. They had God's word and faith, but they did not know the person, time and way that God wanted reserved for them. He does the same with us. Although he wants us to rely on him for all our help and comfort, he does not want to tell us the time, the person, or the place, how, where, when, and by what means he wants to accomplish it. So now follows, as it is clearly reversed, against Adam's opinion, who stands on great confidence, that this should be the right seed.

**V.3-5. And it came to pass after certain days, that Cain brought offerings unto the LORD of the fruit of the field. And Abel also brought of the firstlings of the sheep, and of their fat. And the LORD kept himself to Abel and to his offering, but to Cain and to his offering he kept not.**

11 Then he writes how the brothers both sacrificed. But sacrificing is actually a priesthood, to come before God and serve Him. Therefore, where a sacrifice is made, the person must certainly be a priest, even if he is unanointed and unshorn, as the two undoubtedly were.

12. From whom then did these have it, or who taught them how they should serve and sacrifice to God? From no one but Adam, who preached to them nothing but that they must wait for the seed that would crush the serpent's head. This is what he always did, and it was their gospel; besides this they also prayed and sacrificed.

013 And what did they offer? Cain of the fruit of the field; Abel of sheep and their fat. There you can see where the sacrifices in the law came from. For almost the laws which Moses has originated from the beginning of Adam and the world, and so are kept and confirmed; and the sacrifices, of which he writes afterwards in the third book, are commonly of fruits of the field or of fat. Thus

1) "da bekümmert sie sich vor" probably means: about whom she worries. The Jena edition brings the conjecture in the margin: "da bekümmert sie sich nicht vor".

2) Erlanger: da.

Cain's sacrifice of grain was in the field and happened as Moses writes in the third book [Cap. 2, 1. ff.], that one should take scorched and dried ears and pound them, and put them on the altar, and burn GÖtte, for he says much of the flour offering, baked, roasted, pounded, dried 2c. All this is called in Hebrew mincha, grain offering, which may be eaten as bread. Such the Cain sacrificed of his own, as it gave his food.

14 Likewise Abel also sacrificed of his food, namely of 1) the sheep, and especially of the firstlings or springlings, and of the fat. It is also written in the third book [Moses, Cap. 3, 9. 10.], how one should take the fat from it, the tail with the back, and the fat that covers the intestines, along with all the fat that is inside, and the kidneys with the fat that is on them on the loins, and the net around the liver on the kidneys with it, and should cut off the net around the kidneys, and should lay it on the altar and set it on fire. This is what Abel did, and the way came from him.

Now the question is asked here: Which of these sacrifices was the best? The Jews say that Cain was rejected because he sacrificed too little; they want to condemn the person and justify him according to his works, as they are wont to do. But let us look at the text, we will find how it urges faith against works.

16 First of all, it should not be considered that Cain offered a lesser sacrifice than Abel, for they were the best fruits. And if one looks at the sacrifices in Moses, the grain offerings are almost the noblest among all the sacrifices, but they signify the pure gospel. For this reason [the text] does not say that it should be rejected for the sake of the least sacrifice, for the work of the sacrifice is equal before God, whether it be small or delicious.

(17) Nor is it to be held that Abel pleased God precisely because of the sacrifice, but because of faith; just as Cain was condemned not because of his work, but because of his unbelief. This is clearly inferred from the text, where it says: "GOD

He kept Abel and his sacrifice, but he did not keep Cain and his sacrifice. For Moses means to say that God looks first at the person or man, and then at the work he does, and not again. Therefore, a man must first be pious and please God before he can do a good work; otherwise he would have had to say: God was kind to the sacrifice, and then to Abel 2c. He does not want to look at anyone for the sake of his work, but only for the sake of the person: if he is good, the work pleases him; if he is bad, the work is not good either. For they both, according to outward appearance, do one and the same work; each offers his own, and each is as good as the other; indeed, Cain's offering is more glorious and more apparent. Therefore, if God judged according to the works, he would have to either consider Cain's sacrifice good or condemn Abel's as well, so that both would be judged according to the same work.

But behold, what a judge he is. He condemns the work that is most apparent, most beautiful and best, and praises the other. Neither Cain nor Abel, Adam nor Eve could have done this. Cain thought that he was so sure that he could not fail to please God with his sacrifice, much more than his brother. So he thought: I am the first son, I am entitled to the priesthood before God, I am also the regent, I also bring the best sacrifice; therefore God will ever look upon my sacrifice and please him better than Abel, my brother. Again Abel thought thus: I am the least, he is the best, has much advantage over me, has also brought the best sacrifice, therefore God must look upon my sacrifice out of pure grace. So God judges on this side, looks at the small person and sacrifice, the greatest person and best sacrifice he condemns.

(19) Now we have a certain divine judgment, that one should not judge by works, and only beware of pretty, glittering works; for the prettier, the more annual it is. It does not condemn the coarse pieces, but commonly the highest works. Therefore the text is to be well and strongly grasped, that we do not let our eyes be blinded with something else. If this text does not strike, I do not know,

1) "of" is missing in the Erlanger.



what is to be done. Now then, see and judge whether it is enough that our saints of works say: If you want to do God a great service, become a priest, monk or nun, establish and hold many masses and services; they think it is enough, however, if it only has the name, and seems to be a service and good work. When they only hear it, they blurt and plump on it as if they were blind, mad and foolish. Here is also a service, as glorious as one can ever do; yet he [God] will not be. Therefore one must go on, and first judge by the person, that this is worship, which comes from faith. The person must first be pious and pleasing to God, after which the service will also be pleasing.

(20) By what then did Abel become righteous? Without doubt by faith, as we do; for he could not have been justified in any other way than all other people. Thus the epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 11:4] also writes of him: "By faith Abel offered a better sacrifice to God than Cain, by whom he bore witness that he was righteous, when God bore witness to his offering; and by the same he still speaks, though he is dead," that is, this example still speaks and preaches, and is known to all the world, that we all become righteous by faith alone.

21 Therefore, behold how his heart stood. Behold, the Almighty God gave the word and promise to Adam, proclaiming to us that a seed should come from the woman, treading down all the calamities that the devil has brought. Now I am also under the same affliction, having brought it with me from my father and mother, and am naturally a child of wrath and death [Eph. 2:3]. But because I see that God has shown me such grace, and has offered me through his word that he will help me from all misfortune through the seed that is to come, I will consider it with all confidence, praising and thanking him. Then he comes and brings the sacrifice. His heart is happy in God because of the knowledge, he does not stand on any work, but sacrifices so that he can show himself outwardly that he gives thanks to God's grace from the heart. See,

God wants to have such a believing heart. That is why he is kind to him and his sacrifice, so that we may learn to recognize how he alone is concerned about faith.

But how this happened, that God kept to His sacrifice, Moses does not express. But it is said that in the days of the ancient fathers fire came down from heaven and lit the sacrifice, which was to be a sure sign that God was pleased with such a sacrifice. As one also reads afterwards in the book of Judges [Cap. 6, 21.] about Gideon's sacrifice. Therefore, the sacrifices of the fathers must be considered to have been instituted by God as a sign by which one would know that God was gracious. As we now have a sign with and beside the word, baptism and the sacrament, so that we may both be sure of God's grace through word and sign, so they also had the word and their sign, that the sacrifice was lighted from heaven, so that their faith might be strong and sure.

(23) Now see also how Cain's mind was, that is, as I said: I am the first son, the dear child, the priesthood is due to me, the Father is on my side, (I) am more and better than Abel; so now I will make an offering to God. So he must have thought without a doubt. For if he had had faith and brought it with him, God would not have rejected him. Since he rejected him, it is certain that there was no faith, without which it is impossible to please God [Heb. 11:6]. For faith does not stand on itself and works. Therefore God judges rightly and condemns both the person with the presumption and the work. This then is the first example of Scripture, wherein we are to learn what is valid and pleasing in the sight of God, and how He judges, not according to works, but according to faith.

**V.5-7. Then Cain was very angry, and his mind was changed. Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why is your mind wrong? Is it not so? if thou wert righteous, it would be a sacrifice; but if thou art not righteous, sin shall lie revealed. 2)**

2) Marginal gloss: To the revelation. That is, whether dik sin at this time lies still and remains unpunished, so

(24) Now here is the unbelief of Cain with its fruits. Since God was so kind to his brother's sacrifice, but not to his, he becomes angry, strikes down his head, looks sour, and resents him. For Adam and Eve had meant that he should be the right man and please God. Since he lacks this, what he has in his heart bursts out and becomes bitter against God and his brother. For where there is not a right faith, the heart certainly looks at God with displeased eyes, and thinks: I would that God were not God. In fact, all trustworthy saints cannot suffer their works to be rejected; they are all bad to their father. Again, God also cannot suffer them to throw themselves up and condemn other people; their wrath is too small against God. Even though Abel must die because of it, it is still smelled many times.

025 Now when he is angry, grumbling and purring, God says to him, Why are you angry? if you were righteous, the sacrifice would be valid. As if he should say: You should turn it around, and be pious first, then the sacrifice would also be good. Therefore, if thou be not godly, that is, without faith, all that is in thee, and all that thou doest, is sin. Therefore sin, he says, will lie down at the door, or, will lie down for revelation. These words are somewhat dark; but I think that this is the opinion: If you are not pious, then you do nothing but sin, and the punishment will also follow, will not remain outside for long, will come one day, and can hardly wait until you open the door. Thus he strikes his heart with these words: If you disbelieve, you are full of sin; but if you reprove, it will break out; if it breaks out, it will not remain unspotted. This is a simple understanding of this piece, but also stretches further into the conscience.

**But let her bow down before you, and be her master.**

026 Thou hast sin, saith he, and art full of unbelief, and art angry: but look to thyself, and compel, and hold sin under thee, that it may

must bow down before you, and you be her lord. And needs just the words, which he speaks before [Gen. 3, 16.] to the woman: "You shall bow down before your husband, and he shall be your lord." Thus he means: As the woman shall be subject to the man, and let herself be ruled, so also sin shall be at thy feet. Even though you are in sin, be its master; do not let it rule over you, but be its master, and subdue it, so that you do not do what you desire [Rom. 6:12].

(27) From this saying some have tried to prove the doctrine of free will, but there is no reason for it. For the saying is no more than a doctrine or law how one should do; as when one says to one, if you would act rightly, you should do so or so. But it is like another commandment in the Ten Commandments, all of which require that sin and evil desire not be allowed to reign, but be restrained and subdued. Now as free will cannot be proved from the other commandments, so also nothing can be concluded from these words; since all the commandments are given and serve for this very purpose, that we may see how free will and our ability are nothing. For we cannot keep any commandment with our own strength, just as Cain did not keep this one.

28 There is no evil described yet, but the great sin that is in the saints of works, who, though they do many good works, rage and rage inwardly in their hearts.

29 Thus in these two brethren is presented to us an example of both false and righteous saints. Cain is an image, yes, a father of all hypocrites who serve God kindly with beautiful works, but with a false heart; Abel, however, is the noblest of all who walk in righteous faith and serve God from the heart. But these two groups may never be one with each other; it is neither to be hoped nor thought that God's word will be so acted upon that both parts will accept it. The saints of works must persecute the other believers, like Cain. If one rejects their works, they start to rage and get angry against God and their neighbor. As you can see now, how angry they are against the gospel and its preachers.

(30) Now these words which are spoken here to Cain were spoken, as I hold, by Adam, for he was the chief father a long time afterward, even unto the nine hundredth year, that he also lived through the patriarch Lamech, the father of Noah, in the eighth generation after him. Therefore, God preached through him and punished Cain here, as He is doing through us now. I do not think that a voice came down from heaven, but that, just as Christ says in Matt. 19:5, God said [Gen. 2:24], "A man shall leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife"; yet, as we heard above [Cap. 2:37], Adam spoke the same thing. That Christ thus wants to say that God said such things through Adam's mouth. Just as all Scripture says that God spoke what the prophets say. That is why Adam chastised Cain when he stood like this, knocked down his head, and became angry with his brother. Now what did Cain do when he was punished? Says the text:

#### **v. 8. Then 1) Cain talked with his brother Abel.**

That is, because of shame, that he was so publicly overcome and punished, he had to be outwardly friendly against him, as if he never wanted to be angry; he straightened his head again, but out of a wrong heart. That the saying is almost drawn from it in the 28th Psalm, v. 3: "They that speak kindly to their neighbor, and have evil in their heart." The Holy Spirit has delicately portrayed the heart, courage and mind of all the false saints, all of whom have this Cainian way about them. What he now intends to do in his heart with his brother, he proves soon after, as follows:

**v.8-12. And it came to pass, when they were out of the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. Then said the Lord unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said: I know not; shall I be my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the earth. And now cursed**

**Be thou upon the earth, which hath opened her mouth, and received thy brother's blood at thy hands. When thou shalt build the field, he shall not give thee away his substance: thou shalt be inactive and fugitive upon the earth.**

(32) God spoke these words one after the other through Adam. Behold, such comforting words were already spoken in the beginning of the world, promising help, comfort and assistance to all who suffer for God's sake. How many fine sayings are drawn back and forth in the prophets from this text. Abel walked on the right path of faith, so that he had to leave the life of his closest friend. But what does God do? As soon as he is dead, since Cain thinks that he has won, that he is now alone the dear child, that Abel is forgotten: then he lives stronger and more powerful than ever before. There the high majesty takes care of himself, cannot suffer nor be silent that his own are oppressed. And even though they are oppressed a little, they soon emerge more glorious and stronger than when they lived. That is where Abel is now, that the world becomes too narrow for his murderer without all sword and blows, that he cannot be safe in any place. Thus, in the beginning of the world, there is already a picture of the reward of God for those who do good and for those who do evil; for the comfort of the latter, but for the terror of the latter.

33 Know therefore that this example is not written in vain. First, that it will and must happen that for the sake of the gospel we must await the hostility, not only of strangers, but of our closest friends and brothers. Christ also said before in the Gospel: "I am come to kindle a fire upon the earth: what would I rather that it were kindled? There will be five in one house, three against two, and two against three. The father will sit down against the son, and the mother against the daughter" 2c. [These things are proclaimed and written, first in this place in the beginning of the world, and much more afterwards proved by manifold examples. Therefore we Christians must confidently consider this and sing like the bride in the Song of Solomon [Cap. 1, 6]: "My mother's children are angry with me. They have made me

1) Marginal gloss: For shame's sake, he had to outwardly face and talk to his brother, because he was punished, even though he intended to kill him in his heart. Thus Cain is of all hypocrites and false saints father.

I have not kept my vineyard, which I had." As if he should say: They wanted me to guard and keep outward statutes, so I wanted to be free; they wanted to force me, so I preached against it, therefore I must suffer myself.

(34) This is a thing that we must consider, and be glad of, when they that are nearest to us become hostile to us, who ought to protect us, and to handle us. For it is a good sign that the gospel is right, as we see even now where it is despised and persecuted; though it is not good for those who scoff at it. The certain sign is that it is felt in the heart, that one becomes certain of it; after that, that beats to it. Otherwise, if it were not so, one would be weary in preaching the gospel. Therefore, if one does not like to hear it, he should like to see it and preach it freshly.

The other piece we are to see here is: As soon as a man dies for God's sake, that he may be praised and live in God. There is already 1) indicated the resurrection of the dead, that Abel must come forth again and live, more gloriously than before. For God cannot and will not forget him. Hence the saying of Christ in Matthew [Cap. 22, 32.]: "God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Now as He is Abraham's GOOD, so He is also Abel's GOOD. Because God must not have a dead people, but a living people, he must also live. For he takes care of him here as his servant, so that one can see how he not only lives, but how God also fights for him. He does not want to leave the blood unscented, it must come forth again. But it is not yet fulfilled, it is still going on until the last day. For the fact that Abel is sleeping now is a short time, that when the resurrection will be, he and all of us will think that we have died only now. There is a semblance of life now, that it will last one or two thousand years, but there it is all in an hour. So Abel lies now, yet he must go forth, and the voice still goes, and will not cease to call until the last day.

Thirdly, the terrible judgment is presented here, and the reward given to the wicked and the persecutors of the faith, to frighten them into turning away. For behold, how horribly God leads and speaks with Cain here. First, he asks, "Where is Abel, your brother?" But he gives an insolent and proud answer, "I know not; shall I be my brother's keeper?" Is not this a great contempt of divine majesty? So one sin begets another and greater, until one comes to the end. He is so stubborn: he has strangled his brother, and not only wants to deny it, but also to defy and insist against God; he thinks he is not guilty of taking care of his brother. If there were a speck of love in his heart, he should take care of his brother as himself; but he has fallen so deeply into blindness that he thinks he is doing well by answering in this way.

But this does not last longer, because until the rebuke comes, and God says, "What have you done?" then he sees what he has done, and cries out when the wickedness is revealed to him and put before his eyes; as the prophet [Ps. 50:21] says, "I will punish you, and put myself before you"; so also of Babylon [Isa. 47:3], "I will expose you, and all the world will see your shame. Now there is no consolation, but only fear and trembling. Thus he exposes Cain here, so that he feels that he is condemned and shall be cast into hell. Just as Judas, when he cried out [Matt. 27:4], saying, "O, I have sinned, and betrayed the innocent blood." When the plague comes, it is over, there is no salvation, but hell is there, that one can never come out, and must despair, where the gospel does not help out, and God gives comfort to those who are to be helped.

But here follows no consolation nor sweet words. You see, he says, "Your brother's blood cries out to me. In this he remains stuck, to this he is also condemned, and the punishment also follows bodily, when he says: "Cursed be you on earth" 2c. Whether this punishment still lasts over all the wicked, we do not want to fight out here. But this is what the text wants, that Cain is punished on his goods, body and soul. The soul is given to the devil, in addition the food is to become sour and heavy for him; as also

Even to all unbelievers, when it is seen that their labor and food become much more sour than to those who believe. There is much toil and labor, and little fruit follows; again, these do lighter work, and much fruit follows. There the work and care is greater, because it carries, which pays the cost and trouble; those have well work, but have neither care nor fear.

039 Of these things saith the Lord, Thou shalt be iniquitous and fugitive upon the earth: and his conscience is shown to be foolish and desponding. So shall it be with all who disbelieve, and have such wicked pieces upon them that they are never safe; as also it is written in the third book of Moses [Cap. 26, 36]: Thou shalt be afraid of a rustling leaf on a tree; so stupid and despondent is it, especially when it knows something on it; as also in many places more is written; than once Moses [Deut. 28:67.] says, "In the evening thou shalt say, Alas, if it were morning! and in the morning, Alas, if it were evening!" and thy life shall stamp and hang before thee, that thou shalt never be safe. Item, in [the] Proverbs [Cap. 28, 1.] Solomon thus says: "The wicked flieth when no man chaseth him"; flieth before his own star and thoughts; "but the righteous standeth as a brave lion." Such sayings are all drawn here. For he also saith here, Cain shall never be safe, not from him that chaseth after him, but from his own conscience. This is the punishment that no one can escape. What then does Cain do? Follow:

**And Cain said unto the Lord, My iniquity is greater than this, that it should be forgiven me. Behold, thou shalt drive me from the face of the earth this day, and I will hide myself from thy face, and be iniquitous and fugitive upon the earth. So it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall find me shall strike me dead.**

He is at the end, has a judgment that he himself confirms; there is no faith nor comfort. The gospel is taken from him, and he is deprived of the knowledge of God; he sees nothing but the terrible seriousness of God and his sin, therefore he must despair and perish. This is what all the damned must say and feel. And yet behold what he does. For such a despondent heart looks to and fro, does not know

where it shall abide, [it] becomes the world too narrow for him, that he must say, "Behold, you drive me from the face of the earth." These are vain desperate words. How should he push him from the face of the earth, since the world was so wide? but conscience makes a thousand worlds too narrow for him. Item, how should he hide himself from God's eyes? Who can escape from God? It is all the fault of the conscience, which is in such fear, and would gladly run away from the world and flee from God's face, if it could. This is the real, highest fear of evil consciences, which will actually be the hellish torment, that the damned want to flee and hide themselves, so that they do not see God, and cannot.

41 Item, about which he is even more afraid: "I will be ingenuous and fugitive. So it will happen to me that whoever finds me will kill me. Then his conscience itself pronounces a verdict on him, that he will be strangled as he strangled his brother. And it is truly a horrible, miserable plague, of which we know little. O, how is the murder so hard smelt and paid for! We still worry that God has abandoned us. We should gladly die ten times, because we see how horribly he punishes the murderers, and so richly repays us for our suffering; and we should not desire to avenge them, but to give God home, yes, gladly pray for our enemies, as high as we can, so that God will not let them fall into such fear. We should pity their sorrow as much as we can; just as Abel would have done, without a doubt, had he lived, and would have gladly died again to save his brother.

When Cain was in such fear, God lifted the plague a little, but not completely, and consumed it. For if he had let himself be seen as Cain feared, he would have had to become powder so soon. Therefore he gives him a bodily salvation, but does not give him a gospel and security, and says:

**V.15. And the LORD said unto him, Whosoever killeth Cain shall smell sevenfold. And the LORD made a sign unto Cain, that whosoever found him should not slay him.**

In these words God removes the temporal punishment and makes him sure that he will not be strangled, putting a commandment on it.

But everything happened through Adam, as said above [30]. And God has undoubtedly forbidden the death stroke so severely, so that it does not tear so deeply among the people, as it has done. Now here the teachers argue about when and how this punishment is fulfilled. Answer recently: There is no power in it, if one does not know it; they probably think that Lamech, who slew Cain [v. 23, 24], was punished in this way, that seven of his family were strangled. [But there is no reason in the Scriptures; God will have found the punishment. [It is enough that we know the reason why God forbade it.

44. But what is the sign that God puts on him? The Jewish masters write thus: it was such, that he always went trembling and shaking. [It is well to be believed, but I do not know it, because the text does not give it; although they draw it from the fact that God said, "He shall be inactive and fugitive." Therefore it is possible that God set a sign in his body, that as he trembled inwardly and trembled, so also did he go outwardly, when people saw him, that they should say: Behold, this is Cain, who slew his brother; let no man put him to death. So he had to bear the shame of body and soul. This is a terrible punishment. Therefore it is well said to the Hebrews [Cap. 10, 31]: "Terrible is it to fall into the hands of the living God." It is still merciful and gentle when God punishes through men, but it is horrible when he himself punishes body and soul.

**V. 16 So Cain departed from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, beyond Eden, toward the east.**

(45) How did Cain depart from the presence of God, when no one can escape from him? Answer: It is said this much: He fled from his father into misery and came to a strange land where no one lived. That is, fled from God's presence. For where there are Christians who have God's word and preach it, there God is present, there He looks, as the Scripture says many times. So he had to flee from Adam and the assembly of believers, as many as there were of them; so he also fled without love and friendship.

fled, and came to a land of Nod. There is a doubt whether the word Nod means fugitive, or whether it is a name of the country to which he fled. But I take it for the name of the land that is beyond Eden. For we have heard above [Cap. 2, § 19 ff.] that paradise was planted in Eden, that it wants to penetrate there, that paradise was in a special place. Well, what is dark, let it remain dark; we do not want to make much of it.

46 Thus we have the two examples of Cain and Abel from the beginning of the world and still strong until the end, what Christians and unbelievers are, how God takes care of and rewards those who believe in Him, and how cruelly He punishes the unbelievers. Now follow on:

**V. 17, 18: And Cain slept with his wife, and she conceived, and bare Hanoch. And he built a city, and called it Hanoch, after the name of his son. And Hanoch begat Jrad. Irad begat Mahujael, Mahujael begat Methusael, Methusael begat Lamech.**

(47) Moses describes Cain's lineage to the seventh generation; specifically, he says that Cain built a city. He built this city as a citizen of the earth. For if it were so that we were all Christians, we should not have the worldly sword and protection. Those who remained with Adam did not build a city, nor did they think to protect and defend themselves. But he built for the reason that he might be somewhat secure, because he was afraid and timid. This shows what the world is doing; they must be described first, and they must rise high. For that which is God's people comes forth slowly, is low; the other breaks forth, and soon rises high, builds, keeps, and increases in time.

**V.19-22. And Lamech took two wives; the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal, from whom came they that dwelt in tents, and had cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal; from him came those who handled harps and pipes. Zilla also gave birth to Thubalcain, who was a polisher of all the masterpieces of brass and iron. And the sister of the Thubalcain was called Naema.**

(48) But here our teachers have been wise to say that Lamech was the first adulterer (as they respect the digamos, that is, those who have two wives). I do not think that this is the opinion. Because the text says badly, he had two wives. Whether he was also the first, I do not know. But with it is not concluded that he did wrong, having two wives; because one reads the same afterwards from many, also holy people. But it is only indicated as much as the betting people break out, before the children of light [Luc. 16, 8.], want to spread out soon and make themselves great; for this they are always more skillful than God's children.

(49) So he says, as Jabal son of Lamech was a man prepared and sent for food, he dealt with it that he might be rich, thinking of provisions, that he might lay aside and have enough of cattle and all manner of possessions. Adam and Eve did not bother with this. But the other son, Thubalkain, became a master, who dealt with ore and ironwork; dug it from the first out of the earth, became a man of war, the first, who thought to force the people with sword and iron and to bring them under himself; thinks on people and land to submit to him, like that on the food. The third son, by the other woman, has gone about dancing, jumping and courting, has set his date on good days, pleasure and joy. This is the course of the world. This is how it is with each other: to seek great food and wealth, to subdue land and people, to have power and honor, and to live in pleasure and good days.

50 It is also said of the sister Naema, how she invented silk embroidery, sewing and knitting, that both men and women became skilled people. All this was written before God's children were born, as a mirror of what the world is; as it began, so it continues to do; God does not deny, so it does not let go of its kind. Thus it is described how the worldly rule came from Cain, and his children became skilful and skillful men, and sat down on the wager, and kept themselves with cities and all things. There was no longer a spirit, although outwardly there was a great, glorious appearance of an honorable man.

Life, as we will see from the following text. For so he writes of Lamech, when they now sat in the regiment:

**V. 23, 24: And Lamech said unto Ada and Zillah his wives, Wives Lamech, hear my voice, let my words come into your ears. I have slain a man for a wound, and a young man for a bruise. Cain shall be smelled seven times, but Lamech seven and seventy times.**

(51) There are now few men so pious as this Lamech, especially among princes and great lords. For you see that he condemns himself and judges that the death stroke is not right, even though he is of the worldly lineage, in which there was no spirit. It is to be noted that those of Cain kept a fine outward nature and rule, much better than is now always kept, so that it may stand, as said above [§ 50]: Outwardly pious, inwardly husks; in fine works, but without faith walked.

The text does not tell how this story happened, but it does tell that Lamech killed Cain, because he himself confessed it with his words. Now we have heard above [§§ 43. 44] how Cain said that whoever struck him dead should be smelled sevenfold. The word went among them, and they took it for a common law. For they also had the word of God; but not the true, wholesome gospel, but only the law. But Adam and Eve had the gospel. As God always rules the world, that he keeps many people under the law, but few under the gospel. So the word spoken to Cain is also the word of God, but not a gracious word; not a promise, but only a commandment to do what one should not do. According to this they acted and carried out the same, which was well known to everyone in the generation.

(53) Since we do not know from the text how it happened that Cain was slain by Lamech, we must leave it in doubt. The Jewish scribes say that it happened in this way, that Lamech once went hunting with a boy that he had with him, and Lamech

was blind; that he shot nowhere, except where he was directed. Now Cain crawled in the forest and atoned there, and when he was rough, he is said to have been shot by Lamech, as his boy instructed him, for a deer; but when he realized this, he also killed the boy in anger. But it says so; I do not want to say it for truth, because the Jews also use to do good, strong lies.

(54) Now be it as it may, the text is clear that Lamech slew Cain and committed the murder; we may trust it. [It does not matter much if one does not know how it happened. But this is the reason why it is written, namely, that God wanted to show with this example how pious people we are when we are governed by the law, when the gospel does not beat us to it. For no one has ever become pious before God through the law, hardly even before the people. In the sight of God, not only is wickedness unresisted, but it only grows stronger and greater. Thus nature, if one holds the commandments against it alone, does nothing more, that one may see how it has been from the beginning, that no one is helped by laws. For Lamech ever had God's commandment, as said, that he should do no harm to Cain, just as Cain had before not to do evil to his brother; 1) nor has it helped anyone. For the Jews to say that Lamech did it by chance is not to be believed, since afterwards in the law of Moses such a death stroke, which happens unknowingly, is punished very gently, so that some cities are set apart to flee there and be safe [Deut. 35, 11. 15. Deut. 19, 5.].

55 Now see what he does. So evil he repays the old man, his ancestor, who had now reached the sixth generation, and was almost five or six hundred years old, and was held in high esteem by everyone from this side, as the highest and the wisest. Therefore, Lamech must have committed a great wickedness against him, because it so exposes the scripture to others. For he does not report that more murder has been done here; and yet, because

his son, Thubalkain, first invented and made ore and iron, that is, armor and guns, there must have been much envy and hatred among them, so that there was cause to make swords, that one thought to bring the other from life; as the other brother gave himself to avarice, and Naema gave himself to jewelry, from which hope grew up, also envy and anger, and a quite worldly being, as one still sees it.

56 When Lamech had committed the evil deed, the evil conscience also came and bit him, so that he was much more afraid, fidgety and timid than Cain. Therefore he goes to his wives and tells them, showing them how he has been despondent; no one else wants to tell them that he was also afraid that everyone would kill him. For it was a great thing that he should slay such a man, his old lord and father, against God's commandment, who had the rule among them, and was honored of all; that even the natural law condemned him; wherefore he saith, "Cain shall be smoked seven times, but Lamech seven and seventy times."

The text does not say that God spoke this, nor do I believe it to be true. Therefore it is vain for us to be concerned about how he smelled seven and seventy times. Which some draw to the seventieth part, unto the flood, in which not only they that came of Cain, but also of Adam and Seth, perished, that only eight souls were left, when the children of God were also made flesh and blood. This is the most certain thing, because the Scriptures do not say that we let God command it; He could have revealed it if something had been involved. But that is certainly what happened, that Lamech was punished sevenfold, because it was God's word.

(58) So far we have heard about Cain's members. He writes no more about them, and from now on he refers to the other gender, and divides them both, as we will hear in the sixth chapter, that he calls them "children of men" in one part, and "children of God" in the other. Thus we have seen how the children of the world have positioned themselves, as they still do, that they do all wickedness, and yet pretend to be God's law. Now God's children are not

1) Wittenberg and Jena: "gethan" instead of: zu thun.



without husband and wife, because it was not valid to be without marriage. So they both spread out; but God's children did not have the law alone, but also the gospel, from which they also became and are called God's children. More about this hereafter.

**Adam slept with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son, whom she named Seth; for God has given me, she said, another seed for Abel, whom Cain slew. And Seth also begat a son, and called his name Enos. At the same time people began to call 1) on the name of the Lord.**

(59) Moses describes what the children of God have done on the other side, which is absurd. For the children of men build cities, focus on food, on fighting, think how they sit down here, want to have good courage here and live well, yet pretend they are pious.

But here Adam begets another son, whom he calls Seth, who shall lead another being, and gives cause for the name, that Eve said: "God has set me another seed for Abel. Here St. Augustine (who deceived him) says that the word should be *resurrectio*, that is, resurrection. But it actually means "set," as one lays or sets a foundation, so there it should stand.

61 He also begat a son, and called him Enos. What this means, we want to hear; first of all, that the text says: "At that time people began to call on God's name"; that is, that at that time the service began. Do not take this to mean that it had not been before; for this must be left undone, that since the Word of God came to the woman, faith has never ceased, for the Word has not ceased nor fallen. The Christian congregation must always remain, even if there are only two people on earth; for the sake of those who believe, he lets it go forth alone. Therefore there is no doubt that it has never perished.

gone. However, it suffers a break-off at times; nevertheless, it remains standing.

(62) What does Moses mean by this word? Answer: This much is said, that the gospel, as Adam was told, has come again and has been preached publicly. For the children of men, Cain with his servants, when they became tyrants and oppressed the people, made it impossible for the gospel to be preached or confessed, until God was again pleased with Enos, and he began to gather a small group of believers together in one place to preach the word of God, and perhaps also to set up an altar, where they praised God, gave thanks, and prayed. Which means to call on God's name, as Paul says [Rom. 10:13]: "Whoever calls on God's name will be saved." Item, v. 14: "How will they call without a preacher?" So that the calling must follow after faith, but with it also to bring others to it.

63) If it should come about, as the text sounds here, that God's name was publicly called upon, it had to happen in such a way that Adam and his descendants had to preach in several places. Therefore it must be understood from the outward service of God; not as we now do jiggery-pokery, but as David says in the 102nd Psalm, v. 22, 23: "That they may preach His name in Zion, and His praise in Jerusalem, when the nations come together, and the kingdoms to serve the Lord"; that is, that they preach, baptize, perform the sacrament, and pray together. Thus we have heard that the fathers had neither baptism nor sacrament, but another sign, namely the sacrifice, when fire came down from heaven and kindled the same. Such worship has been reestablished, not in one place, but in more places, where they have been, that worship has increased again, and been improved.

Therefore I think that Enos must have the name, because Enosh means Hebrew "a man". The same language has probably three words and more which mean "man". *Isch* means a man, but often in the common sense any man. The other is Adam,

1) Marginal note: They began. Not that God's name had not been invoked before, but after the worship service had fallen through Cain's wickedness, it was reestablished, and some altar was built, where they gathered to hear God's word and to pray.

2) Jenaer and Erlanger: would have to.

has the name of the earth, as a reddish earth. So Enosh is also called a man, but especially from the misery and heartache that the man suffers, so that one would like to call it a troubled, miserable, afflicted man, so that it means his misery and poor being.

So he had to be called that he was a miserable, wretched man. And all who call upon God's name must be according to the outward character in the holy cross, which he had to bear and first lay the foundation for.

## The fifth chapter.

This is the book of man's birth, at the time when God created man and made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and blessed them, and called their name man, at the time they were created. And Adam was an hundred and thirty years old, and begat a son in his own image, and called his name Seth. And after that he lived eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: and all his days were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died. Seth was an hundred and five years old, and begat Enos. And after that he lived eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters: and all his days were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died. Enos was ninety years old, and begat Kenan. And afterward he lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters: and all his days were nine hundred and five years, and he died. Kenan was seventy years old, and begat Mahalaleel. And after that he lived eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters: and all his days were nine hundred and ten years, and he died. Mahalaleel was five and threescore years old, and begat Jared. And afterward he lived eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters: and all his days were eight hundred and five years, and ninety years; and he died. Jared was an hundred and two and threescore years old, and begat Enoch, and afterward lived eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: and all his days were nine hundred and two and threescore years, and died. Enoch was five and threescore years old, and begat Methuselah. And he led a godly life three hundred years after that, and begat sons and daughters; and all his days were three hundred and five years, and he died.

sixty years. And while he walked in godliness, God took him away, and he was seen no more. Methuselah was an hundred and seven and fourscore years old, and begat Lamech, and lived after him seven hundred and two and fourscore years, and begat sons and daughters; and all his days were nine hundred and nine and threescore years, and he died. Lamech was an hundred and two and fourscore years old, and begat a son, and called his name Noah, saying, He shall comfort us in our works, and in the affliction of our hands upon the earth, which the LORD hath cursed. After this he lived five hundred and ninety years, and begat sons and daughters: and all his days were seven hundred and seventy years, and he died. Noah was five hundred years old, and begat Shem, Ham and Japheth.

(1) This is a bad chapter to look at, because it does not tell more than the birth of the fathers, and how God's commandment was done when He blessed and created mankind to bear fruit. And count ten members one after another, that is, ten patriarchs, namely: Adam, Seth, Enos, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech and Noah. But that he says before: "This is the book", that is, the description, "of the birth of man" 2c., everything is spoken before, but he brings it again, so that he adds something, and further describes, how it has gone on. Therefore it is not necessary to stand here for a long time.

We have said in the first chapter [§56] what is meant by being created in God's image, namely, that God is conformed to it, and what good is attributed to God's nature,

That man also might be made like it, and be made like it. But that image has now perished and perverted, and in its place the image of the devil has been set up. But through Christ it is brought again and renewed; by whose blood we are saved from sin, death, and the devil, and through the Holy Spirit, purchased by Him, are made righteous, true, and good in heart, and set apart unto everlasting life.

(3) Enough has been said of what he says here again, that God created man male and female, and blessed him, so that the power is not ours to make or prevent a man from being a man, or a woman from being a woman, and so also to prevent a man from being fruitful. But these words are not spoken in vain; they are soon spoken, but they are words of faith, and of a high understanding; neither doth any man understand, save he that is in the faith, what is man and what is woman.

(4) But this is what I call recognizing a man or a woman in faith, when a person believes without a doubt that both man and woman are God's work. But there are few of them who come together in this way, or who are with each other. Flesh and blood and evil desire are certainly felt, as well as unhappiness in the conjugal state; but that it is God's work is not seen. Therefore, as one sees every day, one soon tires of it and cries out about it. This is nothing but blindness, that they go up only to atone for their pride and lust; but God has appointed it so that the creatures might be increased. But enough of that. Now let us pass over the patriarchs.

Adam, writes Moses, lived to be a hundred and thirty years old, and begat a son in his own image, and named him Seth 2c. If someone asks what he did during that time, and the chapter is seen as if the fathers were nothing but flesh and blood, that Moses can write nothing about them but how they had marriage and begat children. But of course there is no book in Scripture that praises chastity so highly as this one. Is it not praised highly enough that Adam walked a hundred and thirty years in chastity? In addition, the other patriarchs all, who so

have gone until sixty, seventy, a hundred years from now? Where can you find such people now who could do it?

(6) Nature has subsequently become more and more corrupt, so that now no one can remain chaste for so long, nor live. Many people have dreamed and said that Adam has atoned for the hundred and thirty years in a hole in the land, and the like; but these are fables, and are contrary to faith. For he received forgiveness of his sin, along with Eve, through the promise of the seed. Faith has erased sin, for God does not atone for sin with works.

Now it is to be thought further that Cain on that side has also begotten children. Adam, on the other hand, governs his children in a Christian way, has been their father, bishop, priest and preacher, but has acted against the spiritual law, in which the priest writes and states that one cannot serve God and be legitimate. He not only preached this to his sons, but also continued to do so, and for a long time he was the supreme father, and will have been a fine, beautiful world. For if we count the ten members, we find a thousand six hundred and six and fifty years, until the flood. Now Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years; so after his death the flood was not much more than seven hundred years: so near did he come that he lived with his sons until Lamech, Noah's father. Thus the dear fathers lived among themselves, old, aged people, ruling the world in great spirit, wisdom and understanding. It was right in the spring, that it was green; but soon after it decreased.

(8) Thus we have here the first virtue and noble fruit of faith, which is called chastity. The fathers did not use flesh and blood more than to beget children; they served God with the advantage that they did not teach from books. For it is a great sign of infirmity, and of the evil mind and memory of nature, that we must have books. Then one went to the fathers, asked about all things, and they [answered] from the spirit. Is finely governed by living voice

without all scripture. Now we have to make do with books. Also, because they lived so long, they were able to learn and experience so many things about the stars in the sky, about herbs and animals, and about all kinds of things on earth, that they became highly knowledgeable about all creatures, of which we may gain very little. It has slipped our minds too soon; before we can get our strength back, we must die.

Item 9: On the other hand, they will also have seen countless evil things from the people of the world, especially on that side; because now, when we live through thirty years, we see so many evil deeds that are sin and shame. Although the world could not have been so evil then as it is now, and they had the advantage that among so many patriarchs God's word went forth.

10) Summa: It is not because of books or reason; it is because God sends people on earth. Thus we see in all history and all Scripture that when God wanted to help a people, He did not do it with books, but no other way than by raising up one or two men, who govern better than all Scripture and laws. So this must have been a paragon of good government, since not one man, but so many fine men and old fathers, full of spirit, have been and ruled. It is truly a strange, precious treasure. One still finds intelligent and learned people; but those who also have God's spirit are few. But it must be that the faith would be preserved, and the people would not fall from God's words. Let this be said of the patriarchs in general.

(11) But among others, we must especially consider the one in the seventh member, namely Enoch. Of him he writes something special, that he lived longer than the others, in the fifth and sixtieth year, and begat a son, although he was the most holy, so that the text says especially: He led a divine life, and lived in it afterwards three hundred years. "And while he led a godly life, God took him away, and he was seen no more." Of him alone it is written that he did not die, but was taken away, so that no one knows where he remained. And is a

great, high praise and strange text, that it gives glory to Enoch, that he pleased God specially. Therefore, he must have been a high man in the Christian faith and practiced high preaching. Otherwise, if he had not been especially high, God would not have had him painted so evenly and done such a miracle with him.

(12) First, I said that all the holy fathers had the same faith and the same Christ that we have now. That this has now been taken away is no doubt a comfort to those who believed in Christ. For God is so diligent in His word that He strengthens those who have it daily, both with words and works. Thus he did this to strengthen the faith of the fathers, that there might be another life after this life. As if he wanted to indicate and say: "Behold, with this I want to show that I have something else, because I keep the people, so that they do not die, even if I take them out of the world. Therefore the sum is, that with this history he hath signified the resurrection of the dead, and hath separated this mortal life from that which is immortal, and hath given us consolation, that we which are of flesh and blood may come to live for ever.

(13) Now the question arises: Where did this Enoch go? or where is he now? We only read of two in the Scriptures that God took away, this Enoch and Elijah [2 Kings 2:11]; also it is said of St. John the Evangelist. I leave that in its dignities, because the Scripture says nothing about it. Now one must undoubtedly believe that Enoch was not stolen away secretly, otherwise it would not have been a comfort to them, but that he was taken away visibly and apparently before their eyes, and that God proved this beforehand with signs.

(14) Where then is the place where he remained? It is said that he is in paradise, and this is also to be believed. But what paradise is, I do not know; it is enough that one believes that God has a place where he still perhaps also keeps angels. And stand on the fact that Enoch and Elijah themselves do not yet know where they are. For, as I have often said, we must open our eyes very wide if we want to see into that life. It does not go

so to, as here. He is such a God that he can keep someone out of the world, and in the air, or where he wants, that he himself does not see it, let alone another. So it is enough to know that God has taken him away, and remains with God; but where he is, we do not want to and should not know.

(15) Whether he will come again, as has been said until now, I leave aside; I do not believe it, and I have this reason: If God wanted to do such an apparent work, that this patriarch should come and preach the end of Christ, he would have undoubtedly said it beforehand in a place in Scripture. For he never does such things without word and promise, as it is written in Amos [Cap. 3, 7]: God will not do a thing unless he has revealed it beforehand through his servants the prophets. Since this is not the case, we consider it to be a fable, as many others have been invented so far.

16 Behold, the dear fathers shall all stand with us at the last day, and we shall see them standing with us, and we with them. Then we shall know where they have been. Now it is a long time since he was taken away; but on the last day he will stand there just as if he had gone away that same hour. In the sight of God everything is in one hui; there is no time, as with us, when one thing goes after another. That is enough about this patriarch.

(17) The ninth father Lamech," says Moses, "was an hundred and two and fourscore years old, and begat a son, and called his name Noah, and said, He shall comfort us in our works, and in the affliction of our hands upon the earth, which the LORD hath cursed. What this Lamech had in mind with these words, whether something was perhaps proclaimed or revealed to him, I cannot say for sure. Methinks it is the opinion that he thought this should be the seed of the woman who should help the world; as above [Cap. 4, 1.] Eve said of Cain. Therefore he actually says, how he wanted to be saved from the plague and the curse, [which] was brought upon the

Earth gone. There has also been something about it, but not everything. For the man Noah afterward helped the world greatly.

018 And now, behold, Noah lived five hundred years, and after that an hundred years, until the flood: how much labor and trouble he must have had out of the earth! Here on this side were God's children, and the right seed: yet it has become so evil that even God's children have fallen away much. On this side it has also happened that among them evil people have become, and so much that it is terrible to hear that from this side not more than eight people have been preserved from the flood.

(19) There has been a great, horrible decrease of so many holy fathers, who undoubtedly lived and ruled well; what shall now become in the soup of hell? Methuselah lived until 1) that same year when the flood came, and died soon before. If he had lived, he would also have come into [the] box. He had to see that the world had become so evil, and no one turned back to his old, good life. So this Lamech also cried out about it, as if he wanted to say: "Is it now all evil and cursed?"

20 This is how it happened, as we will hear in the next chapter, that the children of God and the children of the world were thrown together and became tyrants in the land, mighty and famous people. The fathers saw this well. Now when a country is so wicked, and the excesses get out of hand, it is a sure sign that it must break and become different. Just as it is now that everyone says that everything is at its highest; therefore either the last day must be present, or else a great plague and change. Because the wickedness is too great, it cannot come higher. So Lamech also means here, the son, Noah, must change it and make it better, or [it] must even perish. What Noah did, we will see in the following chapter.

1) Erlanger: in.

## The sixth chapter.

**V. 1-4. But when men began to multiply on the earth, and to beget daughters unto them, the children of God looked upon the daughters of men, how they were fair, and took them wives of all that they would. Then said the LORD, My spirit 1) shall not be judge among men for ever, because they are flesh. I will give them yet an hundred and twenty years. There were also tyrants in the earth in those days. For when the children of God 2) slept with the daughters of men, and begat them children, they became mighty men in the world, and mighty men of renown.**

Then Moses began to describe the great and mighty change that took place at the time when the world had stood a thousand six hundred and six and fifty years, which comes upon it with such a terrible and dreadful seriousness that whoever considers it must be terrified that all men will sink drowned, without even considering Noah. Now we have said that Moses had planned for him to write where men come from, and for this reason he drew two cords and lines, of the pious and the wicked, the spiritual and the secular. But it is shown above [Cap. 4, § 47 ff.] enough how Cain's lineage soon turned to worldly things with all kinds of handling; what serves for food, honor, dominion, adornment, good days and pleasure was torn down one after the other. As nature does when you leave it a hand's breadth, it takes a whole cubit. It began gradually 3) but became so rampant that it became too much and too big.

1) Marginal gloss: My spirit. That is, it is in vain what I have them preach, say and punish by my Spirit; they have become too carnal, despising and blaspheming my Spirit's word; therefore let him cease, and I will let them go, and no longer quarrel and punish myself with them.

2) Marginal gloss: Children of God. These were the children of the holy fathers, who were brought up in the fear of God, and then became worse than the others, under the name of God; just as the clergy have always been the worst tyrants and the most perverse.

3) In the old editions: meilich.

(2) When Moses says that sin has come about because the children of God have looked after the daughters of men, (2c) he shows sufficiently that the world has become vain flesh and blood, as he also says afterwards, and that it had already come about that such a thing was brought into a habit and considered a custom of the country. There remained no discipline until there was nothing more to advise and help, so that the world had to perish; as is also now before our eyes.

(3) He does not say this about those who came from Cain, but those who were born from the holy fathers. For that which he calls the children of God is actually to be interpreted to the people, to the tribe and line of Seth, Adam's son. Although one finds little else written in the Old Testament that men are called children of God, it was already called at that time, which is to be taken from the fact that they were fine, highly understanding people, and understood the gospel or the promise given to Adam, that whoever believes in the promised seed, would have everything that God Himself has, and would become God's child.

(4) I say this because our scribes have been mistaken about this, and have made up various things about who God's children were, because they were not accustomed to calling people on earth God's children and holy, when the Lord's Prayer, which we pray daily, puts it into our mouths that we are God's children. Out of such ignorance, some dream that the angels are meant by this, who are true children of God, as if they had gone to human daughters and slept with them, from which great giants or giants are said to have been born. But it is fool's heiding. It is possible, as Mau says, that the evil spirit can take hold of the sorceresses, and also impregnate them and cause all kinds of misfortune. Therefore, they thought that it would have happened here with the angels as well.

4) appointed - known.

(5) Therefore we must be accustomed to the Scriptures, that we may have a right understanding, that they which believe are called the children of God, that is, the pious and justified. So at that time there was almost a distinction between the children of God and the children of men, as we called the spiritual and the secular. But as it has now come into abuse with the spiritual state, so it has also gone there. The Scriptures ask in many places that God would appoint those who preach and guide his word, so that if he does not do it, it may remain unpreached. But it has always been like this: when at first pious, holy people led the spiritual regiment of preaching righteously, carnal people arose after them, and abused the same office, yet they kept the regiment, place and name that they had.

(6) Thus in the Jewish people there were first Moses, Joshua, and some others, who lived and ruled according to and by the word of God. But after them came others, who knew nothing of those, yet were also called priests and Levites, inherited and kept the name alone. Likewise, when the apostles and their disciples were gone, the people who kept the name soon followed, but they are as far away as heaven and earth. So it also happened here. Seth, Enos, and their children to the tenth generation kept it fine; but when they came hillway after hillway, it broke out and ceased. Then they kept the name, that they were also called children of God, but they were quite carnal and worldly.

(7) And especially he refers to the time when they looked after the daughters of men and took as wives whom they wished. With these words, he claims that there was no law, discipline or honor, but that they lived according to all their will, mingled with the people of the world, sought their friendship, fell in with them and took whatever they desired, and asked for nothing. Summa, they have been quite safe and without fear of God.

(8) This is the first fault, that they have become carnal. The other, which follows from this, is that when people have good days and live well, it costs them violence, of course, to make others

People flay and scrape. Therefore he says: "There were also tyrants on earth in the days of old, who were mighty and famous men," and also indicates where they came from, namely, as said, that the children of God of men slept with children and begat children; from this they came. It is that the name of God must be the cover of shame, under which all misfortune is done; as it is also said: In the name of God all misfortune is done. What is the greatest abomination, God's name must always embellish and take upon itself, as has happened to this day with our churches and masses, priesthood and monasticism, and everything 1) that is called worship. If only the name is attached to it, everyone falls on it and considers it delicious. Those who can only boast of the name, that they say they are children of God, are afraid and frightened by everyone; then it falls apart, and they become mighty lords under the appearance and name of God.

(9) This is what Moses means by saying: "There were tyrants in those days", which he calls in Hebrew Nephilim, which the teachers called in Latin gigantes. And they write that they were called so, that they were great, that the others stood against them as if they had fallen. But they are also fables, because they were all of the same size; although Moses will later also say of giants or giants. But therefore they are called Nephilim, because they attacked the people and forced them. For Naphal is Hebrew for fall, from which this word comes; as in the 10th Psalm, v. 10, it says, "He falls with his power upon the poor," or "He falleth the poor multitude with his power. Item, in the 20th Psalm, v. 9. "They are bent and fallen." It has been said of them, as the heathen said of their Hercules, as of great men and heroes, who did many battles and wonders, forced everyone, and obeyed no one nor were subject. So the world has become full of evil, as the text says.

10. Now see what God says about this, since such things began to prevail. "My Spirit (says He) shall not always be a judge among the people.

1) In the old editions: everything.

to men, because they are flesh." But the words and sermon he has undoubtedly said through Noah, as before through Adam. Now the verdict is pronounced in the shortest possible time, but it is almost horrible and terrifying.

(11) But the words must be drawn out into the ministry which the Holy Spirit performs by the word which is preached; and it is such a clear and powerful saying, that if it were in the New Testament, it would be enough for the Holy Spirit to say how his ministry is to punish the world; as Christ says in John 16:8, "When the Holy Spirit comes, he will punish the world for sin, righteousness, and judgment." And here it is finely indicated what the world would be if the Holy Spirit were not judge and punish. If it could do something good and please God by its nature and works, the Holy Spirit should not punish and judge. Now if it is to be right and of divine nature, the Holy Spirit must be there, carry out his office, and do everything through the word alone; that [it is] a great grace where he thus punishes and quarrels with men, and again, the highest disgrace and punishment where he abstains and does not punish the world.

(12) Therefore he will say this much here: It is in vain what I preach and punish until now and still through my spirit in the patriarchs, Adam, Seth, Enoch, and try to control and ward off the wickedness of the people. They are too drowned in the flesh, will not hear nor believe, but despise and blaspheme the word that I preach through my children who have my spirit; therefore I will also desist and cease to punish, and let them go. This is the terrible plague that God will bring upon the world when he destroys it, that he will first shake off his hand and lift up his word, so that each one will go according to his own delusion and conceit, groping like a blind man and not knowing what he is doing; so that all sin and shame will follow in one heap, until everything must perish and perish to the ground.

This is what Moses in the fifth chapter [Cap. 28, 28] calls madness, blindness and racing of the heart, when he tells the curses that are to come upon those who despise God's word and do not want to hear it. This plague is also foretold by the apostle Paul in 2 Thess. 2,

10-12. To the same multitude: "For that they have not received the love of the truth, that they might be saved, God will send them strong errors, that they may believe the lies; that they all may be judged who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness. Just as it has happened in the world, as we now see before our eyes, that 1) we thought we had the right worship and that everything was right, but it was the devil and death. In the end it will happen again: because everyone does not want to hear or accept the gospel, but acts and blasphemes in the worst way, and no one wants to do it, God will again take it away, and punish the world again with greater blindness than ever before, until he finally destroys everything. This is the meaning and opinion of this saying.

14 Then God said, "I will give them a hundred and twenty years. This refers to the time that He wanted to give the world until the flood, so that the people would convert and reform. Now Noah was there, as the text says [chap. 5, 32], five hundred years old, and it is indicated afterwards that there were only a hundred years before the flood, when he got the order to build the ark, that it will be six hundred years together, when the flood came. Is now the question: where then the twenty years remain, which God adds in these words? I know nothing to answer it, nor to resolve it, without saying that it may well be that wickedness so excellently prevailed that God hastened with the flood, and cut short the twenty years; or that it is said per anticipationem, that is, that these words, "twenty years," were spoken before Noah begat the three sons, or ever before he became five hundred years old altogether.

(15) But, as has been said, it is a question of the number of years that God has given to the world for correction until the flood: not, as some say, that he has determined how long a man's age and life should extend. For if reason were right, it would follow that every man should live a hundred and



<sup>143</sup>  
twenty years, while most of the people die young, and it is considered a miracle when one hears of someone who lives a hundred and twenty years; in addition, it is not found in Scripture that God specifies how long one should live. Therefore the goal of the whole world is presented, through God's long-suffering, whether they want to convert; [it] has not become better, but worse day by day.

(16) So this history is good for us to remember, because it is a great, terrible change, in which one sees how God has to rule on earth. He does it secretly, sees through the fingers so long that people become so blind and foolish that they say there is no God, and surely despise everything that God preaches. So we have an example and warning that we certainly believe that God will not let injustice and evil go unpunished nor unscented, even if He has been consuming for a while. This is a piece of this text. Follow on:

**V.5-10. But when the Lord saw that the wickedness of men was great upon the earth, and that all the thoughts and actions of their hearts were evil for ever, then it grieved him that he had made man upon the earth, and it grieved him in his heart, and he said: I will destroy mankind, which I have created, from the earth, from man to cattle, and to the worms, and to the fowls of the air: for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord. This is the birth of Noah. Noah was a godly man and without change, and led a godly life to his lines, and begat three sons, Shem, Ham, Japheth; but the earth was corrupt 2c.**

(17) Here one asks, and is almost troubled, how it is that the text says that God repented that he had made man, because it is said that he could not be sorry for what he does, since he is the highest wisdom? Answer: I think that this piece was written to indicate the lamentation and cry of the dear fathers who lived, that they had felt such a grief and terrible judgment of God, who wanted to change everything on earth. Likewise also afterwards [Gen. 18, 23-32] to

is shown, when God wanted to turn back the cities of Sodoma and Gomorrah, how Abraham took care of them, was afraid, and was so hard on God with pleading that he would have gladly saved them, as will follow hereafter. So here, too, it is well to think, as the heart of the pious father Noah confessed, that he had felt everything that was coming, and that he had grieved and worried about it; that it must not be attributed to God, as if it grieved him that he changed and changed it in this way, for everything had already been decided with God. But if he changes it, it is no different than that he will turn it around, as he has provided from eternity. But he changes it so that the pious people feel it beforehand; they have thought, "Oh! God now has it in mind to change and reverse everything.

(18) This rule must often be observed in Scripture, that God is spoken of as we feel Him. For as we feel him, so he is to us. If you think he is angry and ungracious, he is ungracious. So, when the Scriptures say that GOD is angry, it is not otherwise than that He is so felt. So it is often written in Psalms: Wake up, Lord, why are you sleeping? How dost thou hide thyself? (Ps. 44, 24. 25.) And the like, although his nature and will have no change, without him putting himself thus and thus, and making us see and feel him. Therefore as it was felt here by Noah and struck his heart, so it was. So I wanted to resolve the question; for it is the surest thing to stay down 1) and yet it is God's, not man's, thought. For He gives such sorrow and anguish to the heart that it comes not from man but from the Holy Spirit.

**V. 13-16. Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before me, for the earth is full of their wickedness. And, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee a box of fir wood, and make chambers therein, and try them with pitch, within and without, and make them [the arks thus:] Three hundred cubits shall be the length, fifty cubits the breadth, and thirty cubits the height. You shall make a window on the top of it, one**

1) Erlanger: ernieder.

**Elle large. The door shall be placed in the middle of its 1) side. Make the lower part two-layered and three-layered.**

(19) In order that we may understand the text, let us first see how the ark was built, then what kind of faith Noah had, and thirdly, what is meant by it. The first, which is called the archa, is a Latin word that has come into the German language; otherwise we have many more Latin and French words. In our language, we actually call it a box or a long drawer. If it is now measured according to how it has been decided here, and put into heaps: it is six times longer than it is wide, and ten times longer than it is high. This is what scholars call *proportionem geometricam et arithmeticam*, when one says that a thing is twice as long as it is wide; since one does not name and express how many cubits or spans it has in itself.

20 Thus the chest should have been longer than wide, so that if it had been smaller, it would have been counted as a coffin. For if you take a man's body before you and measure it rightly, it is ten times longer than it is high, and six times longer than it is wide. This is how the teachers measured the ark and interpreted it to make the Lord Christ out of it. But we leave that alone; it is enough to know as much of the history as I have said. Now he shall make a door in the chest in the middle of the side, so that ten cubits remain above and ten cubits below, that it is almost fourteen cubits above and fourteen below. For the box will have gone almost close ten cubits in the water, so remained twenty cubits above in height. But over the door, which was in the middle of the side, the window should stand, and not be larger than a cubit in length and width.

(21) It is to be inferred what kind of light was in the ark, and it is well to be felt that the Scripture wants to indicate here that it was not made for this reason, that they should keep the day of it, nor that they should not be guided by the sun. For it has been seen above on all sides, that the day went in only a cubit far above the door; so it follows that they were in the

They were always burning light in the box, because they could not help themselves to light from the sun, and they did this for so long, as long as they were in there, that it actually happened like in the tabernacle of Moses, where no day could come in, but seven lights had to burn without interruption [Ex. 25, 37, 27, 20, 21.], as we do at night. So it was built only so that they might see whether it was day or night.

22 Further he says: the lower part he shall make two-layered and three-layered. Think, then, that the chest had three bottoms, ten cubits below, ten in the middle, where the door was, and as many above, where the window was. In the lowest he made chambers, here two, there three, and so on various dwellings, in which this and that cattle and animals should stand; for these he made such a building, or perhaps also for himself; so that the box would be a dwelling for all kinds of animals, so that seed would be preserved from all. This is the building of the ark, for the first.

23) Secondly, in this history is shown the faith of Noah, which is the best part of it. Let us see how a Christian faith should be skilful, and it would be right that such histories should be written out as they are worth; but it is lacking, that it cannot be attained with words, and that we cannot think so completely, how a great, mighty faith this must have been, that it is exceedingly; that also, if one looks at it rightly, it is not a miracle that not more than Noah, the eighth, is preserved in the flood 2). For, behold, Noah hath three sons, and they have three wives; that is, together with his wife, eight persons, which have not been without servants, and without mates, as it is yet in the world, and at the same time greater than it is now. Of all these, as great a friendship as he had, none adhered to him and his sons, but badly all departed from him; that it was ever a pity that his word and all the preaching he did did not help, and no one believed nor accepted.

1) Jenaer: the.

2) Erlanger: retain.

(24) On the other hand, it is a great thing that eight people alone should stand so firmly, and certainly think that they alone are right, while so many people in the whole world are all wrong. If it should happen today that a man should come who could say and conclude that he alone was right, and that all others' doings and opinions were wrong and lost; not considering how wise, holy, powerful people, popes, bishops, princes, etc. they might be, who could believe it? Let us see how they now cry and rage against the gospel, so that no one can tell them or defend them. Therefore, there is no doubt that it was the same at that time.

Twenty-five: now reckon it evenly: Noah was now five hundred years when he began to build the box, and he built over it a whole hundred years. Then he preached daily and said, "Correct yourselves, God is angry and will destroy the world with the flood, so I am building the box as God commanded me. This, of course, spread far and wide throughout the world, which is why God gave him so much time and so long to do it. But what happened? He kept preaching and preaching and did not stop. Therefore Peter [2. Ep. 2, 5.] calls him *praeconem justitiae*, a crier and crier or preacher of justice, which title the Scriptures do not give so highly to any patriarch.

26. but the world did as it still does, mocking and despising God's word and his preachers, so that the more he preached of it, the more he had to hear them say: you are a great old fool, worried that heaven will fall on you, preaching and shouting now ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years 2c. of the flood; when will it come? Do you think that you alone are the most pious, that God should destroy the whole world and spare your 1) alone? or that you are the smartest, that he should tell no one but you?

27 He heard these things daily, and many more innumerable scorns and reproaches; but he was not dismayed, and continued to preach until the sixtieth, and seventieth, and eightieth, and ninetieth year. Only then did they become sure and certain. Yes, yes, should God wait so long, when He has

If he were so angry, he would not have waited ten years. So God preached to the world for so long, taking his word for foolishness and lies, and acting in the most shameful and disgraceful way. See what the world is with its prudence and reason, how finely it can place itself at God's word. Now it is still a wonder that his wife and his sons believed with their wives and clung to him alone, yet so much remained with him, 2) especially because it was delayed so long when he always said it would come. How many before there were people who took money and made the box, but paid no attention; nor did he stay on it, believing it would go like this, that God would drown everything.

28 Therefore learn what is the right way of faith, that it follows no thing except the word. For all things are contrary to sense, strive against all reason of men, yea, against his own senses, and all things that he seeth, and feeleth, and heareth, that he may think well: How can God be so strange as to choose me alone and condemn all the people of the earth? just as Noah undoubtedly felt this, and suffered great trial.

29 For this also is the great temptation in the world, except the high spiritual, to think, Behold, all the world holdeth it otherwise; shouldest thou alone be right, and be the wisest? Dear one, how if you are wrong? do you not think that God is merciful, that he will preserve many people, and not destroy everything so completely? If he had seen and not closed his eyes, he would not have stopped. But he has often suffered such blows and blows.

(30) He saw that God's word stood there to be received by eight persons alone. That was said as much as if he said: Only dead, dead, everything that lives there. There faith stands and says: God cannot and will not lie. Therefore he has closed his eyes and subdued all reason, and has held only to the word. So faith must trample all reason, senses and understanding underfoot, and put everything it sees out of the general, and not want to know anything.

2) The meaning is: It is a miracle that nevertheless all those who stayed with him clung to him alone.

for the word of God. So let us praise and glorify reason and our natural light; what is it but blindness and darkness? What can it be better than to fight against faith and God's word? What is the meaning of long custom, and that so many people in the world hold and believe differently?

He has done all this for a hundred years through such faith, which no one can attain or measure enough. Help God, we could hardly stand for an hour when it comes to the meeting, and he has stood there for so long in the highest battle without ceasing and has not wavered; and not only that, but has also preached daily and received scorn and ridicule as a reward, so that his heart has been well crucified.

32 We must do likewise. Whoever wants to be saved must not intend to believe what the pope, bishops and the whole world believe, or what the Concilio decides. Whoever believes in this way is already lost. For as long as the crowd stands, it also stands; does not stand on God's word, but on man's delusion; thinks, should those err and miss, so many and great people? and does not see that God's word says straight against it: Many and great people shall err [Ps. 62, 10.]. In Noah's time there were countless more learned, wise, pious, honorable people than now, because the world was still young; yet he had to break his mind and keep only what God says.

This will be fine when we die. There faith must stand alone and fight against the devil and all senses and reason. There he will reproach you: This is what the pope says, and this is what the whole world believes; what would you think if it were lacking and wrong? Then the heart that has relied on it must begin to wriggle, is so soon in doubt; when it doubts, it goes astray and must be lost. Therefore we must come to the point that faith stands on God's word alone, that we can say: God give, the world believe otherwise or so, I have God's word, as Noah had; if there is someone in the world who thinks otherwise, I let him go, God's word must be right, that does not deceive [Ps. 94, 15].

34. thus we see here the great, mighty earnestness and wrath of god, that he only has the eight

In addition, the great work that a human heart should believe this. It is both, grace and wrath, incomprehensible and unbelievable to all reason and human powers. The text [Gen. 7, 1] says: Noah was justified and without change in his time. Item [Gen. 6, 8]: "Noah found grace with the Lord." The words are set in such a way that they should apply to something, namely such great things as we have heard. From this it also follows that the eight persons were holy. Eight living saints, and yet remained only six; for Ham fell after the flood, and [I] hold, even his wife. It is terrible that one should stand in such faith, and yet fall. Of which we shall hereafter hear.

Thirdly, we will also see the secret interpretation of this story. St. Peter [1 Ep. 3, 21] interpreted it in such a way that the flood meant baptism, because the latter is a spiritual flood, as the former was external. And as Noah was kept in the box, so we are saved in baptism. Now by baptism many more people are drowned than by that flood of sin, because it has spread through the whole world and is still going on. Now as all men were drowned there, except the eighth, who were preserved in the water: so also in baptism all that is carnal is drowned. For we are baptized so as to die to the world, to the flesh, and to the blood; as Paul says [Rom. 6:3, 4], "All that are baptized into Christ are baptized into his death; so we ever died with him through baptism into death." 2c. That it is as much to put a child into baptism as to say, I drown and choke in thee all that is flesh and blood; that when it is drawn out, it is without all sin and unhappiness, so that in baptism all that is worldly and carnal must perish, that the Spirit alone may live. So hold the two against each other: there men drown who are flesh and blood; here spiritually drowns all sin and all misfortune that man brings with him. Thus it rhymes with baptism. 1) The saying in the Psalm goes to this: Dominus diluvium inhabitare facit,

1) Wittenberger: "day", which is in the first edition.

The Lord sits to create a flood of sin [Ps. 29:10], that is, a lasting flood of sin that will not pass away until the end of the world.

(36) Now what is the ark? It was made for this purpose, that Noah should put into it all kinds of animals, of both sexes, clean and unclean, so that seed might remain on the earth and the world might multiply. That is, the Christian church, the assembly of all those who are baptized, called to the Christian faith, who hear the gospel, are all in the box, but are still few compared to the other great multitude. For I say only of those who hear the gospel and are righteous, not that they alone are called Christians, but that there is no false preaching. In the same congregation are all manner of beasts, they and they, according to Noah himself: that is, in the preaching of baptism in the gospel are gathered together divers persons, not only that believe, but also that believe not; yet all have the gospel, which they hear and know. For the rest, who hear it not, are not in the box, but are drowned in the water.

037 Now therefore among these there are some that are clean, and some that are unclean. What these are, we shall hear hereafter; now enough is enough, that the Christian church is of a kind that it hath not vain saints; whereof I have often said. And it would be good to make a proverb out of it, to answer those who take offense at our weakness, saying, "Did Noah have to have both unclean and clean animals;" saying, "If we want to be Christians, we must get into the habit of having many infirm brothers and sisters among us, so that we may be like one another, and bear one another, and say: Dear, we will not all be pure, there must be ravens and doves, wolf and sheep in the box among each other. Therefore also the Sophists said: *Omnis anima in arca Noae*, all kinds of souls are in the box Noah. Would be well said if they had understood it. You can also see this in the Gospel, that Christ deals with tax collectors and sinners [Matth. 9, 10. 11. 11, 19. Luc. 5, 29.], leaves the others behind, who only wanted to have pure animals, and yet they themselves were not. So it must be in Christianity

stand. [The greatest art, the highest wisdom and virtue that Christians have are also found in it. He who cannot do these things does not consider himself a Christian.

The ark is made of smooth and planed fir wood. This is the highest virtue of Christianity, that it is gentle and mild, like a fine, bad, smooth wood without branches; there is no impatience, anger, ill-will or envy among them, not rough, gnarled, nor unbroken; recently, pure love, so that one can hold all things to the other's advantage.

(39) Above this, it is to be written out and written in, or glued. This is both love and patience. If you do not glue a ship, it can soon split and tear. Now pitch is an unflattering, black thing that does not adorn, but preserves. Suffering, too, is not pleasant to look at, but it holds and preserves well. Summa, it is patience and the holy cross, of which Paul says: *Patientia probationem operatur*, patience brings experience. It is challenged on all sides; it rained on the top, and the water beat against it; now it is protected from the outside with pitch everywhere, so that it will not be damaged. This is to be humility and patience, that we may suffer all that afflicts us, within and without.

(40) Therefore, in sum, all things are directed that the highest virtue is to suffer and bear all the infirmities of our brethren, and then all the temptations of the devil and death. There is not the least suffering from 1) infirm people; we always want to be with holy people who are not whimsical, but who are finely guided by us, so that it always goes according to our purpose. Therefore, there have been many who have run hither and thither, thinking that they would find a place where things would not be unequal; each one wanting to pull himself out of the loop, and always having the string, so that everyone would live according to his will, and no one would live according to his will: He wanted everyone to live according to his will, and he should not give in to anyone. Just like that fool who stood in the sun and was bent over, and was angry that the shadow was also bent over. So we want others

1) Jenaer: an den. - The meaning is: The suffering, which happens to us from infirm people, is not a small one.

We have to be right on the string and do not judge ourselves, thus making our own lives sour.

41 Weiler is here also to see what the door in the side, the window above the door, and the two-layered and three-layered compartments at the bottom of the box mean. Now I have often said that one should above all stay with the writing in the simple sense that the letters give, pure and unadulterated; when this is done, one can then play with figures and interpretation, as we first did with the simple words in this history. Nor should such an interpretation be taken as certain and certain, unless it can be proved from Scripture that it is meant to interpret such things. Where this is not the case, you may well interpret it, but no one should rely on it. It is not to be resisted that one should play according to his spirit; but what is to teach faith must be so well founded and certain that one may also leave one's life over it.

(42) Thus we have established above [§ 35] from St. Peter's saying [1 Ep. 3, 21] that the flood signifies baptism; but of this we have no saying that the door on the side signifies the wound in the left side of Christ (as it has been interpreted up to now), or also that the ark signifies the body of Christ; therefore it is not to be built upon. It is true in itself that the interpretation is indicated by it; but whether the interpretation is also right and rhymes with it cannot be taken for an article of faith. But if you interpret it in such a way that the box is the Christian church, but the door means the word, through which one enters the Christian church, as St. Paul also uses to call the sermon, as 1 Cor. 16:9: "The door is opened to me, and there are many adversaries"; likewise also Christ in John [Cap. 10:9] says that he is the door, through which one enters and leaves the sheepfold; this I accept as not contrary to Scripture. But whoever does not want to accept it, we will let his mind be his own; for we must stick to the main understanding that the letter gives; the rest we may decorate and cross out as we can.

43) Item, that the window above is lit, no doubt, as [§ 21] said, not that they would have light from it; for how should a

How could a large building receive light from such a small hole? Therefore Noah had to stay in the ark without light, and make light for him with lamps, as we do in the night. One would have liked to say that God had given the light so much brilliance to the box that it had illuminated it [the ark]; but this is not to be believed. Also, if he had wanted the box to be illuminated by the window, he would have made more of them. What this means, I also give home to everyone. Do what you will, let it remain according to the letter, that he let it be made so that one could see how it would be in the sky, when it would be day or night, the clouds would stop, clear or dark. And he has determined a measure for it, that it should not be larger than a cubit.

44 I wanted to interpret this as Paul's scientiam, that is, knowledge, that Christianity, which lives inwardly by the light of grace, not by the light of the world, sees and judges by heart what is good or evil, as it is according to the outward nature; what is evil, not to be accepted; what is right and good, to be judged by it, and to give thanks to God. This is my interpretation; if anyone has another, let him follow it, for I have no certain reason from Scripture.

45 Now that he goes on to say about the lower part, to make it two-layered and three-layered, it can be seen how the box is made on the inside. Below it stood in the water, there it leaves a building for all kinds of animals; [there] must have been many chambers with many doors, because the animals all had to graze, and each especially with pairs. I will interpret this to mean that there are various gifts in Christianity. God has given each one his gift to serve Christianity; Paul writes about this in Rom. 12, 6. 1 Cor. 12, 28. 29. Eph. 4, 11: "He has appointed some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as shepherds and teachers" 2c. This interpretation I also do not have from the Scriptures, but it rhymes well with the Scriptures. That is enough of the interpretations. Moses now continues:

**V. 17-22 For behold, I will cause a flood of water to come upon the earth to destroy.**

**I will destroy all flesh in which there is a living breath under heaven; everything on earth will perish. But with thee will I establish a covenant. And thou shalt enter into the casket with thy sons, and with thy wife, and with thy sons' wives. And thou shalt put into the coffer all manner of beasts of all flesh, every pair male and female, that they may live with thee. Of the birds after their kind, of the cattle after their kind, and of all the creeping things of the earth after their kind; of all these a pair each shall go in unto thee, that they may live. And thou shalt take unto thee every kind of meat that is eaten, and gather it unto thee, that it may be food for thee, and for them. And Noah did all that God commanded him.**

Thus God's work goes on forever, so that it is foolish to think that he should ever disgrace the world. Could he not provide so much, since he had in mind to preserve Noah in such a terrible flood of sin, that he could not bring in so much food? Did he first have to gather such a supply of temporal goods, as if God could not feed and nourish them long enough? [He starts and lets Noah take care that he has food and drink. Now why does he do this? First of all, there is no other reason than his will. But yet it is also written to warn us against presumption, which is called tempting God. It is true that God wants all our works to be done in faith, that we do nothing without faith; but nevertheless he does not want us to leave in place what is available and has been given by him beforehand.

47 So that we may see it in other examples: He hath built bridges over the waters, that every man might safely pass over them. If then thou shouldest defy faith, 1) and walk not over the bridge, but upon the waters, thou shalt surely be drowned, and go to the devil. For this would be done, which he neither commanded nor commanded. It may be both, but this he has given, that he has not given. Therefore, because thou feelest not in the spirit that thou hast cause why thou must walk on the water, thou shalt not do it.

48. so Christ also did, as in the

1) In the editions: wollest.

Matthew [Cap. 4, 7]. When the devil led him to the top of the temple to let himself down, he said: "It is written, you shall not tempt God" [Deut. 6, 16]. It would be the same if you were to walk idly and not work, saying, "I believe God will feed me. Not so. It is true that He gives all things, feeds and sustains all things; but that you would not use what you could well use, God would be tempted. For he wants you to use what you have before you, what is already given and available to you; not to open your mouth to heaven and let the creature go that he has given you. He will not do a miracle for your sake without need.

49. But if it so happens that it is out of your control, that you cannot work, that you have no grain, money or cash, you must still believe that God will feed and nourish you. So, if you would like to cross the bridge but could not, and yet you are urged to cross the water, go in God's name with strong faith.

50 In short, it is done for the faith that it travels both in supply and lack on the right middle road, so that it needs the supply with gratitude, where God gives it; also again, where there is lack and yet firmly trusts, through such confidence in lack suffers no distress.

51 Item, the same is to be said of chastity, yes, of all things. Virginity is a great gift, but it comes from heaven; no one is born with it. For God has made it so that this is a male and this is a female. If you now want to let go of what you have in store and can do well, and gaze at heaven, waiting for the high, strange gift, you will be lacking; as now all monks and priests tempt God, yes, desecrate Him with their vowed chastity. If it should be so, you may also say: What may one preach God's word orally in the church, or otherwise hear and read; I would rather wait until God Himself speaks to me from heaven; He will certainly enlighten and set my heart on fire without a word, and give me the spirit 2c.; which He has forbidden.

52 Therefore it is God's will that we use what He has created or ordained, and not throw it to the wind; yet you will have enough to believe. This is what this piece wants to teach, and it is almost necessary that it be well perceived. Since

God presents Himself in such a way that the wise might think Him a fool to take on such a thing; but He does it for the very reason that He makes fools of them in their prudence, as Paul says [1 Cor. 3:19, 20]. Now follow:

## The seventh chapter.

### V. 1. And the LORD said unto Noah, Go into the box, thou, and all thy house.

There you see the right judgment of the Almighty God, which is terrible to hear, but much more terrible to see. St. Peter also quotes it, and moves it up: "God did not spare the former world, but preserved Noah, the preacher of righteousness, and brought the flood upon the world of the wicked. As if to say, That world was much better that time than now, nor did he destroy it; how terribly will he punish now, at the end of the world?"

2 Now therefore behold Noah standing there in the midst of hell. It is a bad history to look at, but so powerful that no one can get enough of it. If it were to happen today that we were to live like him in the box, who would not despair? It is too horrible for reason and the senses to see that they have to float like this, that they have no place to stay, that water bursts and beats above and below.

(3) Secondly, they see nothing before their eyes, where they turn, but only death and dying, which should make one's heart tremble. For in such terrible wrath, since God is so severe that he does not spare any animal for the sake of mankind, they would think that God would also strike among them, especially because they saw the water striking all around.

4 Therefore, see what kind of faith it was that could stand in such a reputation of cruel wrath. There has been a real battle with faith and unbelief, and their heart must have suffered many a strong blow. There they still do not know any

1) In the editions: er.

They had to hold out for forty days, so that they could come out and be safe, neither above nor around themselves. Whoever would have helped him himself would have despaired, for there was no help to be seen. They had to cling to the word alone and fight by faith against all sense and reason. So you see what great, mighty power the word has when it is grasped with faith, that for five months they had death before their eyes without ceasing, and yet could despise it.

(5) Therefore it is written for the praise of faith, as all scripture is given for the strengthening of faith. The fish is one, that Christ might feed the people in the wilderness; and the ox or fatling, slain for the marriage, as it is written in Matthew [Cap. 22:4]. These things are to be preached and rehearsed; no work nor any pretence can help, one must cling nakedly to the mere word that God has said.

### For I have seen you justified before me at this time.

This was so strong that it preserved them all with the ark in death, who otherwise would not have remained one day. The faith had to remain alive, even if there had been an eternal flood of sin. So they had to give themselves freely in the midst of death, so that they would be lost body and soul, where the word had not been.

7 Let us therefore also learn, when the hour cometh that we should die, and death is before our eyes, and with his look the devil's deceitfulness and God's wrath terrifieth us; lest thou think thou must perish, and grope about thee, and see where thou shalt tarry and stand (as they do that say, I die, and know not when; I go, and know not when).



not where). There you must close your eyes and all your senses, neither knowing nor wanting to hear, but what God's word says, not paying attention to what you feel, or ever overcoming it. Take hold of the word and do not let it be taken away from you, that you say: Here I am in distress and fear, but I know that I have been baptized and that God has promised me this and that; therefore, as much and as strongly as death may break in, hold out his word to him.

8 It will not do to say, "Oh! who has served God and done many good works. These are vain, nonsensical words, so that the devil only makes the poor people despondent. But then one should say: I have sinned and done much evil, and I am sorry for it; but you are such a God, who does not consider how pious or how evil one is, if one only looks and trusts in your goodness. Thus one can recover and remain in death, as the eight remained in the midst of the flood. That is what one should learn from this. Now this is the promise given to Noah: "Go into the box, you and your whole house" 2c. And these are living words, in which they are much more firmly preserved than in the box. For if he had not had this, he would have had to sink deeper than under the earth, where it could be. But to us they are written for an example, to strengthen and comfort the faith.

(9) And here it is necessary to be accustomed to the fact that the Scripture is called a "house", since we say "wife and child". But he excludes the servants, understands only what is of one flesh and blood and of the clan. Accordingly, in the other book of Moses [Cap. 1, 17. 21.], we read of the mothers of sorrow: "Because they feared God and let the children of the Jews live, he made them houses," that is, he gave them men and children; not that he built them houses of wood and stones. So you will find hereafter in this book, Cap. 30:3, how Rachel, when she had no children, gave her handmaid to Jacob her husband, saying, "Lie with her, that I may be built up by her," that is, that we may chasten ourselves and become more in the house. So he says here: "Thou and all thy house," that is, thy wife, three sons, and their wives.

**V. 2.3 From all the clean livestock take to you seven and seven, the little woman and her maiden; but from the unclean livestock a couple each,**

**the male and his female. The same of the birds of the air, seven and seven, the male and his female, that seed may live upon the face of the whole earth.**

(10) This is a strange text, so that I would not know why it was said if it did not contain mysteria, that is, spiritual interpretations. Above [Cap. 6, 20] he said about pairs and pairs, as also afterwards in this chapter, and yet here in the middle of the text he speaks that he should make a distinction between the clean and the unclean, and especially he expresses the birds, that he should take seven and seven in each.

(11) First of all, it is clear to see that much of the Law of Moses is taken from the ancient histories of the patriarchs. For so we read in the third book of Moses [Cap. 11, 3. 9. 10.] that God makes a distinction between the clean and the unclean, which are to be eaten or not eaten, and says what the sign is of the clean animals, namely, what splits the claws in two in the middle and chews the cud; item, from the fish, which have scales and raft feathers 2c. This is what Noah already said here, distinguishing the animals. In this way, Moses shows how the Law was already in effect in many parts among the earliest fathers, which he subsequently compiled, increased and improved by God's command.

12) As to the second, why he says here seven and seven each of the clean animals and birds, and above in the sixth chapter, v. 20, only one pair of all kinds of cattle and birds, we leave it until the mysteria. For according to the written sense, it is enough to think that there were not too many unclean animals in the box. After that, when Noah came in, he was to sacrifice perhaps once or twice, as it was already done, as afterwards with Moses in the law. If he had taken only one pair of clean animals with him, nothing else would have remained, so that a living seed would have been preserved.

**V. 4. For yet more than seven days will I cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights, and will destroy every living thing from off the face of the earth that I have made.**

This is the last sermon that Noah preached "on earth" before the flood, when he had now registered and prepared all things. But the people were now used to him bluing with them so long, 1) that it did not help and they were only hardened. Therefore Moses besieged:

**V.5-10. And Noah did all that the Lord commanded him. Now he was six hundred years old when the waters of the flood came upon the earth, and he went into the coffer with his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives, before the waters of the flood: of the clean cattle, and of the unclean, and of the fowls, and of all the creeping things of the earth, went into the coffer with him in pairs, male and female, as the LORD commanded him. And when the seven days were expired, the waters of the flood came upon the earth.**

14. above [Cap. 5, 32.] he says that he was five hundred years old, now he says six hundred, that he has just preached a hundred years, and has given the castes enough time to mend. They lived a long time at the same time, so God gave them such a long time. Now He does not give such a long time, because we do not live so long. This also made them angry and hardened them, so that they thought: God gives us such a long respite, makes us comfortable, which is a sign that He is merciful to us and does not yet have need; if He were so angry and wanted to plague us so horribly, He would not let us live so long; as all unbelievers think. But God only allows them to be blinded and hardened by the fact that they deserve it.

(15) But when it came upon their necks, they fled, and had nowhere to go. God would not listen to them anymore, because they had not obeyed any preaching; they had called him in vain, so he calls them again in vain (Micah 3:4). So we are to learn in this, both the long-suffering and the wrath and punishment of God.

**V. 11: In the six hundredth year of Noah's age, on the seventeenth day of the second month.**

1) to blanch - to struggle, to toil.

16) Whoever reads in Moses must be accustomed to the fact that he uses many words in a hostile manner, so that he always does one thing, and is sometimes rich beyond measure, and therefore floods with words; again, at times so ill that he hardly dribbles, and does many things with one word, that it might be annoying to one who does not know the way of language. But God allows it to be written in such a way that he makes a fool of reason, because where he speaks most foolishly, he is most wise; therefore it is not to be despised. But he does it here in the chapter especially because Noah was concerned about it, since he was in such fear. When one is in distress, it is not too much to hear a word three or four times, one cannot preach and comfort enough; but when one has a good rest, one soon becomes discontented, as here one would think: You fool, why do you speak so many words? because it seems like he is washed; but this does not make anything different, because we are not in the sense that he had here.

**V.11-24. This is the day when all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and opened the windows of heaven, and there came rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights. That same day Noah went into the box with Shem, Ham, and Japheth his sons, and with his wife, and his sons' three wives. And all manner of beasts after their kind, and all manner of cattle after their kind, and all manner of creeping things that creep upon the earth after their kind, and all manner of fowls after their kind, and all that fly, and all that have feet, all went in unto Noah into the coffer by couples, of all flesh, wherein was a living spirit: and they were male and female of all flesh, and went in, as God commanded him: and the LORD shut up after him. Then the flood came upon the earth forty days, and the waters increased, and lifted up the box, and carried it up above the earth. So the waters overflowed, and increased greatly on the earth, so that the box on the waters**

2) hostile-----very much.

went. And the waters overflowed, and increased so much upon the earth, that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered; fifteen cubits high did the waters overflow the mountains that were covered. Then all flesh that crept upon the earth perished, of birds, of cattle, of beasts, and of all that moved upon the earth, and of all men; every living thing that had a living breath in the dry land died. So everything that was on the face of the earth was destroyed, from man to beast, and to creeping things, and to the fowls of the air, all were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah remained, and all that was with him in the box. And the waters stood upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

(17) Then he says where the waters come from, that is, from below and above. What then are the fountains of the deep, and windows of heaven? It is spoken with flowery words, and so much is said: Where there was depth, as great ponds and lakes, there it went out, welled up and poured out, so that it washed away; so that the wells are, from where it welled up, and is broken out below; but above it is poured in.

Broken with a vain breast of clouds, 1) and violently washed away, suddenly gave much water; for much water belonged to it, that it went fifteen cubits over all the mountains, as he writes here.

(18) Of the secret interpretation of this chapter I will not say much; for what the flood signifies is sufficiently dealt with above [Cap. 6, § 35]; but of the clean and unclean animals belongs in another book of Moses, where it is commanded not to eat of unclean things, nor to sacrifice. For this interpretation is too broad and belongs to the gospel and the law. We have it also still in many pieces that we do not eat some animals, which uncleanness does not come from nature, but from God's law. So from the beginning of the world there have always been some statutes. For it is almost impossible for a government to exist without various outward statutes. The fathers already had differences among the animals, but they undoubtedly dealt with them freely, according to the freedom of conscience, just as many prophets afterwards did under the law.

1) Cloud breast - cloudburst.

## The eighth chapter.

V.1-12. Then God remembered Noah, and all the animals, and all the cattle that were with him in the box, and caused the wind to come upon the earth, and the waters fell, and the wells of the deep were stopped up, along with the windows of heaven, and the rain from heaven was prevented, and the waters went out from the earth continually, and decreased after an hundred and fifty days. On the seventeenth day of the seventh moon, the box settled on Mount Ararat. The waters continued to flow and recede until the tenth moon. On the first day of the tenth moon, the tops of the mountains appeared. After forty days Noah opened the window of the box he had made and let a raven fly out; it flew out and came back again, just as it had done.

When the waters dried up on the earth. Then he sent out a dove to see if the water had fallen on the earth. When the dove did not find a place to rest its foot, it came back to him in the box, because the water was still all over the ground. Then he waited another seven days, and again a dove flew out of the box, and came to him at supper time; and, behold, it had broken off a leaf of oil, and was carrying it in its mouth. Then Noah heard that the waters had fallen on the earth. He waited another seven days, and sent forth a dove, which came not again to him.

The chapter stops, how the flood has decreased and has gone away, after it had stood and grown an awful long time, and also has cost some days, until it has passed; hundred and fifty days it has stood, says the text, that is almost half a year. Then you can think: should Noah not have trembled and fidgeted with his own during that time, so that it would not stop? God's work is so horrible and terrible; faith is still much stronger, which can endure it and expect the end. To indicate this, he describes it here so diligently with so many words that he also counts the days so evenly. First, he says that it began to decrease after a hundred and fifty days, that the box stood on the highest mountain Ararat in the seventh month, when the water had previously gone fifteen cubits high over all the mountains. After that it fell forty days, until the tenth moon. Then he waited until the other moons of the following year. So he stayed in the box for one year and two moons. This is to show the power of faith and the miraculous work of God.

After that, he sets two pieces, one of the raven and one of the dove. And it is strange to behold, as if nothing had happened in the box but this. Of the first he sent forth a raven, saith Moses, which flew out, and returned as long as the waters were dry. That is so much said: he made it so long with the coming again, until it became quite dry, that he should still come again. As we would say in German: He comes and comes, he waits and waits; that is, it will be until he remains outside.

But what lusts the Holy Spirit to speak such a thing? It is a loose history, to reckon humanly. But God does not judge as men do; He is the Master who knows what He should have written. Summa Summarum: The history has that in itself, that Noah naturally needs the raven; because he is the kind, where he comes on a rotten carrion, he sits on it and eats; [so] Noah thought, he would eat himself full and come again. But he would not, and remained outside.

4 Then he sent out the dove, which was to come again and say. This is a

pure animal, eatset no carrion nor unclean; therefore a saying is: It is so pure, as if the doves had selected it. This one comes again, and brings nothing. The other brings a green oil leaf; the third remains outside.

If one wants to interpret this, one cannot do it better than to the preachers who are commanded to preach God's word. The Christian church, signified by Noah's box, has two kinds of preachers: first, the belly-servants and gluttons, signified by the raven, who seek nothing by preaching but to have enough and fill their bellies; where the word will not serve their bellies, they turn their noses at it, so that it must be directed to it. In addition, if it goes to the meeting, that they should confess it, then they deny; these are unclean rogues, who eat carrion; we must have these also. For so it has been in all the times of the prophets and apostles until now, that beside the right doctrine false teachers fly out; for this purpose this raven shall be lifted up, that he preacheth the right law of God, though he interpreteth it not aright.

Our lumpen preachers, who preach humanity alone, are not yet so good. Now, these also come from the box, have the name that they belong to Christianity, are preachers and bishops. But what do they do? They eat unclean, dead carrion; that is, their doctrine is all of flesh and blood and outward works; there they drag the Scriptures, there they stop, they do not come back, as Paul [1 Tim. 5:12, 6:4, 5 Tit. 3:11] says: "They have their judgment there." The hub brings no good testimony, nor anything comforting; such teachers preach, since no one has any joy from it, make vain fear of the conscience.

7. but those who are signified by the dove are those who walk in the word of God with simplicity; as St. Paul [2 Cor. 1:12. That is, we preachers have a simple mind, like the doves, seeking nothing else but the pure teaching of the gospel, desiring neither honor nor favor, daring everything to be done only so that the teaching may remain pure, so that it may be done to them as God would have it.

will. But the others are not simple-minded, but are full of their own profit; this is a mischievous eye, as Christ says [Matt. 6:23]. Now this is the dear dove, which first flees, but finds nothing; it is not yet time for the gospel to be preached; God must be left to flee, until the raven gorges itself full of carrion; therefore it comes back into the box.

(8) And again he sends forth another dove, which cometh again, bringing a leaf of oil in the mouth at the time of vespers. All Scripture has indicated everywhere that the Gospel is to be the last sermon; therefore one finds in Scripture from time to time that the evening always means and indicates the last time and sermon, as also in the Gospel, where Christ [Luc. 14, 16.] compares it to the Lord's Supper. Even though the evening is long gone, it is still the last sermon, after which there should be no other. That is why the dove comes at vespers, when the day is about to end.

(9) What is the oil leaf in their mouth? Nothing else, but the pure gospel in the mouth of the pure preachers. Oil signifies grace and mercy throughout the Scriptures. For it is of such a nature that, as wine makes the body inwardly beautiful and joyful, so oil makes the body outwardly beautiful, supple, smooth, and beautiful. Because it so delicately soothes, heals and soothes with its sweet, delicate juice, it signifies divine grace and mercy preached through the gospel. Therefore the dove carries the oil leaf in its mouth; for the leaf signifies the preaching, as the fruit signifies the works. So see what the gospel is: nothing else, but like the oil leaf, which the dove brings into the box.

(10) From such an example and figure we Christians should make a daily proverb, against all doctrines and laws of men, which we should keep in our speeches: The dove brings nothing in the mouth, but the oil leaf, that is, one should preach nothing in Christianity. Preach something else than the true gospel? Otherwise, if something else were to be preached, it would be some leaf from a bush, 1) or a piece of rotten carrion.

bring. He who does not lead the oil leaf is not the pure dove, that is, he who does not preach the gospel alone is not a Christian preacher. So such *figurae allegoricae*, that is, which mean something secret, serve for mean sayings. Thus the Holy Spirit takes pleasure in describing such simple histories. I think it would have been necessary to write other things; he lets that go and takes the very least.

(11) When this was done, Noah saw, as Moses says in the beginning of this chapter, that God remembered him; now the distress is ended, and the wrath is gone. This is now the last sermon, as the dove is the last messenger, after which no more shall come. When this goes out, we have a certain sign of grace, that God turns away the wrath; there comes comfort, and the temptation ceases, and the heart comes forth from death into life. Up to now, the pious Noah has always been in a great struggle, so that the dove with the oil leaf has certainly been a comforting messenger.

**In the six hundred and one year of Noah's age, on the first day of the first month, the waters of the earth dried up. Then Noah took the roof off the box and saw that the ground was dry. So the earth became completely dry on the seventh and twentieth day of the second month.**

You see that they have been in the box for a whole year. Above [Cap. 7, 11.] he says, how he went in in the six hundredth year, on the seventeenth day of the other moon. Here he says that the earth became completely dry in the six hundredth and one year, on the seventh and twentieth day of the other moon, that Noah went out. On the first day of the first moon, he says, the earth dried up; then, on the seventh and twentieth day of the second moon, it became completely dry, that is, it lasted three months after the dove flew out, and even longer.

**V.15-19. Then God spoke to Noah, saying, "Come out of the box, you and your wife, your sons and your sons' wives with you, all the animals that are with you, of all kinds of flesh, of birds, of cattle and of all kinds of worms,**

**that creepeth upon the earth, let it go forth with thee. And stir yourselves upon the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. So Noah went out with his sons and with his wife and his sons' wives. And every kind of beast, and every kind of creeping thing, and every kind of fowl, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, went forth out of the box, every one to his own kind.**

(13) This is also a proper text for faith, for you see that he did not go out of the box, nor would he have gone out before God commanded him to do so. By God's commandment he went in, by God's commandment he goes out again, and not only he, but all that lived on earth. And see how it goes one after the other. First, God bids him, his wife, sons and their wives, and animals, to go out. Then He says, "Be fruitful and multiply." For it seemed as if there should be no more life left on earth; therefore he tells them to discipline themselves again. And this is not only a commandment, but also strict earnestness, as we have heard above.

(14) Now this is shown in all of Moses, more than in all of Scripture, that no life or work is valid before God that he does not command, either publicly or secretly through men. Therefore he did not let Noah do anything, because he had commanded him to do it; although it was done here that such a work had to be done, that he went out of the box with everything that was with him, because he saw that God had let the whole earth become dry; nevertheless he was not allowed to do it until he had commanded him to do it, so that he would be sure that his work would be in God's favor.

(15) Accordingly, each one should arrange his state and all his works in such a way that he may be sure that they please God, and live in such a way that we may always be ready for death. Which no one can do unless he is sure that his life and what he does will please God. For he who cannot say this is in a damned state. But that we may be sure of this, it will not be done by works, but by faith, which makes a man comfortable, and assures the heart that everything pleases God;

And even if he does something he does not like, it often happens that he still credits him with it. For man's life is such that he does many things that he would not like to have done, as Paul says in Romans 7:19. But nothing else comes of it, 1) nor can anything else come of it; sins and gross infirmities must always run along with it; therefore man becomes hostile to your life, and always desires death. Thus a Christian man must always deal with the works that are allowed to grace and mercy; he would like to deal with good works, but he cannot.

(16) Therefore, we have taught that the whole life must be based on faith and God's words if it is to please God. For faith without the word is nothing. For what shall I believe if no one promises me? If something is to be promised to me, the word must come to me. Therefore Moses concludes that before everything we do, there must first be God's word, and then we must cling to it through faith. So man can happily say: God has said this, I am sure of it, and I cannot be deceived, so I know that what I do pleases Him; and if I find it, He spares me and looks through my fingers until I am dead.

17 You will find this especially in Moses' books, that it seems to me that he wanted to do it so that he would teach us not to do any work, because we have the testimony of God that it pleases him. With this, all life and being is already down, except for God's commandment. So tell me, where will those remain who have conceived and chosen beings of their own, of which God has not commanded? How can anyone say that the works of the so-called spiritual state are pleasing to God, because no one can say that he commanded them? If you are not sure that he has commanded it, you are in danger that it will not please him; or, if it does please him, you do not know it. For this reason they build on sand and uncertainty. Yes, they say, the Christian church and holy fathers have ordered it so, therefore we are obedient; so God will say again: Yes, where is my word? where have I ordered it to be so?

1) In the issues: not different from.

The devil will pretend this to you when you die; so you are uncertain whether it is rightly commanded, because they themselves do not know whether it pleases God. But "uncertain" cannot receive the puff, nor escape the devil.

18 For this reason I have often preached that no one should do anything that is good in the sight of God, unless he first knows whether it pleases him. If you do something on your own initiative, so that it seems good to you, only know for certain that it is the devil's work.

19 Therefore notice this text, how Noah, the holy man full of the Spirit, does not step out of the ark without the word of God; indeed, that no animal should hedge until God has commanded it. Therefore he comes before anyone speaks of it, saying, "Reprove, be fruitful, and multiply." In short, he will not let any creature do any work, for he has commanded it. Thus we have heard above in the first chapter, "And God said," 2c. that no thing could thus go as it goes, he must first call it; nor do we want to be wiser and more than God, that we do everything according to our own conceit, and do not once think on God's word.

**Noah built an altar unto the LORD, and took of all clean cattle, and of all clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings upon the altar. And the LORD smelled the sweet savour, and said in his heart, 1) I will curse the earth no more for man's sake: for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. And I will no more smite all that liveth, as I have done. As long as the earth stands, seed and harvest, frost and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease.**

(20) The sacrifice that was made in the Old Testament was commonly of doves or turtledoves, and of birds. But of cattle, goats, sheep, and bullocks or oxen. We will save these for the fourth book of Moses. And among other sacrifices, the burnt offering is chief, of which it is said here. This was

such a sacrifice, of which the priests got nothing, but had to be burned even, with dung and fur. Which all points to the faith; of it is to be said elsewhere.

(21) What is this that the Scripture says, as if God had a nose, and smelled sheep and cattle, and said that it was a sweet savour unto him, as it is afterwards often read in Moses? After all, it is a small pleasure to smell an ox or sheep being burned to powder. Therefore it is a spiritual smell; and that it comes before God is that God learns of it, or makes it known to Him, and takes care of the sacrifice, just as one can test what it is from the smell that one has of a thing that one does not otherwise see. So he wants to say that something pleasant and agreeable happens to him, which he likes and pleases him, from which a good cry goes out and comes before him. And this is especially said of our faith. If I do something pleasing in the sight of God, and my heart feels it, as it surely must, it is still hidden from me; therefore, as it is in my heart, so it is in the sight of God. The heart must perceive that it is pleasing to God, pleasant and a pleasant smell, but because I do not yet see it, it is still covered up in faith. Therefore, the Scriptures speak of how it is between God and us, that it be as we hold it, as my heart walks in faith. So the scripture writes that he now smells, now not, therefore that I feel it, now therefore, now differently.

22) There now come again the comforting promises of God, since the text thus says: "God said in His heart, I will no longer curse the earth for the sake of mankind" 2c. Who said this to Noah or to Most? It is this much: he felt it in the bottom of his heart that God would no longer curse the earth for man's sake. Why is that? "Because the thoughts of man's heart are evil from his youth." This is truly praised, and a great honor to us. He who thinks himself a man may well let the rhyme stand. It is painted in the shield of all of us, that we may put down our faces and never cheerfully rise up. And so I will say: What good would it do if I beat them without ceasing; I can see that it is ruined; it is nothing.

1) The words: "in his heart" are missing here in the editions; but later in the interpretation (Z22) they are set.

Good from his youth, that no young child is pure and innocent; for he speaks of those who are not baptized. If then all the intentions and thoughts of man, which come from your free will, are evil, what should the works be? For this is what the world must say: What comes from a wicked, mischievous heart is not good, even if it seems to be the very finest, and is called a treacherous evil. There all our clergymen, that is, world saints, are attacked, that God says out of thin air: there are boys in the skin, where they are the best; how they take it and write it, it is all basically evil.

(23) Therefore he says: I will no more smite the world so, with all that liveth. For after the mark he smites

He will leave a city, a country and a heap, but he will do so no more; we are safe until the last day. Day and night, summer and winter shall remain, lest all things perish, as long as the earth stand. And with it it is indicated that it is not to stand eternally, that once the youngest day will come. So long he will let it remain, until he turns it all around. However, land must always remain, which takes seed to itself, and grows, and lets it harvest. All this shall be consumed in one day, but no longer by water, but by fire; so that there shall be no more day nor night, winter nor summer, seed nor harvest, but new heavens and earth, and one everlasting day.

1) Erlanger: neus.

## The ninth chapter.

**V. 1-3. And God blessed Noah and his sons, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. Let your fear and dread be upon all the beasts of the earth, upon all the fowls of the air, and upon every creeping thing that creepeth upon the face of the earth; and let every fish of the sea be delivered into your hand. Let everything that moves and lives be your food; like the green herb, I have given it all to you.**

Since God, as we have heard, had destroyed the whole world by his wrath, so that it seemed as if he no longer wanted to show mercy, therefore he repeats here everything that he had given to man before. The first, that they should discipline themselves and multiply. The other, that they should be lords over all animals, birds and fish. And here he adds to this. For before the flood it is not read that he gave them flesh to eat, so that it is a little better here than before.

(2) But all things are spoken and written for this purpose, that we may see, as it hath been sufficiently said, how that God would not have any thing done upon earth, which was not first commanded of him; that no work should be done, except by his word, or without his command. Which also all creatures keep, without

man and the devil. The others could not go otherwise than as God has ordered, without us being angry and having transgressed; yet it must nevertheless go according to God's order, that men chasten and multiply themselves.

3. that he now says: "Your fear and terror be over all animals and birds, and fish in the sea", is not to think that we should have all fish in the great sea, and all animals on earth. I some person can not have all the fish and animals in forests under hand. It is said to the whole community that everything that lives would have to be subject to men if they did together. Thus the power is not given to each in particular, but to the multitude, that it may bring all things to and under itself. "The fish in the sea." Sea 2) is the name given to all large bodies of water, which we call ponds, small and large lakes, item swamps, in which fish walk and live, as is the scriptural way of speaking. But that he gives them power to eat flesh is, as I said, a new gift. But there went out the unclean beasts, as yet before the eyes, that one might

2) "Sea" is missing in the Wittenberg and the Erlanger.



does not eat them. But he only takes a common excerpt from all kinds of animals and says:

**V. 4. 5. But eat not the flesh with the blood, wherein is the soul. For I will require your blood, wherein is your soul, from the hands of every beast; and I will require the soul of man from the hands of man, and every man's soul from the hands of another.**

This commandment is almost enforced in the Old Testament through the Book of Leviticus. [The Jews also still keep it strictly, that they strip the blood from all flesh and squeeze it. But the reason why it is forbidden to eat, I do not know, especially according to history, because he wanted to wean us so that we would not become addicted to blood, and also gain a horror 1) to shed human blood. For the death stroke had already begun and come into the world from Cain, that God struck a special prohibition on it, as he also does here. By this commandment he wanted to tear the people away from it, so that they would become timid. But now we no longer hold such things, comforting ourselves that in the New Testament we are free from such outward statutes, as Paul often indicates in his epistles, that all statutes are no longer valid in Christianity.

5 So here he adds the cause itself, and says: "In it is the soul. "For I will have your blood, wherein is the soul" 2c. "The soul," that is, "the life." I would that we had such a word in our language, that we might rightly give the Hebrew word *nephesh*. When we call "the soul" according to our language, we call the other part of man that separates from the body, that is, the Scriptures commonly call "the spirit. For the Hebrew language is much richer than we in our language. But "soul" they call the bodily life, which we naturally lead, according to the five senses. So it is commonly used in Scripture, as one often reads in the third book of Moses [Cap. 5, 2. 7, 21.]: "When a soul defiles itself." Item [Deut. 19, 11. 22, 26.]: "If someone strikes a soul," and the-

1) In the editions: "a grawen"; but "grauen" is always of the neuter gender in Luther.

same that it is called no more, because a natural man.

(6) So we shall hear in the twelfth chapter [v. 5], how Abraham went forth with all the substance which they had gained, and souls which they had begotten; and Cap. 46, 27. how Jacob went into Egypt with seventy souls. We cannot suffer it well in our language, but must be accustomed to the Scripture way. So also understand the saying in the Gospel [John 12:25], "He that hateth his soul keepeth it unto life eternal." Item [Joh. 10, 12.]: "I leave my soul for my sheep." If one wants it rightly German, it is so much: I leave my body life for my sheep. Item: He who sets down his body life and despises it. Therefore do not think, as some pagans have thought, that the spirit or soul dwells in the blood; for where this would be, the soul could never separate from the blood. For I will require your blood from the hands of every beast, and I will require the soul of man from the hands of man," which is to say, "Whosoever sheddeth blood, I will require it of him, though he be a beast. This is a strange saying, since one can see that this commandment is actually intended to prevent murder and death. Therefore it follows:

**V. 6. 7. Whoever sheds man's blood, his blood shall also be shed by man, for God made man in His image. Be fruitful and multiply, and be active on the earth, that you may become many.**

7) The 2) is the first commandment of the worldly sword: Whoever sheds men's blood, he shall be guilty that his blood be shed again; yet not that he [God] will do it himself, but [it] shall be done by men. In the words the worldly authority is appointed, and the right of God, the sword, is given into its hand. As also above [Gen. 4:14] of Cain, when he said, "Thus it shall come to pass, that whosoever finds me shall slay me," which he would not have said if Adam had not wielded the sword. Therefore Noah will have preached and led this also. This is one that is founded here.

2) Erlanger: Da.

(8) But understand the saying to mean that it is true that all the blood of the slayer is shed by the hands of men, unless God comes first. For he only establishes law and power here, although it is often abated by those who have the law. This does not mean that justice is abolished, but rather that it continues; for he does not say *de facto* what is to be done, but *de jure* what is to be done, what is to be done; but for this reason it does not always happen so soon.

**V. 8-17. God further said to Noah and to his sons with him, "Behold, I establish a covenant with you, and with your seed after you, and with every living creature that is with you, of birds, and of cattle, and of all the beasts of the earth that are with you, of all that are gone out of the casket, of whatsoever beasts they be upon the earth. And establish my covenant with you, that henceforth all flesh shall no more be destroyed with the waters of the flood, neither shall there any more come a flood to destroy the earth. And God said: This is the sign of my covenant, which I have made between me and every living creature among you forever. I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be the sign of my covenant between me and the earth. And when it comes that I bring clouds over the earth, then my bow shall be seen in the clouds. Then I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures in all flesh, so that there will no longer be a flood to destroy all flesh. Therefore my bow shall be in the clouds, that I may look upon it, and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature in all flesh that is upon the earth. God said the same thing to Noah: "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between Me and all flesh on earth.**

9 See the order. First, he has exposed it again according to the outward nature, given more gift, freedom to eat meat, and given new laws. For he seeth that there is no good in us: therefore, though he cannot inwardly, yet will he outwardly defend the wicked with the sword; for the pious may not. Now make

He also gives faith for his own, first the word and then the sign. For he has acted this way from the beginning: when he gives the gospel, he does not leave it at the word, but adds a sign. As we have in the New Testament the word [Marc. 16, 16.]: "He that believeth" 2c., with it also the sign: "He that is baptized." Likewise we have Christ's body and blood in the bread and wine besides the word [Matth. 26, 26. 27.]. So he does like a pious, faithful man who writes a letter and presses his seal on it.

(10) But these words are not yet the true gospel, for it is a promise that concerns not only them, the people, but all the animals of the earth; it is a physical good and benefit that he promised before Noah asked for it or thought about it. Therefore he keeps these words, we believe or not. Noah had faith, and was a devout man. The animals could not believe, yet he also promised them. But it helps Noah that his faith is strengthened and comforted. But he speaks differently, not that no flesh should perish, but that it should no longer be destroyed by the waters and the flood. As if to say, I will hereafter cause another destruction, not with water, but with fire at the last day [2 Pet. 3:7]. Item, that he says: "all flesh", indicates that it may well happen that a city or country is drowned; item, that the animals are drowned in the water; but in general it shall not perish. These are the words; now of the sign.

(11) Here the masters of the pagans, the philosophers, wanted to be clever, and were almost worried and broken about what the rainbow was, and they were hostilely striving, 1) how it happened that it always stood against the sun, and generally against the morning, when the sun stood against the evening. Item, that it is only half round, some have said, it 2) comes from the fact that the hollow clouds push the ray of the sun back against the sun, so that it breaks and makes such an arc of various colors. Some bring also other causes, mean, we should it

1) That is, very much sought after. Jenaer and Wittenberger: "vleissig betrachtet".

2) Erlanger: er.

believe. But if you look at it, it is such loose fables, as if it had been said by vain old cripples. So leave off such fables and follow the Scriptures, which say that it is because God says: "When I cover the sky with clouds, then my bow shall be seen in the clouds"; not that it is always seen when there are clouds in the sky, for he does not say that; but when he desires, he makes us see him.

12. as often as we see him (he says), he wants us to remember the covenant he made with us. So we shall know and understand how it means so much that God remembers his promise not to drown the world any more with the flood of sin, and reminds us of the great wrath and judgment that went over the whole world before, that there is none more terrible from the beginning to the end of the world. Thus he admonishes us of the terrible wrath that the world deserved, and still deserves, and yet comforts us that he will no longer punish it so, because the earth stands.

013 And what is this, that he saith, Then will I remember my covenant; item, Therefore shall my bow be in the clouds, that I may look upon it, and remember my everlasting covenant? When is he ever so drowsy that he forgets, when all things are ever before his eyes, that he must see and cannot forget? But these are sayings that indicate the nature of faith. The Scripture says that God remembers when we feel and realize that he remembers, namely, when he presents himself outwardly in such a way that we notice how he remembers. For since the bow does not always stand, it seems outwardly as if he does not always remember it; but when it is seen, we can say: Behold, God remembers his word. So it all goes like this: as I stand against God, so He stands against me; He cannot otherwise deal with us except by words and signs. Therefore, it is called "remembering" when it is done in such a way that I see and hear it. You must be accustomed to this throughout the Scriptures. So we have the flood of sin gone, which is all written for our sake, that we may learn what God's works are.

14. but if there is still the point, which means that one should not eat blood; that must be

we act a little, because <sup>as</sup> stands here first, and is often repeated in the Scriptures. But I have said before that where one cannot prove the interpretation, one should not build and stand firmly on it; so here I say that what is interpreted is right and true, but that it rhymes here, I do not want to die on it. First, to eat and drink is to believe in the Scriptures, or to see the doctrine with faith; as in the Gospel of John the bread signifies the doctrine or law, the fish good examples. This is right and certain by Scripture through and through; for Christ [John 6:54] clearly says, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life," is not said of bodily, but of spiritual eating, as he himself interprets it, v. 35, which is, "He that believeth on me." Thus to eat is always to believe; but according as the food is, so is the eating; as the doctrine is, so is the faith. If the doctrine is right, it is also right faith; if it is wrong and poisoned, it is also wrong, dead faith.

(15) Since it is also said here about food, it must of course concern doctrine and faith, so that the blood means the doctrine that God does not want. But which is it? I have often said that the Christian life consists of two parts. When one preaches about faith, one should see to it that one preaches in the most truthful way, for it cannot suffer anything to be added to it; but love can suffer many things, as Paul says [1 Cor. 13:7]: "Love endures all things," even the most wicked of boys, as Christ has borne us; but faith bears nothing, thus saying: "That people live imperfectly, there may be patience, but with unrighteous doctrine I have no patience.

Therefore, there is a great difference between 1) doctrine and life. With doctrine there is no joking, it must remain pure and right, but with life we do not keep it so strict. As can be seen in the Gospel, Christ is patient with the disciples and sees through their fingers when they stumble. But he also punishes them at times, saying, "This is not right; this is the teaching. But with the Pharisees and hypocrites

1) "the" is missing in the Erlanger.

he never had any patience; for it is not the life that is affected, but the doctrine. The greatest power lies in the doctrine; if it remains pure, one can bear all kinds of imperfect life and weakness, so far as one holds to the doctrine and confesses that life should be different; but where the doctrine is falsified, life can no longer be helped.

(17) So God relents here, wanting people to eat flesh, but refusing to eat blood. As if to say: Keep only faith pure, though you cannot keep and have love pure and perfect. The blood is pure in man, because the soul is in it. That is, faith teaches: You are condemned from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet. That is why we are baptized and immersed in water, so that it may be understood that man must be drowned and perish in this life, because this bodily life is vain sin. Now he that preacheth otherwise, and layeth up our own work, as the Jews did, when they said that the law of Moses must be kept, giveth blood to eat, wherein is life in the flesh; that is, he maketh men to stand in their vesture and blood, because we are born in it.

(18) So I could well bear all the errors that the pope, bishops, 2c. have, apart from doctrine; but that they want to have their doctrine preached, and condemn ours, that is not for us to suffer. For they have corrupted the world, they have preached nothing, that the old Adam might be killed, and they have not suffered him that would preach it. Therefore their doctrine is nothing but eating blood and drinking. So you see why God forbade so severely to eat blood, that is, not to preach anything that makes men able and strengthens works, but only that man must die before God. Therefore, when I preach thus: Dear man, if you want to be saved, it is necessary that you despair of everything that is human, and die to everything that is innate to you [1 Pet. 2, 24], take off the old Adam altogether, and crawl into another skin [Col. 3, 9, 10.], that is preached purely, and no blood eaten.

19 Now against this is that preaching. For they let man still live in his will and works, as something before God.

should apply. If then thou teachest to kill man [Rom. 8, 13. Col. 3, 5.], thou mayest eat flesh; but from the blood thou must beware, that is, thou teachest to put to death the flesh that is not yet in the pit. The flesh cannot be cast away altogether; for what is not perfect we must suffer, and bear the infirmity. Let that be enough of it.

**V. 18-29. The sons of Noah who went out of the box are these: Shem, Ham, Japheth. Ham however is the father Canaan. These are the three sons of Noah, by whom all the lands were occupied. And Noah began and became a husbandman, and planted vineyards. And when he drank of the wine, he was drunken, and lay uncovered in the tabernacle. When Ham, Canaan's father, saw his father's shame, 1) he told his two brothers outside. Then Shem and Japheth took their garment, and put it on both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered their father's shame; and their faces were turned away, that they might not see their father's shame. When Noah awoke from his wine, and learned what his little son had done to him, he said, Cursed be Canaan, and be a servant of all the servants of his brethren. And said further, Praise be to GOD, the LORD of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant. Let God spread out Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant. Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years, and his whole age was nine hundred and fifty years, and he died.**

20 This history is easy in itself, that Noah, the holy patriarch, teaches the world also to seek temporal food, as when he planted vineyards and built them. For this is not to be rejected, that the Scripture speaks of the holy fathers, how they outwardly performed small works.

1) Marginal gloss: Father's shame. Many interpret this story to mean that prelates should not be punished for their vices, which Christ and all the apostles did. But interpret it correctly, that Noah is Christ and all believers. Let drunkenness be love and faith in the Holy Spirit. The nakedness is the cross and suffering before the world. Ham are the false saints of works and the glorifiers who mock Christ and his own, and take pleasure in their sufferings. Shem and Japheth are the pious Christians who praise and honor such suffering.

See what they have done, so that it is not evil, but well done, to work the earth and bring forth the food that God wants to give.

21 Although it is also indicated that it should be used moderately. For God showers us abundantly with his goods, but no one needs them except the spirit; where this is lacking, they are misused, so that they are 1) squandered away nefariously, or that avarice takes hold of them too much, and no one enjoys them.

This chapter also gives an almost good sermon for us Germans. For here we have an example that we get drunk and drunk up. For the text clearly says how the holy man became drunk, as we will also hear about Lot hereafter [Cap. 19, 33, 35]. Nevertheless, we cannot soon blame this work for being done so badly, although the Scripture does not say whether it was done well or badly. But the fact that it says that he was a holy man also indicates that he certainly did not do it out of any evil opinion or intention, that he may or may not have done it, but perhaps, when he was tired, he wanted to refresh himself and thus became drunk; so that such a work might well be done by a holy, pious man, as otherwise by bad boys. As in many other works, it is common to be angry, to be angry, to be scolded, but we read that Christ himself did it.

(23) This I say, that the saints, when their lives and examples are led, are to be regarded, not according to works, but according to the person, and according to their faith. It is not a dangerous thing, for when one looks at the works that the saints have done, he does not look at the faith in which and from which they have done the works. As if I fell on the work and wanted to get drunk and then say, "If the holy man Noah did it, I will go to the devil, just as he went to heaven. Likewise also judge other works of the saints. Therefore, whoever wants to follow the saints must have the faith in which they walked. If

he has, he can follow them without driving.

24 Thus we read in the book of Judges [Cap. 15:8, 11] of Samson the holy judge, how he smote the Philistines, and his people asked him why he had done this thing: and he said, As they have done it unto me, so have I done it unto them. Behold, this is ever unchristian, and contrary to the gospel. Therefore, if you would follow the example and do so, you are leading to the devil. The reason is that you are not the man Samson was, and he was not the man you are. He was righteous in heart, therefore the work was blameless. For he was so minded to suffer for his sake that they would have killed him. But because he was appointed judge, and was to punish the Philistines, and to deliver his people out of their hand, he speaketh rightly, as if he should say, Inasmuch as they have done it unto my people, they have done it unto me.

(25) Therefore we conclude with the epistle to the Hebrews [chap. 11], where he explains how the holy arch-fathers did all works by faith: "Look at your forefathers, how they believed"; as if to say, not what works they did. For it is not possible for us to do all works as the saints did. Nor would anything but vain sect and dissension come of it. In this way all cobblers should be fishermen, because the apostles were fishermen [Matt. 4:18]. Shouldn't a shoemaker be able to be pious and do his trade in faith? But should everyone therefore follow him? Therefore let every man wait for his work. But if it should come to pass that there is need, then thou also shalt follow his work. Otherwise, stick to your own, and you will stay out of the way. The works are many, but faith is one. So you may follow the outward nature, which is called good, that you do well as he has done, but do not determine the very work, person, time, place, 2c. [determine].

26 Therefore I say that Noah's getting drunk could have been done without sin. If another did it, it would be sin. This makes it necessary to separate works from faith. God judges according to the person; as the person is, so is the work.

27. there were also many who preached against the

Drunkenness, and we Germans in particular, have the 1) clamor of it in other countries. It is also not a delicious virtue. But however shameful it is, it is also true that if I had to choose one, I would rather suffer this vice than the one they practice and lead, which they despise us so proudly for, which I do not want to name. Nor do I want to incite them to it, but rather from it, and I would also like to ward it off and stop it if I could. For this reason, no one may take the example for himself and protect his bad habits.

28 Now further. Behold, what a fickle thing it is about a man, and how terrible is God's judgment. There are only eight persons preserved in the ark on earth, four men and four women, and all holy. For if Ham had not been pious, God would not have preserved him in the box with the others, nor would he have been able to carry it. For it had to be a great, strong faith that should stand before the terrible plague, and float in the water, and likewise live in the midst of death, which was always before his eyes. That we may well be astonished that such an excellent man in high faith falls so low that he is cursed with all his descendants, and that God becomes so hostile to him that he subsequently destroys all his family. If then he who has had such faith does not stand, how easily may we who still have so little faith fall?

29. But I have said that it is God's judgment prescribed in all histories from the beginning of the world, that we may see what God's works are. But this is God's work, that no one is so high up that he cannot fall down, and again, no one is so low that he cannot come up. Therefore, there is no reason for either side to despair or to be presumptuous.

(30) So we see in the example that he and his wife fell into presumption, became secure, and insisted on their faith, and so fell into negligence. They sank down until they fell to the ground, 2) so that everyone who has faith may fear and be afraid, and not be sure.

1) "that" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) Erlanger: fall.

as Paul [1 Cor. 10:12] also says 3), "Let him that standeth see that he fall not." It cannot be said that this man did not have true grace or faith; he was much more worthy than perhaps anyone else on earth, for one would hardly find anyone who is now like him in art and understanding. But what does Noah do now? When he learns of the wickedness that his youngest son had done to him, the text says:

**V. 35. 26. Cursed be Canaan, and be a servant of all the servants among his brethren. And said further, Praised be GOD, the LORD of Shem, and Canaan be his servant 2c.**

(31) This is also to be considered contrary to the gospel, for it is ever forbidden in express words, that one should not avenge himself, nor curse anyone, nor wish evil, but only good [Rom. 12:19, 14]. Yes, if another had done it without the Spirit, it would not have been good, but because Noah does it, it is well done, because the Holy Spirit does it, who is in him. Who then will say, Why doest thou this? No one can judge a Christian man and say, you are not doing right; as Paul says, "The spiritual man judges everything, and is judged by no one"; what he concludes is right, because what he judges, God judges; but whoever judges him, judges God. This is how the holy scriptures and their examples go in great things, which the world does not know how to handle.

32 Now the curse is nothing else, but outwardly malediction, that Ham shall be subject to his brethren. And this is the prophecy that followed long after and was fulfilled. For we read soon after that Ham and his family have risen very high and have almost taken the core and the best part of the land and have built it most splendidly. There is still a clear saying here that he is to be a servant of the others, so that it must be assumed that the curse did not begin until after God had brought the Jewish people into the land.

(33) This is because when God speaks a word, it seems as if a fool has spoken it and it is a lie; likewise, when God speaks a word, it seems as if a fool has spoken it and it is a lie.

3) "also" is missing in the Erlanger.

When he says here that Ham should lie down and be a servant, you can see that he always lies up thereafter for a long time. But where is God's word? But that is why it is called God's work, that his way is: whom he wants to lift up, he presses down; whom he wants to overthrow and press down, he lifts up first.

34 Thus he plays with all kingdoms, dominions, wise men and high men still. Thus he did with the kingdoms of Assyria, Persia, Greece, Alexandria, 1) and finally with Rome. Thus he still does: Whoever floats highest and thinks he cannot sink, he throws to the ground. This is his work, faith belongs to it; the spirit must be, which says: Even if it seems differently, than the words are, nevertheless God will follow his word and fulfill it, even if one should not become aware of it. Let only Ham become strong and powerful enough: if he thinks that he sits most firmly, he will lie in the dirt in a moment. This is history and an example. We now want to touch the secret 2) interpretation as well.

Until now, the good patriarch has been made a spiritual prelate, and this example has been interpreted to mean that the spiritual prelates should not be touched or scolded, or their vices punished. How the evil Ham of the father laughs, since he lies so shamelessly, and points at him with fingers. This is what they have done in the world and protected themselves with it, so that everyone was afraid to open their mouths against them. Now it is nevertheless a pity and an annual thing, if one thus drives sayings with wrong understanding into the people, that they grasp it; that [it] costs afterwards more, as I have experienced myself, that one learns it again, than that one has learned it before.

(36) Therefore, first of all, a right mind must be made of it. It is true that we should live like this with the next Christian: if we know of a shame that is still secret, we should cover it up; as I would like to be done to me [Matth. 7, 12]. But if it is evident that it is known to all.

3) But we should help to decorate and embellish as much as we can. But to let it go unpunished and not to resist, this is not valid in any way. For so Paul says to Timothy [1 Ep. 5:20], Thou shalt punish publicly, that others may be offended at it. And behold, as he himself cometh, and reproacheth also their spiritual nature, he calleth them hypocrites and reprobate sects 2c. Why does he do this? Because their nature was a public offense, which led the people to say that their thing was right. There was no longer any use in covering up or keeping silent, for this corrupts the souls.

37 Therefore, when vice breaks in and does harm, one must no longer be silent. But because it is secret, so that it harms no one but itself, I must keep silent and secretly punish it, help it out, or lock it up so that it does not break out any further.

(38) Our blind leaders have told us that neither the pope nor the clergy should be scolded if they do not carry out their office and live more secularly than anyone else, and they have set an example and made a chapter on it in their sacred right. We say no to this. Let it be done that they keep silent what is secret, but that it is known to everyone that their nature and rule is contrary to the gospel, we must say publicly, so that the people do not get into the delusion as if it were right.

(39) This is the least of the punishments, though they alone fear it. But it is much worse if they have to be punished for their holy life, which everyone thinks is delicious. Then stone and wood should cry out and say, "I will be silent about their shameful lives," but that is not to be suffered, that they want to make people devout with their beautiful nature and works. Then I must stand and preach: You are murderers of souls, and thus bring the whole world into misery and distress; you are most of all devils, where you are most holy.

40 Now look at this example with its proper interpretation. God has more to accomplish than that he should, through the holy man, destroy evil.

1) Alexandria will probably mean the empire of Alexander the Great.

2) Jenaer: spiritual.

3) Erlanger: we it.

Interpret jacks. If he is holy, he will also interpret a saint. The holy scripture does not point its interpretation to harlots and knaves, but commonly to Christ. Therefore, if you want to interpret it without a driver, interpret it to Christ. For as Noah planted the vineyard, and drank of the wine, and was drunken with it, and fell asleep, and lay naked in the tabernacle, and was laughed at by this, but was covered up by others: so it was also with Christ. He built a vineyard [Is. 5, 2. 7.], that was the Jewish people; from it he drank, that is, he had to be silked by Jews and hang on the cross; then great love made him drunk, so that he died. And because he suffers so from great love, from which he is drunk, that he forgets himself, that he only helps us, he hangs there with all shame, is mocked, reviled and defiled, like an unfit man, yes, like the worst thief and murderer [Matth. 27, 39. ff.].

Above the suffering and the holy cross, the two are now separated. The pious and the wicked. It angers Ham, but the others mend his ways. Ham mocks him and points fingers at him. These are the saints, the Jews, who do not want to go to heaven through suffering and shame, but through their works. Therefore, it is not that Ham should point out dre who despises the prelates of the Roman church, but that the prelates, bishops 2c. of this Ham are themselves, who do not want to suffer anything, do not want to bear shame, but who despise, mock, and blaspheme Christ's and the pious Christians' suffering. They should embellish, honor and adorn it, so they ridicule it and condemn it.

The others are the devout Christians who understand the gospel well and accept the word of the cross by faith, which brings shame and disgrace, as Christ himself had to bear. Therefore they do not mock it, but hold it in all honor, confessing it before everyone.

Turn to it all that they have, take the garments on their shoulders, and cover it up, that is, confess with words and works that this is the true life, that Christ must suffer and die, and all who are in Christ.

43 Thus the nakedness of Noah is nothing else than the shameful suffering of Christ and His own, which is preached and accepted by the faithful. Ham, however, are the great saints, not gross sinners, who scoff at the suffering, as they said at the cross: Yes, is this the Son of God? "If he is Christ, let him come down and help himself" [Matth. 27, 40.]. This is what they did to all the martyrs who died for the sake of the crucified name of Christ. It will still be done to us, if we become worthy of it. This is the pious son, who should comfort and help carry, so he is happy and proud about it, laughs at the misfortune. As Christ says in the 35th Psalm, vv. 13-15: "When they were in trouble, I bore grief and put on sackcloth; but now when I am in trouble, they dance and leap and rejoice at my loss. And the most grievous thing of all is that the Holy Father's own Son does this, which also happened to Christ from his own people, as the Psalm [55:14, 15] laments. Therefore he also curses them, as Noah cursed Ham, in many places, as, through the whole hundred and ninth Psalm. Thus you have the interpretation of this example, that it, like almost all other figures, interprets the nature, so the gospel causes and brings with it, if it 2) also happens to us in such a way, that we know it must be so. Therefore, beware of the shameful, perverse doctrines and interpretations that our papists have so far driven into the people.

1) "willen" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) "it" is missing in the Erlanger.



## The tenth chapter

**V. 1-12. This is the birth of the children of Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth; and they begat children after the flood. The children of Japheth are these: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Thubal, Mesech and Thiras. But the children of Gomer are these: Askenas, Riphath and Thogarma. The children of Javan are these: Elisha, Tharsis, Kittim and Dodanim. From these are spread out the islands of the Gentiles in their countries, each according to their language, gender and people. The children of Ham are these: Chus, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. But the children of Chus are these: Seba, Hevila, Sabtha, Raema and Sabtechah. But the children of Raema are these: Sheba and Dedan. And Chus begat Nimrod, who began to be a mighty lord in the earth, and was a mighty hunter before the LORD. Therefore one says: this is a mighty hunter before the Lord, like Nimrod. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Acad and Chalne in the land of Sinear. From that land came Assyria, and built Nineveh, and the streets of that city, and Chalah, and Ressen between Nineveh and Chalah, which is a great city.**

(1) Now Moses begins to describe the lineage of the three sons of the patriarch Noah, how all men came from him after the flood on earth; and this is done so that history may remain in order, so that one may know where it came from and where it is going; but mostly so that one may see how God's word remains true at all times. For we have heard how God, through Noah, cursed Canaan, the son of Ham, but blessed Shem and Japheth. This chapter explains this further, and although it is bad and simple, it is still very necessary for those who study the Scriptures. There are many things from the prophets written in it, where these names are written. Therefore we must not cast it to the winds and throw it away.

2 But to grasp a little of it is enough for the laymen, that one takes a little raw knowledge of it, not so sharply marked. Thus

he now begins to write about the youngest son, what kind of people have come from him, and decides that from him are spread out the islands of the Gentiles in their countries 2c. Now if you want to know where they have come, divide the world into midnight, noon and morning.

3. Japheth came in here with his family about midnight. Hispania, France, Welsh and Germany, Poland, Hungary, Moscow and Turkey, with the whole sea and islands, and here are expressed a part of names of the sons of Japheth, which names also the countries have kept, as namely:

4. Gomer, the first son, of which three sons came, Askenas, Riphath and Thogarma. Gomer is interpreted by St. Jerome to be the Galatians. But it does not rhyme well. We think that they are the Riphei, who live in the land and mountains of the Tartars. Madai are the Medes, a great people and country, situated towards the midnight of the Jews. Javan, are actually Jones, that is, the Greeks, of which Eliza, the Aeoles. Tharsis, the Thracians, Moscoviter, and there the Turk seat is, Constantinople. Kittim I consider to be the land of Macedonia, where the great king Alexander ruled [1 Macc. 1, 1.], although they all write that it is Welschland. In short, the Javan is a father of all Greeks, from where their language also came. Askenas is considered to be our, the Germans', father. So now the writing goes in, does not drive the son and his lineage much; but in the prophet Ezekiel [Cap. 38, 2.] Gog and Magog are primarily attracted and driven, so strongly that I would like to draw the Turk to it. [But it is uncertain and not easy to guess.

005 And Ham the other son hath gotten the best of the south country, Syria, Judea, Arabia, Egypt, Lybia, Mauritania, 2c. even unto the end of the world, all that lieth toward the south: and he hath, I say, gone further and ruled than both of them, and hath sat down in the right hand lard pit. We

have come in to the cold, barren lands. In addition it is torn so far in that it reached in Chaldea and Babylonia far against the morning. And many think that because he was a man, skillful and equipped in the world, he invented the letters; item, how to fight and ship. It is true that he was the first from whom the lords of the world came.

Now Moses takes before him his children and his children's children. The first son is called Chus, who is the father of the Moors. Therefore the word Chus is still called a Moor. He was well populated and spread out, fathered five sons, and they settled in the land of Arabia. The land of the Moors is bordered by the Red Sea and Egypt. The kingdom of Arabia is far in the east. There is also said to be a city in the same land, named Saba, after one of the sons of Chu, of whom the Sabaeans are called. After that, the other sons all came there to the border of Moorland, toward the south.

7 But especially the text indicates here how the same first son of Chu also begat Nimrod. This one did not take the land of the Moors, as the others did; and it is said that he was a whoremonger; they commonly turn out that way. In German, Nimrod means a renegade; as when one falls away from his lord, to whom he has sworn and paid homage, and does not keep the oath he has sworn. This Nimrod must bear the name that he is an apostate and a father of all who rule in the world by force.

8 See now how the text sets the words. "He began to be a mighty lord in the earth, and was a mighty hunter"; yes, "in the sight of the Lord," and a saying came forth from him, not among the heathen, but among the faithful (for Shem's family was pious, therefore they departed from this Nimrod), that they say of a tyrant: Behold, here we have a Nimrod, or a mighty hunter. Therefore it is called 1) "hunter", who oppresses and forces the people; thus, that Nimrod became a lord by force, and brought people under himself by force, as still happens in all principalities. For it is

1) Jenaer: the.

No prince who is satisfied with his own 2). Thus, from the very beginning, this prince has always been a man of his own and has brought a great regiment under him. Without a doubt, he was an excellent man before the world, who brought and kept the worldly regiment in a delicious pregnancy; otherwise, the Scriptures would not have so diligently drawn to him and said that he was a strong hunter before the Lord. If we now see such princes ruling in the world, we should think that we have a golden year.

9th For, as he says afterwards, he raised up a great and excellent capital, which was called Babylonia; which he divided into four parts, as they were called Tetrapoles in the days of old, when Hebron and Rome were also. They were arranged in such a way that the first part were patricii, rulers and mightiest; the other equites, the travelers or the nobility, who had to be ready for war; then plebs, the common man; to the fourth rus, that is, the farmers and builders. Therefore, it must have been a fine, honorable and brave regiment that the people had the desire and love for it, otherwise he could not have built such cities and brought so many people to himself. They were not fools at that time, they did not have many books, but nevertheless they established and kept a fine regiment, which everyone had to praise.

(10) Why then does the Scripture call him a strong hunter? Because, even though he led a delicious regiment before the world, none has ever been so delicious; it has avarice and ambition in it, always wanting to eat away at itself. So he had all his thoughts and desires that he would become a great, powerful lord, that he would have much land and people to rule and reign over. Therefore he is an example of all world princes.

(11) Why, then, has God so confirmed the regime that it has nevertheless arisen and been preserved? God has never said to anyone, "Take the land or the kingdom," except to the Jews. But He has established the authority of the parents, which is the greatest and best over the children and the servants, which is commanded to our first father Adam with expressed words. After that he did it again through Moses.

2) In the old editions: at his.

[Ex. 20:12] commanded: You shall honor your father and mother. Therefore this power is greater than the power of all kings or emperors, even the closest to God. Therefore one reads in the Old Testament [2 Mos. 21, 7.] that a father had power to sell his child.

(12) This authority is given and established for the purpose of raising children and teaching them the Word of God, to know, fear and believe in God, so that a father should actually be a bishop and pastor of his household. For he is entitled to the same office over his children and his household that a bishop is entitled to over his people. In addition, God gave the fathers [Deut. 21, 18-21], over the most noble office, also the power of the temporal sword, that he might, as said, sell his child, yes, even kill it, if he did not want to obey rightly 2) that both, spiritual and corporal power, is given to him.

013 What then is it that God hath ordained and commanded the temporal sword and power to be subject unto it? This is it: When the children did not want to be obedient to their parents, as it still happens that a father has an unruly child whom he cannot control, becomes too wilful and runs away from the parents; item, that one's parents have now died, who wants to live freely and nefariously according to his will and obey no one, God nevertheless did not want the world to remain so disorderly, without compulsion and supremacy; therefore he has ordered the sword to come up, so that the boys are strangled; otherwise one would not be allowed to be anywhere. Where that power can neither create nor prevent anything, God has ordered and confirmed this power and is pleased with it. If that power remained in force, one would not be allowed to have it; but because it is too weak, one must have it, so that the executioner may force those who will not let themselves be pulled by their parents. So it is a necessary thing on earth. Now these are the hunters who have such power; but those who use it evil in every way are the successors of Nimrod. The violence of it is delicious in itself, but not the robbery by which it is abused.

(14) Then Moses said, "The an-

1) Wittenberg and Erlangen: the.

2) "obey," which is missing in the editions, we have inserted with Walch after Deut. 21, 18.

fang of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Acad and Chalne in the land of Sinear." These are four names, and are all one city. But the main name is Babel, which is highly famous in the Scriptures, has long had the empire in the land of Sinear, that is, Chaldea. Item: "From it came Assyria", that is the other kingdom, which is called the Assyrian, coming from the Babylonian. As it always happens, God overthrows and overthrows one, and sets up another. By the same kingdom the Jewish people and kingdom were captured, of which the prophets say many things. This Assyrian also built the great city of Nineveh and the streets of the city, the marketplace and the main square. Read about it in the prophet Ezekiel and others.

**V. 13. 14. Mizraim begat Ludim, Anamim, Leabim, Naphthuhim, Pathrusim, and Casluhim. From there came the Philistim and Capthorim.**

015 This is the other son of Ham; he hath six sons at first, and after him two more. By this the Egyptian country has the name, that it is called everywhere Mizraim, and has had very much people. This is a sign that he took the land of Africam, a large part of the world. This is the other people. Now comes the right line, where the power lies, from the third son.

**V. 15-19: And Canaan begat Zidon his first son, and Heth, Jebusi, Emori, Girgosi, Hivi, Arki, Sini, Arvadi, Zemari, and Hamathi. Therefore the families of the Canaanites were spread out, and their borders were from Zidon, through Gerar, to Gasa, until one comes to Sodoma, Gomorrah, Adama, Zeboim, and to Lasa.**

016 These are eleven sons, which had the promised land, but were afterward driven out by the Jews, and smitten. Therefore he says, "Therefore the families of the Canaanites are spread out," as if to say, "These are all the people we are smitten with."

**V. 20. These are the children of Ham, in their families, languages, countries and people.**

Thus we have two great parts of the world, towards midnight and towards noon. The

But the third son came far behind, toward the morning; there we know little of. [It has often troubled me where the people have come and stayed; I also wonder if most of the apostles have come there. We have had one apostle of the Gentiles, on Japheth's side, namely Paulum; no one else has come here. What Peter did I do not know, but methinks that the prophecy of Noah of Japheth was fulfilled by none but Paul. For he brought this, that we have known the God Shem. Of him we have certain writing that he came in here; of the others we know nothing; [but] it is to be thought that they came into Shem's land from behind. For Shem is highly endowed, and became a mighty nation, as we know nothing of; for that we know, the race is scarcely half.

18 These occupy the largest space in the world. Whether they are Christians is unknown to me. But I freely believe that there are also Christians among them, because I had the Scripture, which blesses the Sem, and promises him the seed; and Christ is a Lord over the whole world. Therefore he will have just as well Christians among them, as with us, and perhaps better. This is how he tells the story of Shem's lineage.

**But Shem, the brother of Japheth "the greatest," also begat children, who is a father to all the children of Eber. And these are his children: Elam, Asshur, Arphachad, Lud and Aram. But the children of Aram are these: Uz, Hul, Gether and Mas. And Arphachad begat Salah, and Salah begat Eber. Eber begat two sons, one of whom was named Peleg, because in his time the world was divided; the other was named Jaketan. And Jaketan begat Almodad, Saleph, Hazarmaveth, Jarah, Hadoram, Usal, Dikela, Obal, Abimael, Seba, Ophir, Hevila and Jobab. These are all the children of Jaketan, and their dwelling was from Mesa until one comes to Sephara, to the mountain toward the east. These are the children of Shem, in their generations.**

**languages, countries and people. Now these are the descendants 1) of the children of Noah in their families and people, from whom the people of the earth spread out after the flood.**

019 This patriarch Shem lived a long time, about five hundred years [Gen. 11:11], that he lived and saw the patriarch Jacob. [There are also many who think that he is Melchizedek, which follows [Gen. 14:18], but I do not believe it. Summa Summarum: the scripture says here that he is a father of all the children of Eber, whom he calls here especially, because the story happened among them, which is written in the following chapter; there the languages were divided, but the right Hebrew remained with those who kept to it. That is why he is called Father of the Children of Eber.

(20) Of his sons, one is called Elam, of whom [the] Elamites are called, which are the Persians. The other is called Asshur, which is the Assyrians. After them Aram, of which they make Syriam, but it is not yet certain. The others we do not know.

021 From Arphachad came Eber, who had two sons, saith Moses, and called one Peleg, that is, Certification. For when Eber saw that they that built the tower of Babylon were deceived in the language, and at that time had the son, he gave him the name in remembrance thereof.

(22) This is how the children of Shem are described. But there is no government nor worldly power; they still have the father Shem, whom they let rule them. The others set up worldly rule, so that they force other people under them and rule far away.

(23) Now in this chapter it is described where the wager came from after the flood. But with Shem the Scripture has little to do, likewise also with Japheth; but with Ham, and what came from him, it has the most to do. Because almost all histories deal with it, as we will hear.

1) Wittenberger: Gender.

## The eleventh chapter.

**V.1-9. Now all the world had one tongue and language. As they journeyed toward the east, they found a plan in the land of Sinear, and dwelt there. And they said one to another, Come, let us make bricks, and let us burn them. And they took brick for stone, and clay for lime, and said: Come, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, that we may make us a name: for we may be scattered abroad. Then the Lord came down to see the city and tower which the children of men were building. And the LORD said, Behold, there is one people and one language among them all, and they have begun to do this thing; they will not cease from all that they have undertaken to do. Come, let us go down, and there confound their language, that none may hear another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad abroad, and they ceased from building the city. Therefore their name is called Babylon, because the LORD there confused the language of all the countries, and scattered them abroad into all the countries.**

Here Moses concludes a special piece of divine work, which he did and still does to this day, namely, that he confused, changed and increased the language. It is also a great miraculous sign that everything has been one language and has been so widely divided. Many have also written of the division of languages, and commonly say that two and seventy languages are everywhere in the world. The same number, I think, is taken from the number of the children of the three sons of Noah, Ham, Japheth and Shem; of which so far almost two and seventy are told.

(2) Now this has no reason, neither can we know how many languages there are on earth. For the sons of Canaan, of whom there were eleven, of whom eleven nations came with different rulers, all spoke almost the same language, without a little change; as with

The German language is spoken differently by others, that it changes almost a hundred times. After that, the Arabic, Syriac, Madian and Chaldean languages are almost close to each other. When Abraham went from Chaldea, he understood the people where he was going, and yet he passed through a great country. This is why I say that we should stick to the text and leave the Scriptures pure, and not always give a gloss, as if there had to be just two and seventy languages, because so many of Noah's children are counted. We know that they are many, but how many they are, we cannot say.

3rd Item, of the tower of Babel, of which Moses writes that they wanted to build a city and tower, whose top reached up to heaven, they also lie confidently, and have taken cause from the words to write that the tower was already so high that one could hear the angels singing that it had already gone above the clouds. Item, so they lie further, it still stands today a piece of it; but thus that it sank three miles into the earth, and three miles above away wafted by the wind, and stands still three miles high of it. These are all lies.

(4) It was a well-built city like another, but they did not dare to build something high and great, where God would not have resisted them; and indeed Nimrod started it, of which it is said above [Cap. 10, § 9]. Do not understand the words of Moses in any other way than that he meant to say that they would build a high and mighty city. For it is the way of the Scriptures to speak thus, as in the fifth book of Moses [Cap. 1, 28.]: "Our brethren have said that the people are greater and higher than we, the cities are great and walled up to heaven." Item, again in the same book [Cap. 4, 11.] it is written: "And ye came near, and stood in the lower part of the mountain: and the mountain burned up to the midst of heaven." Thus, according to the Scriptures, everything is called heaven,

what is above and below us, all that man sees, near and far; as also Christ speaks in Matthew [Cap. 6, 26.]: "Look at the birds of the sky" 2c. That is why there is so much talk here; they wanted to raise the top of the tower high up to the blue sky. For that it should have reached into heaven, that was impossible.

(5) Let this be said, that there be no cause to make such gross lies as they have done here, as well as that they should have built the tower, if once more a flood would come, that they might remain before it, when Moses here clearly shows how they said, "Let us make a name, for we may be scattered abroad. They wanted to put their date on the building, so that people would say and sing about it in all the world; they wanted to bear honor and glory from it, so that all people would say: There is a city and a building, the like of which has never been seen or heard. This will serve as a secret interpretation.

Now let us see what he intended to show with this history. It is an example in which one can see what the world is. Above [Cap. 6, § 3 f.] he described God's children; here he describes the children of men. For the book is written for the purpose of learning about both peoples. Thus we find God's children described in such a way that they used the world, but did not roll in it, nor did they seek to rule in it, as if they wanted to remain in it forever; but those have set all their date, defiance and comfort on it. These have not had enough of temporal good, but of spiritual; those have sought only temporal things, that they might have only good and honor.

(7) Thus is found the presumption of many to build, though it is yet small that presumption is atoned for. But this is punished here, as the text says, that they had undertaken such things, and would not leave them; that is, they were drowned in temporal goods, that they put their confidence and glory in such buildings; they did not seek God. He did not want to suffer such arrogance and defiance, therefore he descended and overthrew everything.

(8) Moses said: "When they were going against

the morning, they found a plan in the land of Sinear, and dwelt there" 2c. Sinear was a place or flat field on which they built the city. For so the writers say, that it lies in a delicious country and free, level field, that one can see it everywhere far; has also had many powerful kings, as first of all the Nimrod, item, the Semiramis 2c. that one writes so much miracles of it, that I do not know whether it is to be believed all or not. It has been a beginning of the worldly empire, and has stood longer than any city. Aristotle also says that it was not a city, but a country surrounded by walls. Now they learned to paint bricks, but they had no lime, only clay, just as it is still said that in the country they only build with glue.

009 And what is this that he saith, Then the LORD descended, that he might see the city and the tower? Item: "And the Lord said, Come, let us go down, and confound their language there," and speaks of himself as of many. This is not to be interpreted by one person, although the Jews interpret it that way, that God said it to the angels; but it is not sufficient. Of course, it is said that the Lord, of whom Moses says, descended, because he had previously spoken of One Lord. The same One now says: "Let us descend". So he has already indicated the high article from the beginning, as is also heard before [Cap. 1, §§ 13. 53], and here and afterwards more, that One God is, and yet more than One Person.

But why did the Lord have to come down, if he would have stayed up there? He says through the prophet Jeremiah [Cap. 23, 23]: Non Deus a longe, I am not a God from afar; item, v. 24: Implebo coelum et arida, I fill heaven and earth. Also we say in faith: I believe in God, Creator of heaven and earth. If he has created heaven and earth, he must ever be in all places where his creature is. Yes, he says in the 99th Psalm, v. 1: Qui sedet super Cherub, et intuetur abyssos, he sits on the Cherub, and sees all depths, that one must confess, where the creature is, that there is also God. For no one has the essence of himself, all must be preserved by God's Spirit.

wall. How does it happen, if he is already down there, that he says he wants to come down?

(11) Answer: We also heard in chapter 3, v. 9, how the Lord was looking for Adam in the garden and said, "Where are you? Just as if he did not know where he was. Item, in the fourth, v. 9, he said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" Also he comes down to Noah and talks with him [Cap. 6, 13.]. Thus the Scriptures speak everywhere that God descends from heaven, which cannot be. But if this is exactly what I said above, God descends when He reveals Himself, either inwardly in the heart, or outwardly through a work; as in the Gospel of Matthew, Cap. 3, 16, 17, the Holy Spirit descended on Christ in a bodily form when he was baptized, and a voice fell from heaven, that is, God the Father; in addition, the Holy Spirit also reveals himself through an outward work, so that he had not revealed himself before, although he is everywhere before. Thus he also became man and came from earth, not that he left heaven, but revealed himself to the world in a special work. He still does this when he visits us with good or punishes us. All this is called coming to us, but it is nothing else than that he reveals himself. That is one way.

12 The other is that man also open his eyes and feel this. For God comes to many who do not see Him, nor are they aware of Him. When Christ was revealed, there were few who recognized him, but those who did recognize him saw that God had come down, but the others thought that he was a man like another. Now this piece is higher and deeper than the first. For I have often said that as the conscience holds itself against God, so is he. If you think that he is merciful, he is merciful; if you are afraid of him, as of a terrible judge, he is also, judging you always according to your conscience. Now as such conscience changes against God, so also the language of the Scripture changes, which speaks of just how one feels him. So David often says in the Psalter: "Lord, stand up, why are you sleeping, why are you angry with us?" 2c. [Ps. 7, 7. 68, 2. 44, 24.] So it admits GÖtte: to see, to hear, to walk, to stand, to talk, to be silent, to sleep and to watch, that we may

Because I feel it this way, and because it changes between me and him, although otherwise God's nature remains unchanged. [But everything is to be done for the sake of faith.

(13) Understand, then, that God descends here by an outward work, namely, by dividing the language, so that no one can hear the other; not only that such a terrible plague and work is done outwardly, but also that their conscience feels that God is ungracious to them, and condemns their banishment, by which they seek glory. As they now feel, so it has been; therefore, through such terror of conscience and outward confusion, they are all divided and separated from one another in the world. The heart was despondent and outwardly confused; therefore they could not remain with one another. For the unity of speech is given because of this, that they keep themselves friendly together. This is how it happened with Adam and Cain, as I said. Therefore all this is no more than that God stirs the heart by outward works; as this feels, so God is called sleeping, rising, working, speaking 2c.

(14) How is it that the Lord does not freshly feed them, dividing their speech, and making them astray, but takes counsel concerning it, and first decides it in himself? What need has he of such a thing, that he first of all feigns not to see it? Answer: The sentence is set with diligence against the free judgment. This should offend all those who speak and blow their ears. Although God knew and saw all things, yet he descended to see what they did. Therefore, no judgment should be made, no matter how certain one is of the matter. One should act on it and on it beforehand, inquire into all things, so that the judgment cannot be lacking.

(15) This is a necessary piece, and well to be remembered. For this is now the third time, first in Adam, then with Cain. So we will hear again about Sodom and Gomorrah, where he [Cap. 18, 20. 21.) says: The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah has become much. I will go down and see whether they have done according to the cry that came before me or not, so that I may know.

16. and is therefore necessary to note, because

The devil has always possessed people with poisonous tongues, so that one speaks after the other, and yet presents it so seemingly, as each one adorns his cause and makes it the best, that those who hear it are often caught, and say that it is not right before God. To prevent this, God has written this example, that one should be careful not to condemn anyone, but to hear the other part first. Therefore, if a man speaks of another in his absence, no matter how holy he may be, he should never be believed so soon, so that one should beware of sudden judgments. If you ever want to believe, you may do so; but only shut up, and do not judge; do not go and say that it is as you have heard; do not pass judgment, for you see it for yourself.

(17) Therefore do not base a thing on the words of another. For it is not valid for you to refer to another and say, "This one or that one said it. But if thou doest, thou shalt surely fail, and shalt soon be deceived and made a fool. Oh what misery and misfortune would remain if one did not do this! So we go and rely on man, when we know that he lies, as the Scripture [Ps. 116:11] says. God Himself will not judge, for He has asked before, "Where art thou?" Therefore, let us first hear what the self-guilty man says. When he is publicly overcome, then you may judge. If God would have us form this in the heart, and judge according to it, that we might subdue the tongue, which causes all heartache, that it is hard to counsel again, even by true tongues.

18 Thus we have heard what the history of this chapter teaches us about the tower of Babel. Now it is also to be said of the spiritual interpretation given therein. I have said, then, that in this work the children of men have done nothing so much as to have a name. This is specially put to it, and their presumption is censured and punished for this very reason. But the great multitude and the common evil of the world, which is called false preachers, is thus denounced. For God is most concerned that His holy word remain united in Christianity, without any addition of the doctrine of men. But the word cannot remain, unless Christ is

have alone for the builder, and let him have the name alone. Where this is not, there is no unity, and must certainly also become a Babel; namely, thus:

19. when one preaches of Christ, one gives as much to one man as to another, so that no one has more of Christ than another; St. Peter no more than I, Mary no more than another married woman; for there is no more than one Christ, which is given in full to each. But it is also true that one can grasp it better than the other; but it is one treasure. As when one setteth a jewel in gold, and another in a poor vessel, the vessel may be better and better made, but that which is set therein is no better nor nobler: so one may have special, superior gifts than another, yet Christ remains common; and as the man remains common, so also all the goods which he brings with him. So a young child has just as much as an old man, a scholar no more than a layman, a lord no more than a servant. These names, baptism, gospel and spirit, are all common.

020 As long therefore as this doctrine remaineth, so long shall there be unity in the world. For every man must say, I have no more than the least of these; we are all equal in inheritance; one is another's brother; we have all equal right to it. But when other builders come and appear, they so soon make a division and a separation out of the unity. As it goes in: papal, and also must go in all: secular regiments. There one rules so that one people has more than the other. Yes, a prince must rule so that it happens unequally.

21 So also in the papacy, which is called spiritual, there has always arisen one order after another, only that one has always wanted to be better than the other. For they ever publicly ask: Yes, should we not have more than others, what kind of beings do we create? So they always add to it that it should be something special; then it is already separated and separate, and never the same; in addition, vain envy and hatred come from it among them.

022 But if they do not do this, saying, I am no better than the least of them, I am no better than the least of them.



Christ, we all have the same Christ, baptism, gospel and faith [Eph. 4, 5, 6.]: then they would have to confess that their thing is foolishness, and it would fall away from itself. Therefore their being cannot stand, except it set up discord, and depart from unity. So one after another always comes up and says, "My position is the best. [Each one takes something before himself that should be something more delicious, therefore he despises the others. Now where such doctrine and such things are taught and practiced, that we are all equal has been done away with. Therefore the gospel does not suffer itself to be mixed with the doctrines and sects of men. That is why all these things are rejected everywhere in the Scripture; it is still of no use, it has been left lying around as if it did not concern us, when it alone is a living book, full of living words [John 6:68, Hebrews 4:12].

(23) And so it follows one after another. When one departs and establishes a special status, one must soon also raise up another name, so that the name may become diverse, just as the essence is diverse and separate. Therefore they say, "Yes, should I not have another and better name than they all have? We want to be called Benedict, Francisc, Carthäuser 2c., which we want to lead over Christ's name. These are the ones, so here means, who build the tower, who wanted to make them name, that they did it. It is a great blindness and presumption, yes, sin and shame, that one should suffer and hear such preachers who impudently say: He who follows St. Francis is in a better life and higher state than any other Christian, as if Francis should be holier than Christ, when he has had toil and labor to follow Christ.

24 Thus we have the interpretation of this history, that the builders are preachers. Those who are not in the faith build and preach something great and special before others, so that they have a great name; but the plague and punishment will follow, which is indicated here, that they will be disunited, confused in their language and divided as far as the world is. You will find this in all sects. Where there are true Christians, all things are of one accord, and none can rise above the other, nor be divided, there the language must be reduced to one.

Ways go, and even agree. What you speak and preach, I also preach and speak; and again. Thus one remains one, inwardly in the heart, and outwardly in the life.

But there it is so that they have all said: One must remain under one head, that is the pope, that is still united. But from this flow as many sects as there are monasteries and bishoprics; none is one with the other, each wants to be the best, and one must become the enemy of the other, or even despise it. To this also belong the high schools with their various sects that follow them. No one understands the other's language, no sermon pleases the other; it has never been heard that a monk of the Order of Preachers 1) stood up to exalt the Order of St. Francis, [but every monk praises his Order]. 2) So also no one likes to hear what the other one throws out and praises, or again.

This is the confused and mixed language. From this also follows a divided being, that no one takes care of the other, no one shows love to the other. [It has come to such a point that one priest is not one with the other, indeed, one altarist with the other. Therefore there is no more unskilful people on earth than these people; none of them serves anyone but himself. But Christianity is made so that each one takes care of the other's needs, and cares for him and serves him. That is why such a disunity is called a Babel, that is, a confusion or confounding. It was nothing like the Babylonia, compared to this. Here God drives it much more strongly, that he separates and scatters them, so hurries and drives from each other, that none of them is good to the other. This is a terrible punishment and plague.

The prophets also looked into this chapter and drew much prophecy from it; as in the 5th Psalm, v. 11: "Blame them, God, that they fall from their nobility" or Rathschlagen, "cast them out" 2c. There he touches this history finely, as if he should say: They had also proposed to build a tower and to lead high, but what happened?

1) Thus the Jenaer. Wittenberger: a monk of another order. Erlanger: another preacher.

2) The bracketed words are missing in the Erlanger, but are in the Wittenberger and in the Jenaer.

They had to desist and leave with shame. Item, so he also says in another Psalm: Lord, devour and cut off their tongues [Ps. 55:10].

(28) We should also make such prayers against our Babylon, saying, O Lord, have mercy on their divisions and sects, that they may fall away; separate and divide them; only make them disunited, that they may fall to the ground, because they have provoked thee to anger in so many ways with their sects, and have corrupted thy one people, doctrine, and name. There are many more such prophecies in the Scriptures, which come to pass to those who have regard for them.

029 And what is it that causeth them to build iniquity in the place, in the place of Sinear, where they found a fine fat field? It is never forgotten in the Scripture that it always blames them for being belly servants and stingy vultures. These two things are certainly found in them, avarice and 1) belly. This is the very reason why they do everything they do. Thus Paul says of them Phil. 3, 19: Quorum Deus venter est, belly is their god; and Col. 3, 5: Avaritia idolorum cultus, he who is stingy is idolatrous. They all have that about them, do not believe in GOD, therefore they worry and fear, they cannot feed themselves. That is why they use their tongues, hands, and works to fleece people and to make them rich, so that they may fill their bellies first and have enough before they serve God. And this is the sum of it, that they build the tower on the best place, where a fat, full lard pit is, there they want to live and stay.

**These are the births of Shem: Shem was a hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood, and lived five hundred years after that, and begat sons and daughters. Arphachad was five and thirty years old, and begat Salah, and lived after that four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters. Salah was thirty years old, and begat Eber, and lived thereafter four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters. Eber was four and thirty years old, and begat Peleg, and lived four hundred and thirty years after that, and begat sons and daughters. Peleg was**

1) Wittenberg and Erlanger: or.

**was thirty years old, and begat Regu, and lived two hundred and nine years after that, and begat sons and daughters. Regu was two and thirty years old, and begat Serug, and lived two hundred and seven years after that, and begat sons and daughters. Serug was thirty years old, and begat Nahor, and lived two hundred years after that, and begat sons and daughters. Nahor was nine and twenty years old, and begat Tarah, and lived afterward an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters. Tharah was seventy years old, and begat Abram, Nahor and Haran.**

(30) Moses describes ten members one after another, from Shem to Abraham, the line from which Christ was to come. These are truly great, holy people. How fine the world must have been, since everyone lived so long, and saw so many children and children's children, and everything was governed by fatherly authority. For here you do not see a world regiment, therefore it has stood deliciously on this side. The holy father Noah still lived through Abraham; Shem, his son, also saw ten children after him, and ruled among them, so that if one counts the years, it is found that he lived up to Jacob, yes, almost up to Joseph, into the eleventh generation.

(31) Thus the fathers all kept one another in a fine spiritual regiment. Moses describes it, however, that he wants to lead the line of Christ one after the other; also that he would keep the marriage state in honor, because he is allowed to do so, especially now. God has enough to do to keep it in honor against our clergy, who have not only despised and belittled it, but have also blasphemed it. I think that none of them who have kept the virginity is as holy as one of the archfathers. For they are not to be regarded as bad men, because Moses brought them forth by the Holy Spirit. If it has pleased them that they have had wives and begotten children, let us do likewise with all honor.

**v. 27-32. These are the births of Tharah. Tharah begat Abram, Nahor and Haran. But Haran begat Lot. But Haran died before his father Tharah in his father's land, at Ur in Chaldea. Then Abram and Nahor took Wei-**

**ber. Abram's wife's name is Sarai, and Nahor's wife's name is Milcah, Haran's daughter, who was a father to Milcah and Jezca. But Sarai was unbreakable, and had no child. So Tarah took Abram his son, and Lot his son Haran's son, and Sarai his son Abram's wife's cord, and brought them from Ur out of Chaldea, that he might go into the land of Canaan. And they came to Haran, and dwelt there. And Tarah was two hundred and five years old, and died in Haran.**

32 Here he lists the lineage of Tarah, the father of Abram, and states that he had three sons, which must also be known for the sake of the following histories. According to the account, Abram must have been the youngest son, although Moses claims him to be the first. I can therefore judge that he survives Haran, his brother, and two daughters and a son. For Lot was Abram's brother's son; his two sisters were Sarai and Milcah. So the two brothers, Abram and Nahor, took two sisters, their brother's daughters.

(33) From these things it can be concluded, and has never been abolished, and no one can prevent anyone from taking his brother's daughter with God and honor, because Abram and Nahor, who are praised in the Scriptures, did it, and we are to believe that they were more holy than we are. If it had not been right nor godly, neither Abram nor Sarai would have done it. But it is forbidden that a man should not take his wife, though it be in like manner.

34 We will hear later about Abram's brother-son, Lvt, and also about the two sisters. For Milcah will also become a friend and a mother, Gen 22:20, 21. The Jews say of the others, whether it is true or not, that Jisca was Sarai, Abram's wife, and had two names. If this is so, the account shows that Abram was much younger than Haran. For it is clearly stated that he was a hundred years old when Isaac was born to him, and Sarai his wife was ninety years old. That is, Abram was ten years older than his wife.

35 If Haran is the father of Sarai, and Abram is older, he must have begotten the daughter in the eighth or ninth year, and given her to his brother in the tenth year. Therefore we say that it is not certain that Sarai and Jisca are one wife. But if it is a woman, then Abram must be the youngest son, and yet the honor is done to him that Moses separates him first, because God wanted to make something special of him.

Thirty-six: Thus saith the text: Tharah and his three sons dwelt in Ehaldea, that is, in their own land, when they built the tower of Babylon; for Babylonia is in the land of Chaldäa. There was a city called Ur, in which they dwelt. But one brother, Haran, died in it; and Tarah, with the other two sons, would have gone into the land of Canaan; and they came and sat down in Haran, that is, in the land of Syria, which is toward the promised land eastward, and is often spoken of in the Scriptures.

(37) Here the Jews make out strange things, and I do not know whether they are to be believed. They think that Haran was martyred by the Chaldeans because he would not worship fire; that is why Tarah fled with the other sons. But I wished to make Abram a sinner first, before I made him righteous; and that for this reason, for so it is read in the book of Joshua [Cap. 24, 2. 3.], that he says to the people: "Beyond the water your fathers, Tarah, the father of Abraham and Nahor, have been accustomed, and have served strange gods; therefore I have taken your father Abraham out of Mesopotamia, and brought him into the land of Canaan" 2c., so that Abraham must also have been idolatrous, lest the patriarch be exalted of his holiness and free will. He was as deep in the mud as we are; but that he became such a man, he has well learned, that it was out of pure calling, grace and goodness that God led him out into the land of Canaan. Therefore I cannot well believe that they should have fled from Chaldea, lest they should have worshipped idols, unless there had been some other idol than fire.

(38) I have left the word Ur as it is, and hold with those who say it is the name of a city in Chaldea or Babylonia. Some say that it is called fire, because the Babylonians called it that for their god and honored it, as some pagan books say. So it is not yet certain. Ur does not actually mean fire, but light, although it is almost one; therefore, I think, they gave the city a name. Similarly, we still have several named among us Germans, as Lichtenstein, Lichtenfels, Lichtenberg 2c.

(39) I do not think that the Babylonians there were such rude people that they should have known nothing of God, who created all things, or that they considered fire to be a true God; but it may be that they called and honored God, who created heaven and earth, by name. Just as the Jews gave God many names, as Baal, that is, a man, because they wanted to be as close to him as a bride or wife to her husband. Item, Moloch, that is, a king, and others more, always dealt with it, so that they would honor the right God.

40 We have also done this, and have given our God many names, such as Augustinum, Benedictum, Franciscum 2c. For as we think of God, so he is to us, so he also has a name. So when I look at him, and think of him as making me blessed through my spiritual state, I have already made myself an idol, and think that the true God, who created heaven and earth, is such a man as I respect him, and should look at me as keeping such obedience, praying and fasting. So I paint him, and paint him a color as if he had a Carthusian or Augustinian cap on, and think: "Oh, how fine it is about the cap. So everyone who is without faith puts on his own clothes, makes a PotzmannH out of him, gives him a name and shape in his heart, as seems good to him.

41 But when faith comes, it produces

1) Potzmann - doll, popanz, scarecrow.

He says: "God looks neither at this nor at that, but only at the Lord Jesus Christ; whoever believes in the dear child has the right God, and sees Him as He is.

Forty-two: So these also have done. But they were not yet such great fools as we are, they wanted to be so wise and prudent that one should not say that they worshiped wood and stones; nevertheless, they take God's right name and honor, draw him to themselves, and give him another one; he must keep this one in the world, so he must still let himself be led in all the sermons in the mummary the whole year through. Thus they have taught zero, where one sees the light, there one should worship God; as one has preached to us, where a Crucifix or other image stands, there one should 2) worship Christ. They are not yet such great fools that they think that this light or image is God; but they are such fools that they worship God there, and think that he desires it and sees it. And so they teach: Where you come before a light and worship all, you will meet God, and it will please Him. There was also a fine, apparent worship, which no one could have overthrown but the spirit, as in our times. Who would have been so wise as to say that such things were wrong, which we have done with our worship, masses and spiritual life? But the Spirit comes and says: God has not commanded it, it is contrary to faith, therefore it is unjust and idolatrous.

(43) Even then the holy fathers did so, and preached against it: Not so, God has not commanded it, you have no testimony of it by God's word, do it out of your own head and presumption, that you thus bind God all such place and your work. And so you shall do: God has promised us (Gen. 3:15) a seed that shall bruise the serpent's head; 3) you shall cling to it and believe in it. But they did not want to hear this, they scolded the patriarchs for heretics and threatened them with death. Therefore it is also said that they have burned the people with fire, as now, in the last

2) In the editions: shall.

3) Wittenberg and Jena: sollt.

Babylon, our clergy also do. For this regiment, as it is written, liked to handle fire.

(44) Thus it is written of the three being put into the fiery furnace in the prophet Daniel [Cap. 3:22]. Therefore some have written, as it was said, that Haran, Abram's brother, died in the land for faith's sake, and was burned with fire; item, that Abram therefore fled, that he might escape clear fire. How nuy dem fei, we have no text. But this much we have slos. 24, 3.], that Abram was also idolatrous, and Haran, together with the third brother. Then God came and enlightened Abram by special grace, so that he might see how faith alone was valid before God for the future seed; then he came to the right understanding of what the right service of God was.

45 Therefore there is a fine saying in the prophet Isaiah [Cap. 50:2, 40:25, 46:5, 9]: Behold, I am such a God as maketh the sea dry, and there is none other but I; to whom then do ye liken me, that I should be like me? As if he should say: I have such great power that I have all things in my hand, nor are you so foolish that you want to grasp me in a small work, and I am so great that the whole sea cannot grasp me. What is this but to deal with distant dreams, and to worship those who stretch God so close as we think one should

lift above all creatures, which faith alone does?

46 I have spoken this so that one may understand Moses correctly, who describes how Abram is torn from God out of the idolatrous nature, but not yet called, as it is written in the following chapter. Therefore I will let him remain a poor sinner until God comes and calls him to leave his father's house [Gen. 12, 1]. 2c. This is all for our comfort, that we may see how God lifts up few people to heaven who are pure, but all are lifted up out of the mud.

47) Finally, a great question arises over the text, when one comes to the twelfth chapter: how does it rhyme together, which is written here: Tharah was two hundred and fifty years old, and died in Haran; and after that [Cap. 12, 4.] it follows, how Abram went out of the country; as if he had endured his father's death, before he went out? But it is easy to report, so that this is said per antwiprUiouom, and before that it is written how old his father became. Now it is said above [v. 26F] that Tharah was over seventy years old when he begat the three sons; and it follows hereafter [chap. 12, 4.] that Abram was five and seventy years old when he came into the land of Canaan; which is not yet two hundred years; therefore he must have gone out a year or thirty before his father's death.

## The twelfth chapter.

**And the LORD said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy father's country, and from thy friendship, and from thy father's house, unto a land which I will shew thee. And I will make thee a great nation, and will bless thee, and make thee a great name, and thou shalt be a blessing. I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee. And in thee shall all kindreds of the earth be blessed.**

Here let us see a great, mighty, excellent example of faith. It is also säst

of the noblest chapters in this book; therefore, it must not be regarded badly, and beyond that, listen as if it were no longer valid. I have made this book so that there is no need to preach fables and fairy tales about the legends of the saints, of which the whole world is full, but so that one may see righteous examples of faith and love, so that one may not only deal with commandments and laws, but may have living words and ways before one's eyes, how it goes when one believes and loves.

(2) We have also heard above a great example of faith in the holy father Noah, and an example of unbelief in those who built the tower of Babel, so that it may be seen everywhere how faith is affected. Now as we have seen what is the manner and nature of unbelief in the unbelievers, namely, how they gave their minds to "having enough here, to gain good, honor, and pleasure," and did not set their hearts on the uncertain good to come, wherefore they also said, "We will make a name for ourselves; what was this but that they thought to gain temporal honor and prize, that they should not be lowly and despised men? They wanted to set themselves up as if they were to stay here forever. So let us see here again what faith can do and what power it has.

(3) Besides this, it is a great thing that here again a promise is made by Christ that he should come to Abram. For until now, the fathers had all made do with the promise that God had made to Adam; that had been their gospel, which they had kept until God made it clearer and brighter again, because it had now almost fallen into disrepair. They are short words, but have mighty great things behind them.

(4) Now this is a new gospel, which brings Abram out of idolatry; for he must be an unchristian before five and seventy years, and a valiant and strong sinner before he is sanctified, that the scripture alone may praise grace and mercy everywhere. There is no merit; [it] begins arduously, as God calls Abram; does not write that he ever did a good work, sacrificed, or built an altar, as afterward; but while he is still in sins, and never thought that he should receive such grace, it comes unawares.

(5) Therefore I have said: If anyone is to be converted, devout, or become a Christian, we do not start; neither prayer nor fasting serves this purpose; it must come from heaven and from grace alone, that God, through the promise of the Gospel, should strike the heart, that it should feel and say that it had never before considered or thought that such grace should befall it. As here: Before Abram should have dared to ask, yes, before he even thinks about converting, God comes first, takes

He brings him out of error and sets him in a different being. Therefore, let this example be as new to you as if it had happened yesterday, for it is the work of God that is still going on. This is the way it must go every day if one is to become devout; what one teaches otherwise counts for nothing. He who wants to become devout does not say, "I will start and do good works, so that I may obtain grace: I will wait and see if God will give me his grace and spirit through his word. It must do so, otherwise all is lost; as the prophet says in the 85th Psalm, v. 9: *^uckiam, Huiä lo^aatur in ins Oominus, I will hear what God the Lord speaks.*

(6) Now in these words are written both the law and the gospel. To the law belongs that he says: "Go from your father's country, and from your friendship, and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. That is to say: All your doings and being are not pleasing to me, I do not want you here, you must leave Heralls and everything. That hurt him, too, and was a hard blow. That's why they didn't go with him much, because his wife and Lot, his cousin. Then he had to say and confess before his father, mother, brother and everyone: "This creature is not fit; if there were anything good here, God would not call me out.

Now these people were not fools, but the best that one should find. It was just as if I had told a Carthusian: step out of your nature and order. As hard as it would be for such a one, so hard it became for Abram. No one judges such things but the spiritual preaching of the law, when it comes and says: What you do is nothing, you are blind, you do not see what is good, how then should you do good? So it puts us into sin and hell.

8) After this comes the other sermon, the gospel, in these words: "And I will make you a great nation and bless you" 2c., yes, he says, I will raise up such a man from your seed, who will bless all the world. That 1) is vain grace, spiritual and temporal, temporal and eternal. Now this is the

comforting word, which establishes and sustains him, otherwise he would have to despair through the word of the law. These are the words in which the two sermons are contained; one which makes him a sinner and kills him; the other by which he becomes serene and alive. Now let us hear how he goes into it and follows the word.

(9) First, behold, how the faith of the holy patriarch stood. Thus we have said that faith is a certain assurance of things not seen, see Heb. 11:11, but promised, by which it is waited for, which seemeth as if it should never come. Therefore it is a blind and yet a bright knowledge, a light in the midst of the darkness, so that he also has such good that he does not have, that is, that he does not see, and everyone must say that he has nothing. So that I explain it with a rough example: If a poor man is to marry, and faith is not there, his heart stands thus: What shall I do? shall I take a wife, and have nothing to support myself? Because he does not see where the good lies for his sustenance, he does not want to go there. But if there is faith, he says: I will be married in God's name; where the good is that I am to have, or where I am to take it from, I do not know; I do not look, but am content with the fact that Christ says: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you"; this I grasp and take comfort in, just as if I had what I should have, 1) and yet have nothing.

(10) Behold, this is the manner of faith, that it dealeth with goods which it seeth not, nor feeleth, and dealeth with them as if it had them in its hands; having no other consolation, but that it knoweth that God doth not deny nor confide. He does the same in all other things; for when I am to die, and death comes before my eyes, I have to walk away, and do not know where to put my foot in the first step. Now if unbelief is there, fidgeting, trembling, and saying, Where will I go? Who knows where I will stay? He always wants to see and feel where he should stay, but nothing comes of it.

therefore he must despair. But faith thinks like this: I don't know where I'm going, I have to get out, I don't see or feel anything, but I want to entrust myself to him who said in the 55th Psalm, v. 23: "Cast your care and concern on the Lord, he will provide for you"; then I'll go there, because I know he won't lie. So he has life, and does not see it; indeed, he sees nothing but the contradiction. What does he know about? Only that God has promised that He will not let those who trust in Him fall out of His hand. Such examples should be diligently observed throughout the Scriptures.

11) It happened to the patriarch Noah (as heard [Cap. 6, 13]) that God said He would drown the world and destroy it. However, a hundred years passed, he saw nothing, indeed, it seemed as if nothing would come of it; therefore, people thought it was a lie; but he saw it a hundred years before it came, and acted on it as surely as if it should come tomorrow. Faith has such sharp eyes that it can see in the dark when there is nothing to see, see when there is nothing to see, feel when there is nothing to feel. So we also believe in the Lord Christ, that he sits above at the right hand of the Father Almighty, and so rules, that he has all creatures in his hands, and works everything in us. This we do not see, nor do we feel; nor does the heart see by faith as surely as if it saw with eyes. Now when a man is to die, the same faith is there, and knows for certain that it will go into his bosom.

The scripture praises this kind of faith in the holy father Abram. He was in the country, known to his friends, and was to inherit his father's estate; there was still no faith, for everything he wanted was available, and he felt no lack or need. Then God sends the word to him, snatches him out of all that he has before his eyes, and when he wants to be comforted, says: "Go out." From what? "From your father's country, and from your friendship, and from your father's house," that is, let go, and forgive yourself of all that you see and enjoy here. Where to? "To a land that I will show you." There nothing is mentioned; (see) is a high temptation and struggle of the

Believing that he should leave the country, and not knowing where, he goes wherever the wind takes him; item, not knowing whether he will come to friends or enemies, and having to consider that he will come to enemies first. Do you think that this was a small quarrel?

13 For the heart must feel this way: Here you tear me from all acquaintances, and lead me there, perhaps in the midst of the worst enemies, where they will not be able to suffer me at all; make me even a poor beggar, so that I have no place where I can stay safely. Yes, he has had to consider with his wife, and whoever has gone with him, that they must die, and give honor, goods, body and life into the journey; let go certainly goods, joy and security, and give himself into certain enemies, poverty and death. What does he do? He takes no more than the word that God says: "I will make you a great nation and I will bless you. Yes, if unbelief had added, you add a lot of blessing, and I only see the contradiction; here I have a barren wife [Gen. 11, 30.], then you throw me into a foreign country and people; does that mean blessed? Yes, rather set in all misfortune. He still follows the mere word, as if he should say: You have said that you will bless me; even if everyone curses me, it will not hurt me; therefore I will dare to do it freshly. So he goes into the darkness with such faith, not knowing where he is going, nor does he find the right land; as we shall hear.

14 The epistle to the Hebrews (Cap. 11:8) praises this: "By faith was he obedient," who is called "Abraham, to go forth into the land which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went, and knew not whither he went. Now this is written for our sake, that we also learn to hang on his word, if he promises us that he will sufficiently provide and preserve body, life, and also the soul, even though it is not before our eyes, nor yet present. Only lift yourself up and accept it as if you already had it. If you believe, you have it. Faith cannot fail thee nor deceive thee, though it may already seem as if all things were about to fall to the ground. If it does not come as soon as you see that God has raised up Abram, do not desist, for he has

he does to strengthen the faith. Now follow on:

**V.4-6. Then Abram went out, as the LORD had said to him, and Lot went with him. Abram was five and seventy years old when he left Haran. So Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, with all their substance which they had gotten, and souls which they had begotten in Haran, and departed to go into the land of Canaan. And when they were come into that land, he passed through unto the place of Sichern, and unto the grove of More: for the Canaanites dwelt in the land at that time.**

15 Then see how God has tried faith. For it is not a bad example, because the scripture diligently shows it, which gives this man alone the honor, that it calls him a father of faith [Rom. 4, 11. Gal. 3, 9.], and Christ Himself [Luc. 16, 22.] Abraham's faith the School of Abraham calls; that also God himself holds much of it. He was five and seventy years old, the text says, when he went out; from those he counted until he was a hundred years old, when he first had a son. There we will see how he is tempted in faith so long that he might have despaired a hundred times. God promised him to multiply his seed, so he waited and hoped all the years. It lasted five, ten, fifteen, twenty years; [nothing] would come of it. Oh, how he had to struggle with unbelief during this time. When he was a hundred years old, he was almost in despair, for it was impossible by nature; yet he did not leave the word and promise of God, so that St. Paul [Rom. 4:18] says: "He believed" against hope "in hope."

(16) Learn, therefore, that it is not enough to begin to believe, but that one must also continue and persevere, and not be carried away. For God only tempts faith, as I have said, so that faith may become strong and firm, and the old Adam and unbelief may be strangled, who only clings to the present, which he sees and feels, so that he may tear us away from the present, that we may cling to the word alone, and then we will have enough in body and soul.

17 So he has learned and practiced the: Saying



In the most silent book of Moses [Cap. 8, 3]: "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes through the mouth of God: If a man does not live by the word alone, but by every word that passes through the mouth of God," [Matthew 4:4] he lives by the word alone, so that he clings to it and abides in it; then he must be blessed with all goods. Let this be the example by which we learn how far we still are from faith.

18. but that God first indicates in the promise and says: "I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you", then he puts the holy cross on him. This is the other piece we have to learn -from the fathers legends. For these are the main pieces of the Christian life, faith, hope, love, and the cross. For where God's word, the holy gospel, is, there the holy cross should not remain outside. For Paul gives it the name [1 Cor. 1:18] that he calls it a word of the cross, that is, it costs the cross and must bear the cross. For the world and the flesh are so minded that they do not like to suffer the gospel, for they only want to cling to that which they see before their eyes, to have honor and good enough, and to be sure of the thing. If then the gospel preaches that it is not right, she cannot hear it, for it only preaches against her. Therefore God tells Abram beforehand that he will be cursed, so that he may consider this and know that it must be so, so that he will not be challenged; and at the same time he comforts him with the same words, as if to say, "Be of good cheer and hold fast; you shall see that I will curse him who curses you, and I will bless him who blesses you.

19 But this is also in faith. It is not all described how it happened, but afterwards, in another place, it is well indicated, and here also that he was cursed by many, condemned, mocked and scorned, he "was a stranger in the land among his enemies, and not sure of life, had to fear his wife also [verse 10-12]. So now the Holy Spirit comforts him; but is silent, and yet lets him 1) lust, pretending not to see it. Therefore this is a blessing and cursing of God in the spirit, as if he should say: Those who curse you are

well blessed in the sight of the world, and again; but hold thy peace, and eat into thyself; look upon me, as I lead thee in the spirit, that they are accursed before me.

20 So he always points him to the word. So he had to live in the eyes of the enemy, risk life and limb, and let what he had be taken away; that God should stand by him, as if he did not hear and see how everyone blasphemes and defiles him. This is great; but it is even greater that he must go with his wife and large household; for if he had been alone, he could have gotten along much better. [It is well to think that they have been lords in the land, how often he has been wronged and violated and deprived of what is his.

(21) All this is presented to us as a high example, the like of which is not much found among the saints. For God Himself has arranged to describe His legend with all diligence, that the whole world should call Him a father of faith, from whom everyone should learn how faith must be skilful and what its nature is, namely, that it passes between life and death, honor and dishonor, good and poverty; so that he can say to God: You are mighty, you can keep me alive in death; because you have enough and live, I must also live and have enough. For even though he sees the contradiction, he is always guided by the promise.

22) But I have said, that in these words, "In thee shall all kindreds of the earth be blessed," Christ is actually promised. Although the Jews, to whom Christ is actually promised,Z) draw the saying, as they also pervert and sin other Scriptures, that so much is said: "In you all generations on earth shall be blessed," that is, by you all generations shall be praised; so that if the Gentiles turn to the faith of the Jews, or to their state, and are circumcised, they can boast that they also belong to Abraham. That is how far they interpreted it.

23 But we are to draw it further. Because

1) Erlanger: them.

2 " "To whom Christ is actually promised" is missing in the Wittenberg.

It goes to the Seed of Jesus Christ, as it is also subsequently greatly deleted. And the blessing is to remain on the whole man, body and soul. For he that is a Christian is blessed through and through, all that he sees, and hears, and feels; so that the word is mightily extended.

24 This saying concludes that we are all cursed and damned in Adam, to whom the sentence is laid [Gen. 3:16, 17]: "Cursed be the field for your sake"; and to the woman: "I will cause you much grief when you are with child" 2c. The sayings and curses go over man and woman and all of us, for the sake of sin, so that sin would be punished and repelled. But all this ceases when Christ comes, who brings a blessing for the curse, not so much that he takes away the sweat and labor, and the pain of childbirth, but much more. For the blessing is entirely spiritual, so that it first takes away and strangles the sin for which the curse has passed over us; which is also the right curse, through which we are stuck in the maw of eternal death; as above s^Cap. 2, 17.] is heard, "Which hour thou shalt eat of the tree, thou shalt die the death."

025 But how he taketh away man's labor, and woman's anguish, is not seen. For he taketh away as death, so that sorrow and death remain; but giveth us such medicine, and maketh us so drunken, that all these things do not deceive us, and we suffer them with a cheerful conscience. For he that believeth goeth up cheerfully, 1) not with displeasure and bitterness as before; and though it grieve the flesh and blood, yet the conscience remaineth cheerful. The taking away is much more glorious than if he were to stop it altogether; for there he shows his power and strength, as he is so mighty that in the midst of death life comes and drowns death. In the same way, he does not take away the work or the sweat, but makes it not hurt, and the heart full of joy, so that it thinks it cannot hurt him. He also does this with the woman, that she suffers everything gladly, even if it were more; [it] hurts her well.

but before, much more sore; yet now it becomes sweet and light to the conscience.

26. so he leads his blessing so strongly that he blesses all men in such a way that the curse must become harmless; will also finally take it away, but first the whole Adam must die. When we are through it, it is all gone. So the blessing must be understood as working in the heart, comforting and strengthening it, so that no misfortune will be too hard for it. Where this is not the case, the pain is too great and unmistakable, and there is only unhappiness and heartache, so that one always wants to be overburdened. Unbelief can suffer nothing willingly, flees because it can, so that it does not work, wants to have enough beforehand and be well provided for.

27 Thus it is seen everywhere that unbelief is a cursed thing, and makes all things bitter and bitter; but that faith is a blessed thing, and brings all good and joy. Now this is promised here, that such a blessing should come and go upon all generations, because the world stands, so that it is said and preached to the last day, Abram is dead, Christ is in heaven; yet the blessing is there. Wherever the gospel is preached, it proclaims that whoever believes in Christ, Abraham's flesh and blood, shall have his sins forgiven, death taken away, and eternal life. This is ever highly blessed, offered to everyone. If you want to be blessed, believe in Christ. Therefore it is nothing else than preaching the gospel, in which the blessing is spoken daily.

28 This then was the gospel which they had at that time, which saith the same thing, and is none other than our gospel, by which Christ is preached in all the world. Whoever accepts and believes it shall be saved from all calamity. The same gospel was also given to Adam, but not so clearly as here to Abram. From him it is always driven away and expressed more clearly, until Christ has come.

Thus we have seen the holy cross that the holy patriarch carried. He has now come to the land, but does not know that this is the one that God told him. Therefore he went up and down like a pilgrim, coming as far as Shechem, almost in the middle of the land of Canaan.

Now that he has obeyed his God and gone forth, He will not leave him without comfort at last. Therefore Moses says:

**V.7-9. Then the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land. And there he built an altar unto the LORD, which appeared unto him. And he departed from thence unto a mountain that was toward the east of the city of Bethel, and pitched his tent, that he might have Bethel toward the west, and Ai toward the east. And there he built an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD. And Abram departed from Bethel, and went out toward the south.**

030 This text may be thought to be a bad text, as indeed it is; but three journeys are signified therein. First, Abram passed through the land from time to time, and encamped once at Shechem. From there he departed and moved away, settling down between Bethel. And the third time he departed thence, and went forth toward the south, unto the land of Egypt, and built altars in two places, when God appeared unto him, and at Bethel.

(31) The prophet David has rightly considered this text, when he says: "I am a stranger with you, and a sojourner, like all my fathers." Item, the epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 11, 9.] also says "By faith he was a stranger in the land promised to him, as to a stranger." And Stephen [Apost. 7, 4. 5.] also says: "God brought our father Abraham over to this land, where you now dwell. He gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot wide, and promised him that He would give it to him to possess, and to his seed after him, since he had no child." So he had to be freryd all his life, that he also had to buy his burial [Gen. 23, 16. 17.]. Therefore he did not put his hope in temporal goods.

32. it is a strange history and a strange faith that God leads the man from the temporal to the eternal, names and indicates to him temporal goods, namely this country, and

But faith, which is attached to the word, even though it speaks of the temporal, gives him eternal happiness. Therefore, it depends on God's word. When God speaks, even from a straw, it is nevertheless an eternal word, so that whoever believes in it is justified and pious, that he has God and enough for eternity. Therefore, you must not look only at what he says, for it is all the same, one thing and another; but you must look at the very most of his word. If you are sure of this, close your eyes and do not ask what he is talking about. If the word is there, you have enough, because it is the eternal truth and God Himself [Psalm 119, 160. Joh. 17, 17.]. So faith is also an eternal treasure.

(33) I say this because there has been a hostile disagreement as to how the promises of the Old and New Testaments are to be separated, and they commonly separate them in such a way that in the Old Testament good is promised temporally, and in the New eternally. Such a distinction is not sufficient, and does not conclude. For Abram is not promised eternal possessions when he says, "This land I will give to your seed," for he is speaking of physical children and land; nor is the word eternal, and the faith that holds to it attains eternal life and blessedness. Therefore, the word of God is to be kept in the same regard, he speaks whatever he wants, and always clings to it. It is all God's power and supreme good. Otherwise, if one were to judge according to the difference, Abram would not have become a Christian through faith in this word, from the bodily good.

Now this is the comfort that God gives us in suffering. For he has a way of tempting faith, he tempers it, and makes it last, so that we take off the old skin and cling to the mere word and insist on it. But if it lasts too long, and comes too hard, he does not leave it without consolation. But the scripture is reasonable and does not say how he was taken along. Why did he not stay in Shechem? Of course, he did not do it because he wanted to. Moses also mentions it in the 5th book, Cap. 26, 5: "The Syrians wanted to kill my father, who went down to Egypt and was a stranger there. The people of the land did not like him."

1) "says also" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) Irr the expenses: they.

35 For it is certain that Abram preached the word of God, and so lived as he believed. If he preached and lived like this, it is impossible that he pleased the people. For he had to punish them and say out of Christian love, "Your nature is not right and against God. If he had not done this, he would not have been a true pious, holy man, for Christian love cannot remain silent nor tolerate that the neighbor errs and sins, it must punish and punish where it can. That is what he has done; therefore, wherever he goes, he remains as long as he does not speak the truth. When he opens his mouth, he has to leave.

In those days there was still a fine world, many wise and understanding people, also pious and holy. But he found many of them, especially hypocritical and presumptuous people, who especially persecuted the true saints, as Moses touches on in the fifth book, as we will hear later. Therefore he did not do it out of recklessness that he broke out like this; nobody wanted to suffer him. And because he stands thus in the holy cross, having no one among the people to comfort him, God Himself comforts him, but puts such words that it is contrary to all appearance. 1) As if to say, "You are a stranger among men who are enemies to you, who think that they have possession of the land and that you must live at their mercy; but I will turn it around so that you will be lord and they will not. Abram was comforted by this. This is how God deals with all His believers. This is one piece.

(37) The other thing, that Abram buildeth an altar at Shechem, and afterward one when he cometh to Bethel, is no other thing than that the pious patriarch prepared a place for himself and his servants, that they might come together to hear the gospel, and to pray, and to sacrifice. For from the beginning this was the outward worship, that they slaughtered and sacrificed animals, as Noah, Cain, and Abel; as we have the mass or sacrament, where we preach and pray. They also preached and prayed as we do, but had other signs, namely the sacrifice. Sometimes it happened when they put it on the altar.

that it lit and consumed the fire from heaven, when I said about Abel's sacrifice [Cap. 4, 22.]. But I will believe that ses<sup>a</sup> did not happen here, or not at all times. Alan probably afterwards finds it clear that ses<sup>a</sup>s had happened; as, of Gideon and Manoah in the book of Judges [Cap. 6, 21. 13, 20.]. But it is not to be thought that they established such a service, that they wanted to do God a good work with it; but, because one must have a place and place, where one comes together, and God's word teaches and acts, such the necessity forces to establish, thus that actually Abram did such for the sake of preaching.

(38) What then did he preach? Just what we preach in the Gospel, namely: Here is God's word, which promises me that he will give me a seed through which all the world will be blessed, and will give me this land. If we believe the word, we are pious. He] has thus set forth how one should serve God with faith, and how in the promise the whole gospel is understood, that no one can please God without faith [Heb. 11:6], but no one could believe without God's word, that is, the sermon.

39 Then he also asked that the promise be fulfilled for himself and his servants, and for his enemies who had harmed him. There he is landlord and priest, has both regiments in his hand. Therefore, this history is not to be rejected. He has been holier than any pope or bishop has ever been; he has also led the spiritual office better than any of the very best. Preaching is the highest and noblest office. Where this is not, nothing can make a priest before God.

40 So the sacrifice is not to be understood as if he had done it as a good work, but as a sign to confirm the sermon, just as we take the sacrament in addition to the word to strengthen faith. For if thou receive this, and hold fast the word, and believe that his body is given for thee, and his blood shed for thee, thou art blessed. He also said: "If we believe that what God has said will come to pass, we will become a sign of God.

1) Erlanger: which is reflection.

make a sacrifice to strengthen the faith, so that we may be the more sure. Scripture has not set this in vain. For the less the service, the better it is to keep only the word and the sign.

041 And Abram, when he went forth, and came to Bethel, set up an altar again, and offered sacrifices. Bethel is called a house of God. For Beth is a house of God; so that when the man came, and met the place, he set up a house of God, and called upon the name of God, saith the text. This is all said of the public ministry; so that where it is found that the saints have built an altar or the like, that it may be learned that it is not said of secret prayer and worship. For he did the same thing that no man saw: but this is the public work which he did in the sight of the people when they were assembled together.

For "to call upon the name of God" in Scripture means "to call upon publicly. This is nothing other than the outward service of God, by which the gospel is made known with the mouth and preached before everyone. He will have done so, that his people were present and listened; to them he preached and put sayings in their mouths, how they praised God and gave thanks for the future Christ and all the goods that were promised to him [Rom. 10, 9. 10.].

These are the three journeys, that he must be a pilgrim, and flee from the holy cross. He would have gladly stayed, since he built the altar at the first, but he always had to leave, so that he would be well trained in righteous faith; he always thought that God would give him a place where he would stay, but he had to hover between heaven and earth.

44 If anyone should say, "It is forbidden in Moses that any man should not perform a service for him. Item, that the Scripture says, God will not suffer the works which we ourselves choose, that they should be well done before God [Matth. 15, 9. Marc. 7, 7.]. For, as I have often said, what we do must be done in such a way that we can say that it pleases God, and have certain sayings that say that God wills and gives. Where this is not, I shall do nothing before God. As,

That a Christian should believe and love is God's word. What I do now, so that I can always say: I do this because God has called it; then I am right before God. Otherwise, all works are nothing and condemned, no matter how great and beautiful they may be, as all priests and monks are.

(45) For no work shall be called and be good, except it have the word of God in it; not that it seemeth good to me or to thee, that it seemeth good in the sight of the world and in the sight of reason, that it be great, long, and heavy, or that there be great devotion and good opinion in it; but that it have goodness and nobility only in that it proceedeth in the commandment of God. Now, if all the clergy and ecclesiastics in the world could come up with a saying that God had ordered and commanded their thing, we would also carry it on our hands. It takes more than good opinion and what the world can do to make it good. God's word must do it.

(46) How then shall we save the holy father, that he should lead and build altars, when he hath no word of God concerning them? As long as he does not say so, he should not build an altar, no matter how holy he is and how good he means it. Answer: That he certainly had orders from God, whether it is not written that the Holy Spirit said that he should build, otherwise one could not defend it. But this helps that he had God's word, because the text says: "He built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him"; he concluded from the Spirit, because he wanted to give him the same land, that it would please him to build altars there. If he was to be in the land, he had to preach there; therefore he had to build an altar. Therefore he does not do it out of his own presumption, but in obedience. So we must dwell on this and groan, 2) that we always say that they did nothing that pleased God without God's word. For if one allowed that one might do something more, monks and priests would have already won justice.

#### **V. 10-16: And there was a tempest in the land. Then Abram went down into Egypt,**

1) Erlanger: heavier.

2) moan - support.

**That he might abstain there as a stranger: for the theure was heavy in the land. And when he was come nigh unto Egypt, he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold, I know that thou art a fair woman in countenance: and when the Egyptians shall see thee, they shall say that this is his wife, and shall slay me, and keep thee. Dear, say that thou art my sister, that it may go well with me for thy sake, and that my soul may live for thy sake. Now when he came into Egypt, the Egyptians saw the woman, that she was almost beautiful. And the princes of Pharaoh saw her, and praised her before him. Then she was brought into Pharaoh's palace. And Abram prospered because of her; and he had flocks, and herds, and asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and asses, and camels.**

This is the last and hardest journey that Abram makes; he has had comfort for a while, but now a greater temptation comes again than before. This is another great example of faith. The land is weighed down with dear time, the inhabitants can hardly feed themselves, where will the pilgrim stay? He must leave. So he is once again] chased away, knows nowhere to go, God is silent about it, and lets him be pushed out of the land that is promised to him, since he thinks that he is the most firmly established. So God does not let His own rest, so that no one will hang on to temporal good; thus He plays with us, gives and takes it away again; and again. Over this he must also put his wife on the road, yes, first of all surrender his life, knows no advice to save himself, but that he gives his wife away.

48 And is he right in putting his wife in the way, and in daring to honor her? Item, that he has such evil thoughts of people, when one should think the best of one's neighbor? Answer: He does as much as he can, so that he does not tempt God. Because he can do that, so that he can save himself with his wife, he needs her. After all, God commands it all. Think, then, if I did not have my wife with me, God could protect me and keep her in honor as well as with me; but because I have her and can use such means, I will not tempt God.

For faith is so made that it freely considers the mere word of God.

and home all things to him, and yet do not try. But what does trying mean? It is two things: The first is on the left side, not accepting God's promise that He will give it into our hands. As if Abram, about the promise, would have the land in his hands so soon, and would not believe until he had it in his hands, the word would have been struck away and God would have been tempted, as the Jews did in the wilderness, to whom God had promised that He would lead them and not let them lack; but now when they saw that [it] would lack, they began to grumble, not wanting to believe that they had it in their hands [Ex. 16:2, 3]. That is, God tempts in lack when there is not available what one should have.

50. the other is in abundance on the right side, when God has given food that can be used, and one leaves that and shuts his mouth to heaven, wanting to have a special sign. If we are hungry, he could well keep us without food; as he said [Deut. 8:3] that he would feed us by his word; but because he also gives bread, he does not want us to leave it lying around. So here God is said to be tempted when one has need and want, and can well help the matter, and does not use what God has given. Those who vow chastity are also of this kind. God has proposed and instituted the conjugal state so that we may escape fornication; whoever does not want to accept this, and does not have the nature to keep chastity, leaves behind God's word, which he has given, as if God were to perform a special, supernatural work and miracle with him.

(51) Therefore faith should walk and drive in this way: If there is lack, that he may freely trust in God's word; but if there is abundance and enough, he should need it and not seek something else. Thus he walks between the left and the right side, staying on the right middle road. This is what this example teaches us. If he is in want, he commands God, even though he must now live in the road; but if he has a wife, and sees that if he said she was his wife, they would kill him, he takes what God gives him for protection and uses it.

52. but it is a great thing, his wife

from himself, and [dare] to do so only on God. He must have had no doubt that God would keep her, must also be a pious woman who is so obedient that she gives herself to strangers. In sum, it is quite fraternal that she also puts her body and honor there, and does what pleases her husband. Two people came together in a crowd: Abram, the father, Sarai, the mother, have well deserved to be preferred as an] example and model of faith. But they suffered many and great trials, that the faith might be kept pure and sincere, both in want and sufficiency; and both were able to live in want, and to be rich, and to be high, and to be low, and to engage in all manner of good and evil.

(53) God is wont to deal with His own in this way, that He does not let them stay long in one place, but chases them hither and thither, not only for their sake, that their faith may be proved, but also for the benefit of other people. For Abram certainly could not keep silent, nor was it proper for him not to preach to the people about God's grace. Therefore God drove him through the famine in Egypt, so that he might also be of use there and enlighten some with the right knowledge of God. Which he undoubtedly did. For it is not fitting that a man should deal with people and not reveal to them what is good for their salvation. Because he says that he dwelt in Egypt, and that it was well with him for Sarai's sake, he did not fail to teach her. Thus God acts strangely on earth, sending apostles and preachers to the people before they know it or think of it; even those who are sent do not know how to get there.

**V.17-20. But the LORD afflicted Pharaoh with great plagues, and his house, because of Sarai Abram's wife. Then Pharaoh called Abram to him and said to him, "Why have you done this to me? Why did you not tell me 1) that your wife was? Why saidst thou then that she was thy sister? because I took her to me to wife. And now, behold, thou hast thy wife; take her, and go. And he commanded his mighty men over him to go with him, and with his wife, and with all that he had.**

1) In the issues: say.

54 You see how God always responds to faith and does not let it fall. So he goes and puts his wife and her honor on the road. That was very daring, especially in the king's court. He does not worry, does not set a goal for God, how he should bring her back, does not set a time, a way, or a person, but goes freely, thinking: "It is God's command, where I stay and come with the wife, I do not want to know how or when she will come back. He clings only to the blessing in which God promised him that he would not leave him; and when he is tempted, he goes and does not doubt that he will help her to come back to him or otherwise for the best. As now his heart stands, so he finds. For God cares for him so highly that he also attacks the king and all his household with great plagues.

(55) Moses does not say what the plagues were, but he presses the king so far that he gives Abram back his wife himself, and orders his officials and officers to escort him with all that he has. That is how exactly God respects this man, who in front of the world seems as if he does not know or see him, let him take his wife. Before he looks around, he attacks King Pharaoh for his own sake, which the prophet David praises in Psalm 105, v. 14. Therefore, it is a remarkable example that God cares so much for him and gives more to him than to the whole kingdom. What is in the king's kingdom is a hundred times less than poor, foreign Abram; that the prophets may have seen this, so that we may learn how God holds himself against those who trust in him, and believe that there is no power so great and terrible that is not subject to a Christian.

For God does not strike a bad man here; he was not warned before. Now he warns him so highly that he is glad to keep Abram as a friend; he causes so much trouble that the king must humble himself before him. How bad it would be now to suffer that a poor beggar would come into a king's country, that the country and the people would have to call him gracious lord 3) and be afraid of him, and be glad that they

2) In the editions (according to Latin idiom): itself.

3) In the old editions: "gnad Herr".

showed him all the services? Nor can God accomplish this so soon. Therefore it is not possible for him to leave anyone who trusts in him and clings to him; indeed, he helps more and better than we can ever desire.

57 For Abram would never have desired nor wished that the king should send for him, restore his wife, and make him well attended. Therefore let the faithful be undaunted in all troubles. For thus says Solomon in Proverbs f^Cap. 16:7], "If a man's ways please the LORD, he will also make his enemies content with him."

The saying flows from many histories. If God is pleased with us, let Him take care of the enemies. He can throw them around in a hui and make them friends. It is only the hopeless, damned unbelief that cannot be resisted; as he sees with eyes, so he judges and goes, not wanting to step into darkness.

(59) Great benefit and correction will come from him, so that kings and princes will be taught and converted through him. For such

The punishment is that the king became Abram's friend. And it is a sign that he has recognized God, so that Abram has carried out his ministry with great benefit. How God always deals with his own, that he gives them to work on earth. That is why he tosses them back and forth. That is enough of this chapter.

60 But what is to be said now between Abram and his Sarai, I command others. [It is also shown how a fine marriage it was, and how it should be done. For Abram laid out a commandment to his wife, saying that she was his sister, and so put himself in the way for her husband. There is no reluctance, but fine friendly obedience, ssie^ keeps to her Lord's word that right conjugal love has been there. Therefore she has also done a mighty great work of faith there, because she has also had to surrender herself and her honor to God's power. Therefore, both women and men have ample examples and stimulation of faith and Christian conjugal love.

## The thirteenth chapter.

(vv. 1-18) So Abram went up out of Egypt with his wife, and with all that he had, and Lot also with him, toward the south. Abram was loaded with cattle, silver and gold. And he went on his way from the south even unto Bethel, unto the place where his tabernacle was first, between Bethel and Ai, even unto the place where he had made the altar before: and there he called upon the name of the LORD. And Lot, which went with Abram, had also flocks, and herds, and tents; and the land could not bear that they should dwell together: for their substance was great, and they could not dwell together. And there was always strife between the shepherds over Abram's cattle and the shepherds over Lot's cattle. And the Canaanites and the Perizzites dwelt in the land at that time. Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between me and you, or between my herdsmen and yours.

teu, because we are brothers. Isn't all land open to you? Dear, part from me. If thou wilt go to the left, I will go to the right; or if thou wilt go to the right, I will go to the left. Then Lot lifted up his eyes, and saw all the region of Jordan: for before God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, it was full of water, even unto Zoar, as the garden of God, even as the land of Egypt. Then Lot bought him the whole region of Jordan, and went toward the east. So one brother separated himself from another, and Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot in the cities of the same region, and pitched his tent in Sodom. But the people of Sodom were wicked, and sinned greatly against the Lord. And it came to pass, when Lot was departed from Abram, that the LORD said unto Abram, Lift up thine eyes, and behold from the place where thou dwellest, toward the north, toward the midst.



**day<sup>^</sup> toward the morning, and toward the evening; for all the land which thou seest I will give thee, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth. If a man can number the dust of the earth, he shall number thy seed also. Arise therefore, and go through the land, into the length and breadth thereof; for unto thee will I give it. So Abram raised his tents, and came and dwelt in the grove of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.**

This is a short, easy chapter, and actually written for the sake of God's promise. For here you see the very first promise that he makes to Abram about this land. For in the previous chapter we heard that God told him to go out, but did not point to any other land, leaving him hovering between heaven and earth, moving from time to time, so that he did not yet know what the actual land was until he came out of Egypt again and parted from his brother. Then he said, "This is the land I promised to give you," confirming and explaining the promise he made in the previous chapter.

(2) This is first of all the cause why it is written; there it stands in the bottom. For the promise that the Jews should take the land and possess it is therefore taken, and 1) is always afterwards continued. [But it is also written, that it may be seen how God does not desist from those who believe, as long as they do not desist; but as he sends one affliction after another, so also one comfort follows another; so that it is finely mixed, that now the sun shines, now it rains, and now it is dark, that they may be tempted in good and evil at the same time. He let Abram go a good while after the comfort in Egypt, but it lasted a year or two until the shepherds quarreled with each other that he should separate from his brother. Now another comfort comes, but it gives him room to wander, and he is a sojourner and a stranger here and there until Hebron, where he remains. Thus this chapter also indicates the pilgrimage of the holy father.

This is now also part of his faith, that he has walked with his brother's son until now, but now he must also separate from him; it is also an example of love. Since his and his cousin's shepherds could not get along, which he undoubtedly tried many times, he does what he can, stakes his good and friendship on it with Lot, before he breaks the love, and lets anger and strife become. We are so skilled that we may quarrel and rumble over a drink of beer. He is in a foreign country with his wife and servants, yet he holds so firmly to love and peace that he puts everything he has into it, thus remaining in harmony with his brother and allowing him to choose his own advantage. Another would not have divorced him so easily. Thus one sees how they have been righteous children of God.

In the last also here is described the land of Sodom and Gomorrah. To understand this, one must know the occasion. The Promised Land is situated so that it has Egypt toward the evening and the Jordan toward the morning. At the end of the Jordan is the sea called the Dead Sea, in which the five cities were drowned, as we shall hear. The same land, before it was turned back and sunk (says the text), was full of water as a garden of God, like Egypt land. There he praises it highly, and especially indicates that Egypt is more delicious than the promised land, which is as pleasant as if God Himself had planted and prepared it; however, it was a lard pit, the right core and soil of the land, since everything was enough; after that Bethlehem is not far from it, even deliciously situated.

(5) This is why, in addition to the story of Abram, he shows that worldly good and faith are hardly together. For because the land was so delicious, rich and full, they became bad boys who asked nothing of God and his word. If they had been more pious, they might have suffered sorrow and hardship. That is why abundance and full sufficiency lead them into such sin and vice that God had to destroy them. This was also indicated by the prophet Ezekiel j<sup>^</sup>Cap. 16, 49. 50.]: "This was the sin of your sister Sodom," he says to Jerusalem, "hope, abundance of bread, and plenty, and her idleness, and her daughters," the

1) "and" is missing in the Erlanger.

The people of the land, the villages and the countryside around, "and that she gave no hand to the poor, no one could come up to her; therefore she became proud, and did such abominations, that I destroyed her.

6 Therefore, I say, where it is full, there is not much grace; but where it is narrow, there is skill. As we see: When one is full and has no lack, there is no one who looks to God; again, when one suffers hunger for one day, everyone cries out. So the world does nothing, except that it is

God is angry with good and riches; if he does not give them, they are angry. Thus, Scripture indicates that God likes to deal with the poor, and how dangerous it is to live in abundance; when He gives much, we cannot moderate ourselves, we must abuse it. Therefore it is a great mercy that he lets the common rabble have little, otherwise he becomes 1) so naughty that [f]es] no one can suffer, as Solomon says in Proverbs.

1) In the issues: wills.

## The fourteenth chapter.

V. 1-16. And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Elassar, and Kedorlaomor king of Elam, and Thideal king of the Gentiles, that they warred with Vera king of Sodom, and with Birsas king of Gomorrah, and with Shinarab king of Adamah, and with Shemeber king of Zeboim, and with the king of Bela, whose name is Zoar. All these came together into the broad valley where the Salt Sea is. For they had been twelve years under King Kedorlaomor, and in the thirteenth year they had fallen from him. And Kedorlaomor came, and the kings that were with him, in the fourteenth year, and smote the giants of Astharoth Karnaim, and the Susim of Ham, and the Emim in the plains of Kiriathaim, and the Horites in mount Seir, unto the breadth of Pharan, which is upon the wilderness. Then they turned and came to the Rechtborn, which is Kadesh, and smote all the land of the Amalekites, and the Amorites that dwelt in HazezonThamar. And the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Adamah, and the king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela, which is called Zoar, went out, and prepared themselves to fight in the broad valley with Kedorlaomor king of Elam, and with Tideal king of the Gentiles, and with Amraphel king of Shinar, and with Arioch king of Elassar; four kings with them.

And the broad valley had many clay pits. But the king of Sodom and Gomorrah were put to flight there and laid low, and what remained fled to the mountains. Then they took all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the food, and departed. They also took with them Lot, Abram's brother's son, and his goods, for he dwelt in Sodom, and departed. Then one who had escaped came and told Abram, the foreigner who lived in the grove of Mamre, the Amorite, who was a brother of Escol and Aner. These were in league with Abram. And when Abram heard that his brother was taken, he armed his own servants, three hundred and eighteen, born in his house, and pursued after them unto Dan, and divided himself, and fell upon them by night with his servants, and smote them, and pursued after them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of the city of Damascus, and brought back all the goods, and Lot his brother with his goods, and the women, and the people.

This chapter is also easy and bad. Whoever wants to know how the battle happened, may look at the figure of the Jewish land printed. Why it is written, we will see later. First of all, one must know how the land is situated in order to understand the history correctly. The land where the Moabites, L-eir and Edom dwelt, even unto the Red Sea, is all that is called Arabiam Petraam. Abram

But dwelt in Hebron, which was at that time a goodly and great capital, when afterward Rome was in the Welsh country, so that all looked upon it; now it is upon the border, having the salt sea, that is, the dead sea toward the east; item, Amalek, likewise the Carnaim, giants, Susim, and Emim, Horites, Amorites, also toward the east. They have fallen upon all these in the land, and have smitten all that they found in the same places and in the same mountains.

(2) Now the kings are specially mentioned. The king Amraphel of Sinear and KedorLaomor of Elam are the kings of Persia and Medes, from whom the Elamites came and still remain. Although it happens in all the world that the names are changed, after that one people drives out the other, and sits down in a country, as here the Horiter lived before times, where after the Edomiter sat. Therefore the names of a part are uncertain.

003 So it came to pass, that the four kings fell from the east, through the land of the Amorites and Moabites, whom they smote; and the Shushim also, which were the nobles of the land; which were also smitten, because they wished to make the kings of the land free again, and to be their lords. At that time almost every city had a king, so that it was a powerful nation. So now the five kings have armed themselves for battle against those four.

4 Now this battle is told, not that God should desire to tell how the nations quarrelled and fought with one another, but for Abram's sake and for the miraculous work that was done. Twelve years they had served the Persian kings, says the text, but in the thirteenth year, when they were rich and thought 2) they were established, they fell away and gave neither tithes nor interest any more; this they did for one year. But in the fourteenth the others arose and smote them; the rest they took away, as the land was full and rich.

005 Now this is the miraculous sign, that the five kings, who were strong and mighty,

item, the giants, a mighty people) with the Amorites, also the Amalekites, Susim, and all that was about the border, were smitten by those four kings, that none could withstand them; and Abram, the one man, was to smite them, without all the help of any king or city. For the text saith, He took of his own servants three hundred and eighteen, and none more than three brethren, Mamre, Escol, and Aner, which might have been nobles at Hebron, where he dwelt.

(6) In order that Moses may show what Abram's rule was, that he nevertheless had a very large number of servants, because so many servants alone are counted, many of whom had wives and children. With them he had to move in the country, where he had nothing of his own, ruled them physically and spiritually, with preaching, sacrifices and prayers, as said above [Cap. 12, § 37 ff]. Nevertheless, some also joined him in Hebron and kept company with him, as these three, who are mentioned here.

(7) So the stranger set out, and with his company alone he pursued so many and mighty enemies from Hebron to Dan, at the end of the promised land; so that he passed through it from noon to midnight. When he came to Dan, which at that time was not yet called Dan, but Leshem (Jos. 19:47), he used reason, although the spirit ruled them, and attacked them secretly, not hurrying after them, but letting them go far before, so that they were safe, and thought they had passed through. That one sees how God thus plays as if it had happened naturally and through human cleverness, and yet it is God's miraculous sign. So he suddenly attacked them, when they did not know it. For if five kings were lying together, they would still consider it a disgrace that they should let three hundred and eighteen men frighten them, break out, and leave behind them what they had captured and stolen. But because this happened, the story itself shows that it did not happen naturally, but must be a miraculous sign. When they now

1) In the old editions: one part.

2) In the editions: "meant them, they".

3) "they", namely reason.

When the two men, who were in such a hurry, separated, fled and were beaten, he brought back all the plunder they had taken away, and of course much more rich booty. This is a piece of history, how it happened.

The first thing to ask here is: Since Abram is an evangelical man, who walks in pure faith, and all his life is in the Word of God, how is it that he wields the sword here, and commits such murder, since he must have slain many people? How can such a Christian man do such a work that belongs to an executioner, shed so much blood? Should he not have suffered it cheaply, as Christ Match. 5:40, and thus say, "If they have taken my brother away from me, I must suffer that they also take me away.

(9) Answer: So we have taught, a Christian is such a man, who stands completely in God's will, does everything he knows to be pleasing to him; and again, is so skilled that he completely shuts his eyes from the works, does not see how great or small, short or long, how pretty or foolish it seems, as reason does, which always makes a distinction among the works, saying: This is delicious, this is small; but faith looks only at God's will. If it is God's commandment, he does it; if not, he does not do it, even if it were good; he sees no further. If God demanded that I strike my neighbor, I would have to do it, and not judge by the work, but by God's will. Where else would worldly power come from if he had not commanded the sword to be used? Because he says so, it must be done. Although a prince must be so minded that he does not harm anyone for himself, he must nevertheless strangle the wicked, even though he would rather grant them life.

(10) This must be understood when one reads the histories of the Old Testament, for there one finds many examples of how the saints shed blood and strangled people. Whoever now wants to judge according to the works of the fathers becomes a fool, for they are so strange that no human reason can judge from them. So this is also to be considered a foolish work, as also above [Cap. 12, 13], when he gave his wife.

The Scriptures are full of them everywhere. As we read in the first book of Kings [Cap. 20, 31-42], when Ahab, king of Israel, had so smitten Benhadad, king of Syria, and driven him in, that he had him in his hand, he wished to be merciful, and to show mercy to his enemies: He let him go and called him brother, because he thought he was doing a good deed. God did not want to suffer this, and as soon as a prophet arose, he came to his neighbor and said by the word of the Lord [vv. 35-37]: "Dear one, strike me. But he refused to strike him. Then said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the word of the LORD, behold, a lion shall smite thee, if thou depart from me. And as he departed from him, a lion found him, and smote him. And he found another man, and said, Slay me, I pray thee. And the man smote him sore." After this the prophet went to the king, and said [v. 42]: "Because thou hast left the banished man alive, thou shalt perish, thou, and thy people."

(11) Behold, is not this a foolish work before reason of the prophet? Even if another did it, without spirit and word, it would be impossible. What is different here that makes such a work praiseworthy, but this: Because God wants him to be struck, 1) he must be struck, and only the eyes must be closed. Many high people must be offended by such histories, when the light of reason looks into them; it is blind and mad, and cannot do otherwise with God than to suggest to him what is good and delicious; and as it judges, so shall one do. God does not like this, therefore he often does such works, and wants them to blind reason, and thus says: Believe me, and see no work, be it what it may; if I say it to you, do it. So we will hear again hereafter [Cap. 22:2] that Abram was to sacrifice his son. Was it not strange that he should kill the only son he loved without any guilt, when God had said before [Cap. 21, 12] had said that He would give him a seed from Isaac? Nor did he have to do the whole thing, not seeing if it was his son.

and freshly went with him to slaughter him. These are right men, who regard not the commandment, but the will of him that commanded it. Thus they have done strangely, that the whole world is made fools of.

(12) Now answer the question, whether a Christian may use the sword, since he is to love everyone? A Christian must not use the sword at all for his own sake, nor for the sake of other Christians; but if God wants him to use it and gives it into his hand, he must do so, freshly executed and strangled.

(13) So it happened here that the Spirit led Abram to do this battle as a Christian man, not as a pagan to cool his courage or atone for his lust, but according to God's order, word and command. That this was the case is shown by what follows, how the high priest Melchizedek praises and glorifies him when he came from the battle; it also proves the work and miraculous signs in himself. If God had not commanded it, he would never have done it, nor should he have dared to stand up against such mighty kings, who had defeated everything that stood against them. But because God commands it, especially to save his brother, he does it and goes in faith. Now when such people come, they can penetrate and win. God wanted to strike them miraculously, so that the miraculous work was confirmed enough that it was done by his will and pleased him.

14 Let this be said in answer to the question, that Christians may not use sword or spear for themselves, nor for those who believe; but because it is necessary for the sake of evil men to defend them and to protect the pious, a Christian, if he is ordered to do so by God, and by those who are in God's stead, may go and slay like the others. Therefore, if a ruler of a country or an authority has to defend himself and protect himself, and if he has to go into battle, go in the name of God, burn, rob, and kill what you find among the enemies; whatever you can do, do it freshly with a good conscience and faith. Do not spare yourself, but do as the warrior does; not

think that you will make widows and orphans, but consider that God has decreed that the land or the people should be ravaged. But if you are struck by it, let God rule it.

15 Thus shalt thou always read in the histories of the children of Israel, how they were commanded to slay all that lived among their enemies, that they should not leave a dog alive. It is his anger against the wicked; for this he needs both the pious and the wicked. Therefore Abram did right in that he spared not the sword; only srisch stabbed and hewed, no mercy showed. So again you read in the first book of Samuel [Cap. 15, 3. 9.], how the Jews wanted to be sober, although they had God's commandment, that they should destroy Amalek, what was in the whole country, dry and clean, not letting live a cattle, shas, house, or stable. For thus he had foretold in the other book of Moses [Cap. 17:14], "I will cut off Amalek from under heaven"; and they were to have complied with this, and to have cleared away everything fresh, so that not a stick remained. But when they did not do so, he was angry, so that he expelled King Saul from the kingdom (1 Sam. 15:23), so that all his blood also had to be cut off because of his disobedience.

16 Thus the pious Abram was skillful and had a heart full of love for everyone, as well as for God. Therefore, afterwards [Cap. 18, 23. ff.] he prays so diligently for the Sodomites that he would have died for them. Where is the love here? Because God wants such things, God's love goes beyond the love of the neighbor. Therefore, these kings would have remained for his sake, because he kept them like his neighbors; but because God called him to be slain, there must be no more love nor mercy.

(17) Therefore let us learn what are called righteous works, to which all histories look, as one finds so many of Samson, David, Elijah, and Elisha, 2c., which seem to reason as if they were done out of anger, revenge, and ill will, that reason cannot distinguish between an angry tyrant and the holy prophets; so they rage. There is still a great difference. Here goes

God's word and obedience, and elsewhere one's own will of courage. Therefore, we see the contradiction in Scripture, that those who wanted to show mercy to the enemy, who wanted to be spiritual and pious, angered God and perished.

(18) Learn then from such histories that works are not to be considered at all, but only God's commandment; that you do none, for you have the testimony of His will; so go up with joy, whether you must put yourself and all that you have into it. Then right men go out, are not bound to any work, do nothing except what God has commanded; therefore they are sure that God is pleased with everything they do. So the patriarch went with a good conscience and right faith, knowing that his killing would please God in the best way. It is good to argue with such people, they are courageous and joyful. At times one man can beat ten, twenty or thirty. 1) If they die, they die well. The others are sad and despondent. For this reason he had good war with God's word, which was his right armor; therefore his sword had to press on. Let it be decided, then, that a Christian man, be he what he will and who he will, shall 2) wield the sword when he is called upon to do so; if not, let him leave it. Therefore, if the authorities want the priests and the clergy to join them in the field, they are as guilty as the others, even though they finely pull themselves out of the noose against God's order, and want to be free from all authority's command.

(19) This is the story in which we see that Abram kept the love of neighbor, so that he nevertheless put it under God, so that faith and love for God should govern love for neighbor, so that we do not love man more than God. Where it goes right, it also goes right against the neighbor.

(20) After this, love of neighbor shall rule all outward works, that we do all that love requires; so that all the commandments may be mastered by the same, that we may do all things whatsoever we ought to do, to convert other people.

1) Erlanger: to be beaten.

2> In the outputs: it shall.

and to bring them to the faith, as with the Jews and the Gentiles; so that one does them all kinds of love and service that one can, to the faith without harm. For according to love one must judge everything that is commanded against one's neighbor; where it is contrary, it must cease. No law can be set over love; it must rule by force, so that everything may always remain free, whether commanded or not, for the benefit of the neighbor; if not, that everything may only come to ruin. So one should only do freely against the 3) pope's commandment, set against love. Therefore, we have prescribed many examples in which we see faith toward God and love toward one's neighbor so strangely intermingled that it seems contrary to all reason.

(21) This is the first part of this chapter, written to instruct those who deal with warfare, according to God's word or order, not to consider the guilt or innocence of the enemy, but only that God wills it so. For this holy father has certainly struck and strangled many people. And even though he did not do it himself, he nevertheless gave the cause of all the slaughter and murder that was committed, so that he must answer for it: and yet he has done well, and is praised and glorified before God. Without ever arguing in such a way that it is done for the protection of our people, which concerns the Red.

(22) But that the mad princes of the world now wanted to help themselves with this does not apply. For they have only started wars out of sheer will of courage, not to protect their country and people, but to atone for their lust; that is what sets them against each other. The common man has to take the blame, to destroy country and people for the sake of their will to be brave.

(23) But where it is necessary, it is not a will of courage, but to protect the oppressed; for if it is the work of love, it is no longer a sin to make widows and orphans, even to kill the innocent at times, if it cannot be done otherwise. For there it goes, as one says: One neighbor owes another a fire. If we live near each other, we must also expect common misfortune. And even if we do not

3) "des" is missing in Erlanger, 4) Erlanger: wilchen.

But because we are in the crowd that causes it, we must suffer with it. Whom God wants punished, He punishes; therefore, we must look at nothing but the adversity that God's will and wrath brings.

**V.17-24. Now when he returned from the battle of KedorLaomor, and the king with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him in the area called the king's valley. But Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine. 1) And he was a priest of GOD Most High, and blessed him, saying, Blessed art thou Abram, to GOD Most High, which possesseth heaven and earth; and blessed be GOD Most High, which hath determined thine enemies into thine hand. And unto the same Abram gave tithes of all the spoil. Then said the king of Sodom unto Abram, Give me the souls, and the spoil keep thee. And Abram said unto the king of Sodom, I lift up my hands unto the LORD God most high, which possesseth heaven and earth, that I will not take of all that is thine, neither a thread nor a lace, lest thou say that thou hast made Abram rich. Except that which the young men have eaten, and the men, Aner, Escol, and Mamre, which went with me, let them take their part.**

24. this was done so that Abram would be the more certain that he had acted with God, and God was pleased with his work from the heart, that he punished the kings whom God wanted punished. As one finds more 'in the Scriptures than [2 Kings 10, II. 23.] of Jehu, who so purely exterminated the kingship of Ahab and all the priests of Baal that not one remained, as the LORD had spoken. He showed no mercy there, and is praised for it. For such is the same in the sight of God as when a father strikes his children with rods, and he is praised. Therefore he is pleased to give the sword to those who deserve it, so that they may use it only when it is needed. Thus Moses [2 Mos. 32, 28.] slew three thousand men at once, who was the meekest of men, as the Scripture says, because he had GOT-

1) Marginal gloss: Not that he offered it, but that he fed and honored the guests. By this is meant Christ, who feeds the world with the gospel.

to take away the wrath of the priest. This is what happens here to the pious Abram, that the priest blesses him and strengthens him in this work.

025 Secondly, the high priest indicates that God has performed a miracle when he says, "Praise be to God, who has delivered your enemies into your hand. Abram would have left it well that he should have defeated with three hundred men four mighty kings, who before had laid low five kings, and all where they came. It is a public miracle, therefore he says that God did it.

26 So the text says, "Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine." Sodom and Gomorrah were not far from Jerusalem. But Jerusalem at that time was called Salem. In those days there were not so great kings as now; almost every city had its king. So the king of Sodom and Salem and Abram were with each other. The king of Salem was also a priest of God; therefore he used his office and blessed Abram. No one has looked at this text and cut it out like the epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 7, 1. ff.). From it one can see what it is to whom God puts the word in the mouth, that he finds and sees what no man had seen. At first, they did not esteem it highly that he offered wine and bread; but our teachers and preachers made it hostile and raised it up, and thus said: he offered bread and wine, therefore it was a figure of the Lord Christ, who also instituted a sacrifice, of his body and blood in the bread and wine. Thus we have been told and led by the nose; they have made of it what they only desire.

(27) Against such error we shall sit down and say, first of all: There is no word in the Hebrew text that means sacrifice. The Hebrew language is as rich as any language, especially to speak of spiritual things and worship; therefore it also has many words that point to sacrifice. But there is none of them here, but a common word, *hozi*, which actually means *prockueera*, *axpioniara*, that is, to bring forth, as from a cellar or pantry, that (it) says so much: he has given Abram and the people who came from the slaughter, a sacrifice.

He gave them food and drink, made them live well and rejoice, thanking God that so many kings had been defeated. This must indicate to our dreamers that Christ should have offered wine and bread when he gave the sacrament to his disciples.

He sacrificed himself only once (Hebr. 7, 27), so that he himself is the priest and also the sacrifice, but the altar is the cross. He could not have offered a more delicious sacrifice to God, because he gave himself to be strangled and burned in love fire. This is the right sacrifice. The sacrament and the mass are only a sign of such a sacrifice, like baptism next to the word of God and faith, since we do not work, but only take, and God only gives. That is why we have torn this saying out of their mouths, that it does not speak of sacrifices, but badly of food and drink, presented to the people who had come from the battle.

29. but he leads it right, that the epistle is to the Hebrews, saying [Cap. 7, 3.] that this Melchizedek is Christ's figure, not that he offers wine and bread, but that he carries it forth. His wine and bread, which he brings forth, are the words of the holy Gospel, that he may feed the strong Christians. For the young Christians are to be fed neatly with milk, as children; for they are not yet manly enough to stand in temptation, and to fight with the devil; there belong armed men, who can wield the sword in their hand, defend themselves, and fight. These are the ones to whom one should present bread and wine, whom one strengthens to the utmost. So that one always remains on it, as often said, that one draws the figures on the preaching office, and lets remain on the teaching. [Just be careful not to interpret it as works that one wants to carry and sacrifice before God, as they also do here.

30 After that it is stated that the king of Salem is described here, and yet it is not indicated who his father or mother was, neither gender nor friendship is mentioned, nor is his death expressed. Moses drives in plump, in the middle of the history, breaks off also briefly again; leaves it to say, where or how he comes, and where he remains; indicates only, what he has with Abram, and

Abram did with him. The epistle to the Hebrews interprets this in a masterly way, saying [Cap. 7, 3]: "Since he is without gender, father and mother, without beginning and end of his life, he is compared to the Son of God, who remains a priest forever. Whoever does not understand Christ, does not understand this figure either. The prophet David understood it well when he says: "The Lord has sworn, and will not repent, that you are a priest forever, after the manner of Melchizedek"; there he expresses exactly what the epistle indicates when he says: "forever"; but not like Melchizedek, after the manner when he offered wine and bread, but as it is written of him, so you are (he says sHebr. 7, 3.) a priest without father and mother, and without beginning and end.

31 Therefore it is evident that Christ was much more of a priest than the Levitical priests. One was a priest for twenty, thirty, forty or fifty years, but all of them died. 2) The priesthood lasted from the beginning of the race until the end. But this priesthood lasted from the time the race began until the end. Through this priest Adam and Eve had to be absolved; so also the last Christian who is yet to be born. He is an eternal person, who remains forever, because God (says David [Ps. 110, 4Z) has sworn, will hold fast to it, and will not be sorry. How finely the prophet has spoken of it and seen deeply! [It is all written in the short words, which is Christ. He says not, A priest like Aaron, but like Melchizedek. The latter are temporal priests, who preached no more than the law, but helped no one; this priest never dies, but can help forever. That means after the way of Melchizedek, that it concerns an eternal priesthood.

32 Now it is often said what a priest is. It is a mighty and sweet word, that there is not a lovelier, kinder name on earth; and much rather to hear Christ called a priest, than a Lord, or otherwise; without pitying that the devil hath brought into the world, that one may call the

1) "without" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Erlanger.

2) "a" is missing in the Erlanger.



name in such a way and abused it that it was of no use. Our Papist mob has led the name as priests before God, but acted like the boys, and only murdered souls, with outward appearance and violence.

33. priesthood is a spiritual power, which is nothing else than that the priest comes, takes all the infirmities of the people upon himself, not differently, as if it were his own, and asks God for them, takes the word from him, so that he comforts and helps everyone; is even more lovely and comforting than father and mother name; yes, the name brings us all other names<sup>P</sup> For by being a priest, he makes God our father, and himself the Lord. If I consider him to be a priest, I know that he does nothing, except that he sits up in heaven as our mercy seat, and there without ceasing represents us before the Father j^Rom. 8, 34.], prays for us (Hebr. 7, 25. I John 2, 11, and speaks the best. This is the highest comfort that can befall a man, and no sweeter sermon can be preached into the heart.

34 He has now demonstrated this in the gospel with all his words and works. For he does nothing but serve and help people, and surrenders to everyone, taking upon himself all the wrath we have deserved, costing himself his blood and his life to reconcile us; even now, though he sits up there with the Father in his glory, he still preaches here without ceasing, sweeping, cleansing, carrying, and correcting us through his limbs, as he did bodily on earth, so that he also makes us all priests. I, 6. sii, IOP What could be more comforting to the afflicted conscience?

35 What you now hold against this is vain filth and unwillingness. The papal mob has taken it upon itself to make priests who, with their masses and works, should blot out our sin and reconcile God to Christ and His sweetest name to the highest shame and disgrace, so that no more abominable blasphemy and denial of Christ has come on earth.

Therefore, let us each keep this name pure.

1) Jenaer: they would be.

It is so glorious that we should fall down before it; it was well done when Christianity was still standing. As happened to Paul; when he gave the last 2) and made his farewell, all their eyes went over and fell around his neck [Apost. 20, 37.]. For he had acted with them and taught them how a right priest should act. This should also be done well. But those who go on like this, as the pope goes on through the devil, press the world only with laws, and make it full of sins, that they should first be called priests, and the chief priests; let us bless them. Let them be called cane-masters, executioners and murderers. Priests and ministers shall do their office enough, so that they give themselves completely and become servants with life and limb, praying before God and preaching before the people.

This is the saying of David (Ps. 110:4), drawn from this text powerfully, mightily, that Christ is an eternal priest, after the manner of Melchizedek, that is, an eternal, immortal priest; for he will comfort the conscience, not by works, or any temporal thing. For it is ever the greatest comfort that his priesthood stands forever; if it stands forever, it is not possible for us to be condemned. Here is our mercy seat and priest, which does not cease; even if we stumble and fall back, so that the devil overpowers us, it stands and does not fall: that God has not spoken alone, but has sworn to assure our consciences to the highest degree, that we keep the promise; take an oath to this effect, and say that it shall not repent Him, if it were enough that God said [it] alone. Now Melchizedek was a man, that he also died; but because the Scripture does not report it, he is like, says the prophet, the true Melchizedek, who truly has no beginning nor end.

Now, I have also spoken of the priesthood before, how we are all kings and priests in Christ [Revelation 1:6]. Which is also the great and mighty treasure, that through Christ we are allowed to come before God (Hebr. 4, 16), to ask, to teach and to preach, and to have the authority to be called children of God (Joh.

2) Erlanger: letzt Gabe. Jenaer: last gift. Wittenberger: letzt gäbe. Letze - Valette is also often written "Letzte".

1, 12.]. Which stretches so far, that what we ask, we are sure, that he hears us <sup>^</sup>1 Joh. 5, 14.], like a father his child. It is ever an exuberant good that he honors me poor maggot sack so highly that he listens to me and lets my word count. For this we also have the power, what we preach, that [it] is valid as much as [if] God Himself said it. When a Christian preaches, baptizes or absolves, it is as much as if God Himself came down, spoke, and did everything Himself; He has kept nothing that He has not given us. What more shall he do?

39. Is it not beyond measure that a man should become God? Nor has he also said it in the Scripture M'. 82, 6.s said: "I have said that you are gods, and all children of the Most High", because because we become His children, we must also become fellows of the divine nature and name, as Peter [2. Ep. 1, 4.] says. Our word and work is all God's word and work, without distinction. That is how close he is to us, and how highly he blesses us. This is the priesthood of Christ, which all stands and lies in faith, which the epistle to the Hebrews j<sup>^</sup>Cap. 11, 6. ff.s so abundantly leads.

(40) They also refer to this king's name, Melchizedek, rex Lalem, which means in German, king of righteousness, king of peace. The two titles actually belong to Christ, that he is both, a king of righteousness and of peace. How so? We have said that righteousness is what God gives us in the heart, so that we become true and righteous through it, so that he is true and righteous; this is nothing else than his grace, so that we also become like him in heart, as wise and strong as he is; all the virtues that he has in himself are imparted to us through the gospel, if we believe that we are heirs with him in the heavenly being. So Christ is a king of righteousness because he is the head from whom all righteousness flows into Christians. For through him alone must we attain to it.

Now notice what a great, beautiful title this is, and what a lovely kingdom. Christ is the king of righteousness, truth, light and life; the devil is the king of unrighteousness, death, darkness and lies. Everything that Christ in his kingdom

**Luther's Works. Vol. m.**

He works to make people righteous; if this is to happen, he must put away sin and take it away. Therefore his kingdom is nothing else, but that he should rid us of sin. Therefore, if you want to understand Christ, understand the two names. Now despite him that taketh away his name, that any man should be called a king of righteousness. One may find kings of court, of worldly honor and good, 2c. but one does not find a king of righteousness but this one alone. Therefore those who seek righteousness by works and free will are already outside Christ, in the kingdom of the devil. Now Christ's kingdom is nothing but a constant exercise on earth. That we may be freed from sins, no one does but this priest, who alone executes it, that we may be freed from calamity; not with driving and beating by the 2) law, but by the comforting gospel and the 3) sweet grace and goodness.

42 Furthermore, the most noble prize and virtue of this kingdom is that it is called a peaceful kingdom. Where his kingdom is, there shall be peace [Rom. 5:1]. Not outwardly, but in the conscience, that the same is sure, joyful and undaunted. This is what the heart feels when it is at ease and at one with God. He who does not yet have peace does not belong in the kingdom. Thus, recently it has been depicted how Melchizedek is Christ's figure with the eternal kingdom and priesthood.

43 Lastly, the text says how Abram gave a tithe of all the spoils to Melchizedek. The epistle [Heb. 7, 5. ff.] now shows this with many words; it wants to conclude: Because Abram gives tithes to Melchizedek, and Abram takes blessings from him as from a priest, it is a sign that Melchizedek is greater than Abram. Although the Jews are of the opinion that Abram was greater, so much is proved from the text that Abram professes to be less. From this it is seen how the Levitical priesthood was inferior to the priesthood of Christ. The priests, who are of Levi, came from Abram, and through him they were ten times as much as the priest Melchizedek, while they were still in the priesthood.

- 1) Wittenberg and Erlangen: the.
- 2) "that" is missing in the Erlanger.
- 3) "the" is missing in the Erlanger.

Abram's loins were. There is no eternal priesthood. If Melchizedek's priesthood is to be eternal, not after the Levites, it must ever be more precious than Abram's and what came from him.

44. so here is the last thing according to history, that already at that time the priests took tithes. For God has from the beginning of the world provided for the ministry that they take their food from other people; also Christ [Matth. 10, 10.] confirmed it, and Paul, as, Gal. 6, 6. where he says: "He who is taught by the word divides with all good things to him who teaches him." It is a divine order, and it would have been well worth it, that one would have stayed with it in Christianity, that one would have provided such a pastor with the tithes". But now that freedom has been torn down, the preachers are commanded on their conscience to take as much as they need; although St. Paul did not use or demand such, he was nevertheless right. Now because compulsion is out in the New Testament, there is no need to tithe. Such an order, I say, would still be fine, if we were to be one among ourselves; but the priests who preach should also be allowed to do so, because God has ordained that they feed on the gospel [1 Cor. 9:14], but those who want to be of the spiritual state and do not preach the gospel should not have it. If one finds such, one could feed them with it, but one will find few enough of them.

(45) The world is full of others, all of whom have enough, and preach no gospel; have more than half the goods of the well, if it be divided equally; pretend no more than that they are spiritual. To what end are they spiritual? That they feast and demmen, preach no word of God. They are the ones who desecrate the noble and pure name, which should be considered holy.

(46) I say this so that it may be known how God Himself ordered it at that time, and how it has been kept for a long time afterward, that the priests had to tithe. But as it stands now, it will come to this, that the gospel must be dropped, only because one does not want to give those who preach it their food. That others do it in vain

is not right; for it is well known that such people have little air to the gospel, to whom everyone should preach for free. But those who are the devil's preachers are to be given enough, as has been done; to this the whole world gives with heaps. We are already facing the same situation: no one is willing or able to give to the gospel; we are all worried that we will become poor and starve.

The last part of this chapter is that the king of Sodom says to Abram that he should keep the goods and give him the souls alone; but Abram swears that he will not keep a thread of them all, lest he say that he has made him rich. Moses also describes this as if there was great power in it, but it seems to be a bad history. There is no doubt that there was great wealth; it is to be thought, since four kings are defeated, who had won so much land, and brought together great, mighty wealth, and Abram takes it all back from them. It must have been a great booty, that [he], if he had kept it, would certainly have become as rich as one of the kings. Now the king of Sodom, recognizing such a miracle that God had done through him, wanted to be grateful to Him for giving him all his possessions, without the living bodies. He refused, and would not even take a shoe lace from it.

48 I have said before [Cap. 2, § 14] that one must get used to the word "soul" in the Scriptures, that it is not only the spirit that separates from the body, as we use it in our language, but the living body, living people. This is the way of speaking in Hebrew, as Christ also speaks in John [Cap. 10, 12]: "A good shepherd leaves his soul for his sheep"; item [Cap. 12, 25]: "He who hates his soul" 2c.

49 What then does the Holy Spirit teach in this example? A great, noble, valiant fruit of faith, how finely free a man clings to God, even without all avarice; that such an example the Holy Spirit considered good, that it should be written to strengthen us against vice. For behold, how great a cause he has to take the good to himself. First of all, if he is a stranger in the land, it would be a great advantage for him to have as much as the king, so that he might sit down and stay in the land with the king.

feif has often had to suffer much from his neighbors, so that he could never sit safely and quietly. And even more honestly, because he has earned it himself with his work, has put his life and limb into it, so that it is also due to him before God; in addition, that the king gladly gives it to him, and even accepts it, yes, is glad that he is only saved; so that he has good reason and right to it on all sides.

(50) Why then is he afraid to take it? Not other than that he wanted to avoid evil appearances; as he himself says: "That you do not say that you made Abram rich. He could not leave the honor and glory to the king. For if he had accepted it, he would have said, He had given so much to Abram, and should have been his debtor; as always happens when one accepts such things, it is sweet; but it soon sows. As it is also said, It is not bought more dear than that which is taken as a gift; if one does not give it back double, he is said to be ungrateful, and must be bound to have right to one. So it is also in the secular regime: that fs] is something better, one buys it and pays for it freely, than to have it given to him. This is what he wants to do here, too, to be bound to the king, even if he has the right to do so.

1) In the editions: "somewhat better" in the Jena one with the conjecture "about" in the margin.

51 But the greatest cause is this: that he keeps his honor pure to God, and proves his faith, how he is not at all attached to temporal goods, and for the sake of evil reputation prefers to leave his right. Now let us look at the world, how many would be found who would do the same? We are so drowned in goods that it is better to throw everything into the redoubt before someone lets something go for nothing, even if he has the right to do so. Then see what kind of spirit it was that drew the sword in such a way that he got land and people and property, as the mad princes do now. Therefore the Historia forces, that Abram had a high, sincere spirit in that; not at all his use sought, but only his neighbor, that he pardons himself here such large property and use. Therefore he now says: "I have a Lord, to whom I lift up my hands", who has given that the kings are defeated, will also give what is necessary for me. I will give glory to God alone, and not to you, that I may have something from you.

(52) This chapter is written for our instruction, that we do not act like fools who do not believe in the Old Testament. [It is a great store and treasure given unto us, that we may strengthen our faith, a thousand times better than all the legends that were ever written.

## The fifteenth chapter.

After these things it came to pass, that the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a cloak, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy very great reward. And Abram said, Lord, Lord, what wilt thou give me? I go without children, and my servant hath a son, which is Eliezer of Damaseo. And Abram said again, Thou hast given me no seed; and, behold, the son of my servant shall be my heir. And stand, the word of the LORD spake unto him, saying, He shall not be thine heir, but he that shall come of thy seed shall be thine heir. And

And he bade him go out, and said, Look toward heaven, and number the stars; canst thou number them? And said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

(1) This is also a rich chapter, for the sake of the one2) saying which Paul indicates, not in one place. Behold, Abram has no child yet, and it is promised him, not only that he shall have children, but also that his seed shall be so great that God wills the land for their sakes.

not only one, as Egypt, where he led them out, but also others, namely the one where he is a sojourner; so that he will destroy them and put his seed in them. Here we must now grasp the history of what God means by this. How he leads the children of Israel out of Egypt and sets them in the land, we will hear later in the other book. The promises are here, but they are still dark until it comes to pass that 1) everything is fulfilled and done.

2) The first, that he says, "After these things came unto Abram the word of the Lord, saying, Fear not," 2c. is not the word of the law, but a promise and a gospel word. For we have heard the difference between the gospel and laws. Law is when God means to do or not to do, and demands something of us. Gospel is when he proclaims something good that he himself wants to do and give to us. Thus the two go against each other: one drives, the other gives; one demands, the other gives. Thus all sayings that promise God's grace and mercy should not be called anything else than gospel, which means good news.

(3) Secondly, see again how God is so particular about His own. Abram is a stranger in the land, so he holds on to God that he does not even consider the good that he had great right to do, willingly remains on the road among the enemies; therefore God does not leave him without comfort. If we also believed, he would also let us hear such comfort; but we cannot come to it, for we do not try.

-The gospel has now gripped Abram, making his faith stronger than before; as God always tends to make stronger the more and more one preaches. Therefore he was glad of the promise that God said he should not be afraid; made him sure that nothing would harm him. Item, that he further says: "I am your shield" and protector, who will protect you everywhere; not only your shield, but I will also be "your reward" myself, and will repay you abundantly. The 2) is the same, that he will give him such a great seed, and also the land.

1) Erlanger: da.

2) Erlanger: what.

5) Now faith belongs to these words, because if he had not believed it, it would have been lost. So then he had to do this, that he had considered, 3) that he needed no man's protection, and had a certain patron from heaven. These are excellent, great words, also a mighty faith that grasps them; he] sees none, but hears only the words, and relies on them. God had called him from his fatherland and promised to bless him and make him a great nation, as mentioned above [Cap. 12, 2/ heard. He did not understand how it should be done, nor did he know if the people should be his flesh and blood, or otherwise add a great nation. For God can raise up a man and give him many people, when he has already become so great that he has three hundred servants in his house, none of whom is his blood or flesh.

006 Then he inquired, and desired to know whether it should be of his blood and flesh, or of his servants only; saying therefore, Lord, what wilt thou give me? As if to say, "I do not desire much good; I have restored all the people to the king of Sodom; I would have a desire, if I had one, to have an heir; but thou givest me none, but my servant and his children, I hope, are my goods and my inheritance. As if he should say, "You treat me so strangely, giving children to so many people to whom you promise nothing; but to me, to whom you show such great mercy and make such a promise, you give none; how can I wait? Then God gives him comfort, saying, "The son of thy servant shall not be thine heir"; thou shalt not become a people by thy servants, but I will give thee a son out of thy womb. And still further he says, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if thou be able to number them; so great shall thy seed be also." These are the words of promise, from which Mosi's word follows and speaks:

**Abram believed in the Lord, and it was counted to him for righteousness. And**

3) In the old editions: "to venture"; to venture - to rely on.

4) Erlanger: wool.

**And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Chaldea from Ur, to give thee this land to possess.**

7 This is the great main saying in this book, which Paul [Rom. 4, 3.] leads and rightly emphasizes, that [it] is a miracle; says, it was not written for his sake, because it was written long after his death, but for our sake, so that we also believe. Therefore the text is not to be taken for granted. So you see that no work is mentioned here at first, no more than that God promises Abram that he should have a child from his womb. He does nothing, prays nothing, works nothing, but believes alone; and faith is counted so highly that it is therefore holy and righteous before God.

8 Therefore we conclude with Paul that faith without works justifies. Why is that? Because, says St. Paul, he gave God the highest honor that can be given to him, that he believed him to be true and was obedient. For he would have had good reason to doubt, because he was now ninety years old, and also his wife not much younger, that they were both of course no longer capable, so long ago in the age) that it was impossible that they should beget fruit; as he was also concerned here that he would have to go without children.

(9) Then he contended against reason, against nature, and against hope, that he should be the father of such a rich seed, which should become so great. But what did he do? He grasped the words that God speaks here, "did not see (says Paul Rom. 4, 19.) the dead body", and that her womb was completely cold; there was no hope of having a fruit; yet he closed his eyes, did not see how impossible it was, walked in darkness, held to the word; there he put on all his confidence, and was sure that it could not lie. Thus he gives glory to God, that he considers himself a fool, God wise, kind, truthful, mighty, almighty. To do so is the right worship of God. For this is the right honor, when you honor him from your heart,

1) "so long there in the age" - so far advanced in age, "so" put by us instead of "pulled" in the issues.

2) In the editions: "deceased".

That is, if you think of him as you think of God, that he cannot lie and do whatever he says, no matter what. Unbelief cannot do that. Thus he has fulfilled the first and highest commandment.

See, St. Paul builds his sermon on this text, makes it dry, pure and strong, and concludes that faith is nothing else than a killing of the old Adam, who would have to say, according to all reason and sense, that it is impossible, unheard, and contrary to nature, therefore it will not be true, it will be a dream or a deception. Thus the old man judges God's word. But such arrogance dies completely in Abram, and he becomes strong and alive in the word, so that he insists that it will and must happen this way, even if all the world says otherwise, and all the senses are deceived. In this way he even gains a different, new delusion and understanding about nature. This is what it means to be justified by faith alone.

11 So now I command to move this example well from St. Paul's epistle [Rom. 4, 1. 2. 3.], who leads it with higher words. "What shall we say (saith he) of our father Abram, that he found according to the flesh? This we say: If Abram was justified by works, he has glory, but not before God"; as if he wanted to say: God does not ask that a man justifies himself by works. "But how does the Scripture speak? Abram believed God, and this was counted to him for righteousness." The Scripture says plainly that he was justified by faith without works.

12 He proves this further by what will follow in chapter 17, v. 11, about the circumcision, which came long after. And if it had done any work, it should have done that also. [But it is long before described that he should be justified before he remembered this work. Thus the holy father goes forth in God's words, saying that he would be his reward, and give him a child and a great nation from his own womb, which was now dead. To beget fruit according to nature. Now God says to him again: "I am the Lord who brought you out of Chaldea" 2c. Then he explains what he means and decides that this is the land that he has brought him.

as he also promised above [Cap. 13, 15]. These are all strong gospel words and sermons to show that Abram was distressed and needed to be comforted with so many words. For such words of God and great comfort do not come in vain or without need.

**(v.8-21) And Abram said, Lord, Lord, how shall I know that I possess it? And he said unto him, Take a heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took all these, and divided them in the midst of one another, and laid one part over against another; but the birds he divided not. And the birds fell 1) upon the carcase, and Abram scattered them away. When the sun had set, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and behold, terror and great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto him, 2) Know thou that thy seed shall be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and there shall they be made servants, and shall do evil four hundred years. But I will be judge over the people, whose servants they shall be. After that they shall go out with great goods. And thou shalt return to thy fathers in peace, and be buried in a good old age. And they shall come again after four days: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet here. Now when the sun had set and darkened, behold, a furnace smoked, and a fiery fire went up among the pieces. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To my seed I will give this land from the waters of Egypt to the great river Phrath; to the Kenites, to the Kinites, to the Kadmonites, to the Hittites, to the Perizzites, to the Giants, to the Amorites, to the Cananites, to the Gergesites, to the Jebusites.**

13. Abram is now sure that the Safire, which was promised to him, should come from his body. The father is interpreted, but the mother is still in doubt, as we will hear. For GOD is still exercising him more and longer. Now what is it that he says, "Whereby shall I know that I shall possess this land?" I have often said that when God makes a promise, He also makes a sign; so also here, when He promised to give him a child to possess this land, He gives him such a sign that he should take three kinds of animals and divide them and lay them one against another. It is a strange sign, as it seems to us, because he has been dead for a long time; but it was comforting to him, it confirmed and strengthened his faith. But what this sign means, the Lord himself interprets; as we will hear.

(14) To the first: Those who read the Bible above consider it as if Claus Schmid were talking to Hans Mist, one man to another; but, if one looks right into it, it is great and excellent that the divine majesty speaks to man as to a child. slt] is no greater sign of God's grace and mercy than when he lets himself be heard, than again no greater plague is than when he is silent and does not let himself be heard. Therefore, such stories that God spoke to the fathers should be held in high esteem, not because of the fathers, who were people like us, but because God held them so high that He spoke to them. If Abram had no other praise, it would be enough that God had spoken to him once or twice. Now you see how he lifts him up so high that he speaks to him so often and with so many words and comforts him, and yet leaves him stuck beside it in all danger of body, good and honor, and also of the woman. For this reason, the histories are not to be overrun and considered bad.

(15) So this sign is almost unpleasant to the disgusting spirits who do not like the Scriptures, but otherwise it is almost rich to him. For God strengthened Abram's faith with the sign, so that he would not doubt that he would not only have a seed, but also take over the whole land. But how far the figure and interpretation stretches, we can not better meet, because the text

1) Marginal gloss: birds fell. The birds and the smoking furnace and the fiery fire mean the Egyptians who were to persecute Abram's children. Abram scares them away, that is, God delivers them, for the sake of the promise promised to Abram. But that he is frightened after the sun goes down means that God wanted to leave His seed for a time, that they would be persecuted; as the Lord Himself indicates here. In the same way it happens to all believers that they are abandoned and yet are redeemed.

L) Jenaer: Abram.

itself gives. For the text does not deal with the meaning of the three-year-old heifer, goat and ram; but this much it wants, that the sign should make him so certain, not only that he should have the seed, but also know how it would go with them. As if to say, This land I have spoken to thee, and thou shalt not doubt it: but so long shall it be delayed, and faith shall be so well tried, that it shall seem as if nothing came of it. Therefore he proclaims to him that his seed shall be a stranger in foreign lands, and shall do evil until the time comes for him to possess the land, that is, after four hundred years, when no one will believe that God remembers his word.

For thus I have said that God's work is always so done and skillful, that when he wants to fulfill his word, he so foolishly attacks it, as if it should even go back: as, here he promises him such a great thing, that his seed shall have the land. Since this was to happen, no reason nor sense could see and feel otherwise than that it was to perish with him. For it is written in Exodus 1:7, 10, that when the children of Israel multiplied so that it was teeming with children, and it seemed as if it would come to pass, a king arose and put all the children to death, weakening and deceiving the people, so that all hope was gone. Yes, when they had already left Egypt [Ex. 14:9, 10] and came to the Red Sea, the enemies chased after them, so that they could not get out on either side, and were like the enemies and stuck in the jaws of death. This is how God acts with all his deeds, words and signs. For His works are not like the works of men, Isa. 55, 8, but even contrary to sense. So here it is that when something is to go out, it goes down first; and again.

Thus such histories teach everything that faith is. Whoever cannot be guided by this, does not understand God's work, must resent it and fall back. Where there have been Jews who have not believed, they have thought, "Oh, it has long since ended, what is to become of it now? Whom no doubt there have been many

are those who have measured God's work with reason, judged by the eyes and senses, and cannot understand it.

18 For this reason the Lord gives a sign, comes first and warns as a kind father, as if to say, "See, this is how it will be, so that you will not be offended by my work or my word. As Christ also did when he said John 16:1, "These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended." This is to say, "Here you have the word, but hold fast to it, for if it seems as if it is to be fulfilled, it will go back before the eyes of all people; but be of good cheer, and only see that you do not waver, but hold to the word, I will perform it well, higher than you can think or ask. This is also a warning: Although it seems that I have forgotten my promise to oppress you, I will use great power and miracles to avenge you on your enemies.

(19) Behold, so it was with Christ, and so it is daily in his kingdom. Since everyone thought that he should redeem the people and become king, he attacked them in such a way that the people had to say:- Now it is finished; ser] lay down, and was nailed to the cross, and was condemned as the worst of men, that they spied on him, and said [Matt. 27:42], Yea, is this the King and Redeemer, which helpeth other men, and cannot help himself? We esteemed him as the most despised," and saw nothing but pain and weakness in him, says Isaiah [Cap. 53:3], and Lucā at the last, v. 21, the two disciples said, "We hoped he should redeem Israel." Therefore, when he wanted to go to his kingdom, he went in such a way that all reason and senses had to resent it, even the apostles themselves, could not comprehend it, although Christ warned them so diligently beforehand.

This is how it always goes, in all histories. Wherever God works, he does it so foolishly that according to reason it falls into mud, but according to the spirit it turns out in the strongest possible way. This is the warning that God is doing here, not only for Abram's sake, but for the sake of his seed.

21. for Abram will not receive the promise at all.



1) diligently preached, then Isaac, and so from then on, when this was their gospel: "We are Abraham's seed" [John 8:33], have the promise. "Abram believed, and is counted justified thereby beforeGott" [Rom. 4:3.], therefore let us also believe. Thus Joseph says to them, when they were already in Egypt [Gen. 50:24, 25]: "God will visit you and bring you out of this land to a land that He swore to Abram, Isaac and Jacob. Therefore, when GOD will visit you, carry my bones away from there." They knew and practiced the gospel well, but when it was to begin, it turned out to be so absurd that it was necessary to comfort and strengthen the pious with these words, which God says here before. Now the examples serve us through and through, that we may be prepared: When we have the gospel, and it shall come to pass and help, it shall be as if he had forgotten us; when life shall come to pass, death shall come upon us with all power.

22 Now what is the sign here? The animals he divided and the doves are his seed and children in Egypt. The ravens and birds that want to eat it are the Egyptians, the king with his tyrants, who want to devour and consume Abram's flesh and blood. But he scares them away, not because of his holiness, but because of the promise. For he must stand there in place of the divine promise. For the word which GOD saith, that is, the promise, hath driven them away, that [it] might be so much as said, Because GOD remembered his promise, which he did unto Abram, therefore he helped the Jews, and redeemed them. Thus the prophets themselves often refer to it, and especially Moses [2 Mos. 2, 24], that God says: "I have remembered my covenant with your fathers, Abraham, Isaac" 2c., I have come down to help you. That is, the birds away Fescheuchet, that for his sake, that is, for the sake of the promise, he promised him, will help his seed. So, where in the Scripture it is mentioned that God remembers Abram and the fathers, everything is mentioned for the sake of His promise.

23. but here is a question: how the Rech-

How is it that the four hundred years of which he says here agree with each other? For when it is reckoned, it is found that they were almost two hundred years and some sixteen in Egypt; but the persecution lasted fifty or sixty years; so that from the time Jacob went into Egypt to Moses, who carried it out again, are two hundred and sixteen years. Why then does he say here of four hundred years? Because he includes Abram with his seed. Because from Abram to the exit from Egypt four hundred and thirty years are counted. As if he were saying, "It will not happen until four hundred years have passed. But that he says afterwards, "They shall come again after four men's days," that is, four men's remembrance, which is almost two hundred years. For one man's remembrance is not much more than fifty years. This is what I command the scholars to do further.

024 But that after this a great terror fell upon Abram, when the sun was down, 2c. is the same as the former sign. (He) gives him two signs, as Pharaoh the king had two dreams, which indicated one thing, how it will follow after [Cap. 41, 1. 5.]; so that he would ever be sure and certain that it should happen that way. God has great concern for the future people, that he would keep them in faith, so that they would know how it should be viewed much differently. Thus the fiery furnace means the Egyptians; therefore God says now and then in Scripture (Deut. 4:20, Jer. 11:4): "I brought you out of the iron furnace of Egypt," in which you were baked. The fact that Abram was terrified and in great darkness means that his blood and flesh were to be pressed, forced and persecuted in Egypt, so that he had to be a figure. The fiery fire or torch is Moses, or the angel who carried it out. This is the sign or both signs that God gives for sure faith.

(25) So also we, when we have the word, have also signs beside it. And as I said about Abram, that we feel in him that God has done great things with him, and for one of us.

1) Erlanger: fine. Wittenberger and Jenaer: vleissig.

2) Wittenberger and Erlanger: should.

great saint, that he spoke with him: so it is with us, we also have come into the grace of hearing God's word. How miserable a pity sund) strangling is in all the world, because the word of God does not go, no one can measure. Again, the riches of having His word, no one can measure.

enough praise, no tongue to speak out. It is a gracious sign when the majesty lets himself be heard. Now he lets himself be heard much more abundantly than to Abram. But this is the defect, Abram perceived [it] with ears, but also understood; we hear it, but do not perceive it. But they that understand with the heart are as worthy as Abram: for as the word is one, so is the worthiness one.

1) "Strangle" is missing in the Wittenberger.

## The sixteenth chapter.

1-16 Sarai, Abram's wife, bore him nothing; but she had an Egyptian maid, whose name was Hagar, and said unto Abram, Behold, the LORD hath shut me up, that I should bear nothing. Lie with my maidservant, that I may build myself of her, rather than of myself. Abram obeyed the voice of Sarai. Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her Egyptian maid, and gave her to Abram her husband to wife, after they had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan. And he lay with Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she was with child, she esteemed her wife little before her. And Sarai said unto Abram, I am wronged for thy sake: I have laid my handmaid with thee, but when she seeth that she is with child, I am contemptible in her sight: let the LORD be a judge between me and thee. And Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thine handmaid is under thy power; do with her as it pleaseth thee. 2) And when she would humble Sarai, she fled before her. But the angel of the LORD found her by a well of water in the wilderness, that is, by the well that is by the way of Sur, which said unto her, Hagar, Sarai's handmaid, whence comest thou? and 3) whither wilt thou go? She said: I have fled from my wife Sarai. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return unto thy wife, and humble thyself under her hand. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, I will take thy

So multiply the seed, that it shall not be numbered before a great multitude. Then the angel of the LORD said to her, "Behold, you have conceived and will bear a son, whose name you shall call Ishmael, because the LORD has heard your affliction. He shall be a wild man, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him, and shall dwell against all his brethren. And she called the name of the LORD which spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Surely here have I seen the back of him that saw me. 4) Therefore she called the well a well of the Living One who saw me, 4) which is between Kadesh and Bared. And Hagar bare Abram a son; and Abram called the name of the son which Hagar bare him Ishmael. And Abram was six and fourscore years old when Hagar bare him Ishmael.

What bad histories does he describe? Did he have nothing else to write? I have said before that one should read the Scriptures, God's work and word, and God's judgment with fear, and not pay attention to them as other histories, but always pay attention to the one who speaks the word and does the work, because you will always find God, no matter how small it may seem.

2 So far we have heard how God promised Abram that a great nation would come from his blood and flesh and take over the whole land. He preached this to Sarai, who was five and seventy years old when Ishmael was born:

4) Thus the Erlanger. Jenaer: siehet.

2) The following text to the end of the chapter is missing in the Wittenberg.

3) The words: "where ... and" are missing in the Erlanger.

But she waited two, three, four, five, six years to see if God would still make her fruitful; nothing came of it. Since she now sees that she bears no fruit, as the text says, she thought so: My husband has the promise that he is certain to become so rich from the seed of his own womb; but nothing will come of it, perhaps GOD will not have it from me; throws herself down, thinking thus: I am not the woman, God does not consider me to be the mother of the seed; he pardons himself of the honor with great humility, so that it will be highly honored again.

What is she doing? She also wanted the promise to be fulfilled, stood in faith just as Abram did, was also justified by it, gives God the honor that he is true, is content with that, and forgives herself for the other. As if she were to say, "If it is not to be me, let it be another;" yet she does not want to take a stranger, but takes her maidservant. At that time the servants and maids were serfs, like cattle, so that what they bore was the property of the masters and wives, and if they wished they could cast them out and keep the children. Which is now abolished.

(4) So Sarai said, I will not take a stranger, but I will take her whom I have nearest me, who would bear me children, that they may be mine; as she saith, Whether I will build myself of her. In the Old Testament, to build means to beget children, as we will hear more about in this book; and in the other book of Moses, Cap. 1, 21, it is written: "God built houses for the Hebrew women," that is, he gave them fruit so that they bore many children and filled their houses.

005 Now here is a great faith, both of Abram and Sarai. He came into the land when he was five and seventy years old, and Ishmael was born in the tenth year after. There they are nine whole years in the land, to which is added the last promise a year or four or six before, that they shall be abundantly tempted in all places. [They may well think, When will it be? nor have they always held fast to how long God will give them.

has also spoiled. She would also have liked to hurry, as all women do, would have liked to have a child soon, therefore she drives it, gives him her maid; Abram grants this. This seems to be foolish to those who ignore the Scriptures, as if Abram had been a man who gave himself to a maidservant for the sake of lust and vainglory. But God has finely preceded him. If he had had a desire for a handmaid, he would have found another one, the best one in Hebron; but he did not go further, because Sarai wanted to have one and asked him. Therefore it is clear that he has not stinted for another, and seeks no more than the fruit.

(6) Here we should also speak of the question whether a man may have more than one wife. Enough has been said. What has happened and been described here must be left as God's history; no one has the right to punish such history; therefore Abram must not have sinned in this. Further, we have heard that Abram was a true, yes, perfect Christian, living in the most evangelical way in the spirit of God and faith; therefore, we must let his life be an example to follow where it happens in faith itself. So now we ask: Since it was forbidden for him to have more than one wife, how can we account for him that he remained a Christian?

(7) First of all, if one wants to speak plainly about it, one says that it is abolished by the gospel, since Christ says in Matthew [Cap. 19, 8]: "From the beginning it was not so"; item, Paul [1 Cor. 7, 2]: "Let every man have his wife, and every woman her husband", that one would like to say, Abram did some outward works, which are annulled.

(8) But this will not do, for we must keep ourselves so that he may be justified. For this is ever true, that all things which we find in the Old Testament, done outwardly by the fathers, should be free, not forbidden. Thus circumcision is abolished, but not so that it would be sinful to do it, but free, neither sinful nor well done. So, to eat the paschal lamb, and all such things, without doing it in the name of being justified thereby, is not forbidden.

as the fathers also did not do it for this reason. So also among other examples of the fathers must go, that they took many wives, that it was also free. And Summa Summarum: Abram did not lead it so far, as other patriarchs, does not take the maid sooner, than it calls him his wife and asks. Other examples will penetrate further; this could still go on as a special one before other fathers.

(9) I say therefore, and conclude, Where there are not honorable, but heathen people, I would that the law should be observed concerning divorce, that one should put away a wife, and take another. Christ has abolished it; thus he says in Matthew [Cap. 19:8, 9]: "Moses gave you leave to put away your wives for the hardness of your hearts; but from the beginning it was not so. But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his 1) wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery." Likewise also Paul to the Corinthians [1 Ep. 7, 10. 11]: "I do not command the married, but the Lord, that the wife should not divorce the husband. But if she divorce him, that she remain without marriage, or be reconciled to him, and that the husband not put away the wife." But those who do not hear Christ would be well enough to obey the law of Moses before they had to suffer the fact that two husbands and wives do not spend a good hour together. But they would have to be told that they were never Christians, but in the pagan regime. But if you are a Christian, you do not have to divorce.

(10) But it is not forbidden for a man to have more than one wife. Even today I could not forbid it, but I would not advise it, for it still remains that a man should not divorce but be attached to his wife. That is why the preceding sayings do not apply to this. But I did not want to bring it up, but therefore I say it: if it would come to the sharpness, that one would know rightly to answer, that one would not reject the father, as if it had not been proper to do; as the Manichaei said.

11 So now we have seen the great

Humility of the holy mother Sarai, that she forgave herself the honor and the child, and let another wife have the seed and blessing promised to Abram. He does not speak much about the holy woman; but the example gives enough indication that she was of rich spirit and highly gifted; therefore the Scriptures mention her in more places. jMej did not exalt herself, but humbled herself, therefore she was also exalted [Matth. 23, 12].

Now the Historia, although it lays the foundation of a holy life, is not written for this reason alone; Paul [Gal. 4, 22. ffl] has masterfully deleted it. There are also [the] words so set, must be something behind it, not only the history. For otherwise he could have included many things and kept silent about them; but he leaves it, saying how the maid became proud when she saw that she was with child, so that she had to cast out the woman; and how she came to her again and gave birth to the son Ishmael: The angel proclaimed how he would be a wild man, and how he would fight against all his brothers. Therefore it is still considered that the Turk came from this Ishmael, who lived in Arabia, from where they also have origin that one calls HaZnrenos the Saracen.

(13) Therefore we will deal with the figure as history brings it to itself. Thus you have heard that the Scriptures everywhere exemplify the two sermons, the Law and the Gospel; according to the same two sermons they also preach to two kinds of people, the Law and grace. In Ishmael the people who keep the law are shown; therefore he also bears the name, manner and way, in which such people lead, that he is an example of all saints of law and works. For this reason it should also be known to us, because the apostle Paul has especially emphasized what kind of people they are who want to become godly by works, that is, without grace.

14. first, he is not born of the right matron, who has the rule, but of the maidservant; though she also is legitimate with Abram, yet there is a great difference. For the other son, Isaac, is not of the maidservant, nor bondwoman, but of the free woman, as Paul says to the Galatians [Cap. 4, 22], who is the right woman and rules in the house.

1) Erlanger: one.

And, which is the greatest, he is born of the woman, since the promise of God points to. This is apt; and St. Paul [Gal. 4, 23.] carries it out with great force, that Ishmael was indeed born of Abram's blood and flesh; but it happened without God's word; but Isaac by God's word.

015 For when Sarai said, Behold, I cannot bear fruit. Dear, take my maidservant, if I may beget children with her," there is no word of God nor command, but no more, for a work of love, that she depart, forsaking her honor, which she would gladly have had; so he is at her will. In addition she, the Hagar, is a young woman that the birth is quite natural. But afterwards j^Cap. 17, 16] God's word comes to Sarai and says: "You shall have a son, whom I will bless. This was a miracle of God. This must now be noted that Paul leads mightily, as Ishmael was born by the handmaid, without God's promise; Isaac by Sarai, by the promise. Now we have said that it is very great to throb, since God's word is; where that is, there is a precious thing; for it is an eternal thing. If it were not for the jewel and treasure, Isaac would be no more than another.

(16) It is the same in the New Testament and from the beginning of the world; in the spiritual regime everything is born either from God's law or by grace. Since the law people rule, they are like Ishmael, also receive right seed from God, as Ishmael is received from Abram; hear the word and preaching, wash more of it than the right Christians, but do not become righteous, fall on works, attack it with free will, rely on it, have God's commandment before. There they go in an apparent life before the world, that no one can reprove. These are all the children of the handmaid. For there is still no word of God of the promise, but only flesh and blood, natural things; God's grace does not work, there is neither faith nor spirit, through which they become free from the law, therefore nothing but Ishmael comes of it.

17 But Ishmael is called in German a hearer of God. The title has the people everything, especially the Jews, they are finely painted with it.

have heard the word of God, how Christ will come; they had both ears full, were highly gifted with many prophets, have diligently practiced the law of Moses through and through, are the people who had God's law before all the world all the days; therefore, they have such rain that they hear much from God, but do not see Him. Just as when one walks on the road, he hears and sees what is before him, but in the straight 1) walk he cannot see what is behind him. So it was here also. Christ was to come after Abram; they heard it, but did not see it; indeed, since he was present, and still is, they remain only Ishmael, hearing forever.

(18) All are of this kind who deal in works, not knowing or seeing God, who is hidden from them, hearing only of Him, and standing in delusion and resolution to live thus in their works until God comes and gives grace. He has not yet come to them, indeed, he never comes. But they always hear that he will come, so that he always remains behind them, like the Jews. Thus the people are masterfully painted with names and all things. We Christians, however, have him before our eyes, and know him, thus saying: With works I trust to gain nothing; but I know that Christ is there, who has purchased everything for me, I see him before me in the mirror, I am no longer an Ishmael. This is a piece of this character.

19. but the mother's name is Hagar. Hagar means a guest; therefore Hagareni the guests. So Paul says [Gal. 4, 30], all those who work are guests and strangers, not children in the house. He that is a sojourner, of whom neither house nor goods are his own, eateth and drinketh, and departeth again. So are all temporal saints of works; God pays for their good life with temporal goods; when he gave the land of Canaan to the Jewish people, he exalted them for being a famous and powerful people, as indeed they were. Since we were outwardly pious, he gave us a belly full of food, great goods and honor in the sight of the world. To such saints, who deal in temporal, corruptible things, temporal reward is due. But the Christian reward of righteousness is eternal, as the prophet j^Jes. 32, 17.] says.

1) Wittenberg and Jena: starcken.

Now when we die, it will be all the more true: death will be gone, and in its place will be life and bliss. On earth they do not have the reward, but all misfortune, shame and disgrace. Therefore we are no longer guests and strangers, as Paul says, but citizens with the saints and members of God's household, yes, the children and the inheritance.

(20) The saints of works also have the name of Abram's children and Christians, and yet they remain in temporal holiness, which does not last forever. But the faith that God's word takes hold of is an eternal thing, namely in Christ who does not die. Thus the name Hagar is called the whole company of saints of works; they are sojourners, they do not finally remain with us in Christendom, but fall on works that perish. But we cling to Christ, who is eternal. The text goes on to say:

**V. 12. Behold, he shall be a fierce man, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him, and shall dwell against all his brethren.**

This is the right way and color, so these saints lead, who do not walk in faith. The more beautiful their conduct, the more wicked they are; hopeful, proud and ill-tempered people are not to be found on earth, nor impudent, crude and unrighteous. For they think they are pure, therefore they cannot suffer anyone, nor have mercy on others; they cannot refrain from judging and judging everyone, but they can least of all not suffer that their cause should not be heard and exalted.

22) We have also done this, we have said: We are spiritual, the other crowd is the world; we have become such puffed up people that they would have driven in an emperor before a shabby monk. If one touched one, then one had touched 2) God's eye; if also someone has subjected himself, they have banished him to hell. That is it, which the text calls, that they are insolent and disobedient, want to be right and must be right; one laughs or weeps,

1) Erlanger: still.

2) Jenaer: has.

ask or dräue, so] they remain with the head harder than no anvil, as Job [Cap. 41, 15J says that if one forges for the same length of time, it does not become soft, but rather softens other irons.

Thus Christ says in the Gospel [Matth. 11, 18.lü.]: "John came, did not eat and did not drink, so they say: He has the devil. The Son of man is come, eateth and drinketh, they say, Behold, how he is a glutton and a winebibber." As one does with them, one cannot do them right: "If one whistles, they do not dance; if one laments, they do not weep" [Matth. 11, 17.]. [It] counts for nothing, except what seems good to them, and what pleases them; if not, it shall not please God. These are true Ishmael, unruly, stubborn and unruly; a people that cannot be controlled nor bent; how one wants to catch them with God's word, they know how to turn out. Such must be suffered among themselves, we] cannot resist that they have the name that we have; as Abram must suffer Jsmael in the house.

24. further: "His hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him. One still says that the same people, from Ishmael come, a desolate, unfriendly people fei, which feeds itself only with robbery, snatches to itself what it seizes. Such will have fulfilled now Ishmael. These also follow ours. The hands are the works, they must be other than the Christians. What is to become of it? There are many worldly-wise people who say that the gospel should be preached so that there would be no turmoil and discontent in the world, otherwise the people would go astray. But we have our preachers to thank for that. Why did they not preach the gospel so that people would know what was right or wrong? After all, it is commanded that everyone listen and know how to judge; they] have just taken away our right. Because they have heard this, there is no uproar. But if one is to follow the judgment whether the pope and his teachings are right, God has instituted strife, so that it cannot and should not go any other way.

(25) Therefore let no man think after resting: if the gospel come to pass, it is right to lie down confidently against it. We who

3) Erlanger: could.

If we live with Ishmael, we must surrender to him and gladly consider that his hand is against us; then he will have to suffer that our hand is also against him; we must put our necks to it and not be silent, but always resist. So he is impudent and insolent, does not let him be told, becomes angry, and strangles us at last; so we die in God's name for the sake of God's word. So let no one be dismayed, but still rejoice when we see how shamefully the gospel is persecuted. For it has been said before that we may take comfort in it and fs] venture freshly upon it. One must lie here in the army, there no man will be judge, neither Pabst nor eonbilia, but God himself wants to be judge, he says s^Ps. 82,l,], therefore nothing will come of it, that the thing will be judged; smarf thue was man will, so will Ishmael on his side be stronger and close.

(26) It is not possible that there should be a concilium which closes with one accord, without flesh and leaven. I have never seen a concilium among all where the Holy Spirit reigned. There may have been a Christian piece or two in some, but I have not read that it was entirely pure. Therefore it is nothing that one still wants to refer to a concilium, nothing good is done. It went exactly with the Concilio to Jerusalem that it went off purely. [There were only three men there who kept it pure, all the other Christians closed their eyes against Christ; no one but Peter, Paul and Barnabas kept it pure, nor did they allow anything to happen; if it had not been for them, it would have all been falsified. Who has blinded us, [that what we set and do must be right?

(27) There will never be a concilium when people should agree together by the Holy Spirit. God allows this to happen precisely because he himself wants to be the judge and not suffer men to judge. That is why he commands everyone to know what he believes. It will not help that you say you have heard or heard preached; the devil will not inquire. But if you have God's word, you can say: Here I have the word, what else may I ask, what the Concilio say? So he must go back.

28. because now God wants to have when we have

see that his word shall suffer no judge but him, then let no man depart here, neither can there be any rest. And, since God is for, if there were silence and stillness, the gospel would be over. It must rumble where it comes; if it does not, it is not right. Therefore Christ [Luc. 12, 49. 51.] says: "I have come to kindle a fire on earth; what would I rather that it were already kindled? Do you think that I have come here to give peace? I say no to that, but discord." If this is to work, Ishmael must move his hand, and that again. That is where the Holy Spirit separates us. When people want to separate, it only gets worse.

(29) I say all this so that one may be accustomed to what God's word is, that one may not regard it as if it were a quiet and calm thing, as is suggested by the highest reason, which finds it so hard that it goes on in such a tumultuous way; I would so gladly help the matter that there might be unity after all. I can let it be done, but if it comes to that, Ishmael will always lay his hand against us, if we already offer ourselves in the most friendly way. So they must remain mixed together, some Ishmael, some Isaac, and always let hand go against hand. Since we see this illustrated in the Scriptures, we should be confident and thank God, who assures us that it is right. God is so wise that he soon makes fools of such wise people, as he will also do. [He is able to let His word be preached through despised little people, to whom no one thinks of going. His judgments are high, hidden and incomprehensible. The world wants to look only at the person; if he is wise and seems holy, then everyone wants to fall to him, and again, he does not only hang on the word of God, as the believers do. So this remains the office and manner of Ishmael and his crowd, that they are insolent and proud, judge everyone, are unruly, unconquerable, do not stop rumbling against the gospel and the right Christians.

The other people is a people of grace; they are also born of Abram, but also have the promise of it, and are called Äii promissionis [Rom. 9, 8.], over whom God's word passes, and says: You are it. These are the ones who, according to the holy gospel, are marked with the Spirit.

will, as Paul writes Rom. 8, 16, trust in Christ, not in works, hold on to their salvation; they are not born of the flesh, but of the Word and the Spirit [Joh. 3, 5. 6.], you cannot see who they are, but God has decided that they are the ones He 2) wants. One preaches publicly to everyone, but he knows which ones he wants to touch and make born again. These are they who are not bound by works, but are finely tempered, neither proud nor insolent, able to suffer all things, condemning no one, having their goods and treasure in heaven; as their righteousness is eternal, so is their reward eternal. They are not born of Abram's blood and flesh alone, but of the woman and the free woman, of which Paul says [Gal. 4:23].

(31) The liberty which Christ hath purchased and set us free, that neither works nor laws should bind the conscience. For Christ has done enough for all things; through the Holy Spirit we have it all; henceforth we owe nothing, but to love and serve one another. This is the right mother, and these are 3) the right children. For '7^ Sarai, as we shall hear hereafter, is called a woman who rules in the house,

1) Instead of the preceding words, the Erlanger: "they are not born by the preaching", one can read 2c.

2) "it the" is missing in the Erlanger.

3) "that are" is missing in the Erlanger.

to whom all things are subject, as the man is called a lord. So Paul wants to say: She is a maid and a guest, she is a woman in the house: House, there she has the name after.

(32) These are the two kinds of people, but under one rule, all flowing from the word of God. For it is not said of rude, impudent people who belong under the worldly sword, but of the very best, most pious and wise of the earth; but before God it is not valid, unless otherwise born of the Holy Spirit, and become a new man. It is evident that many a pious man, monk and nun live in such a way that no one can reproach them. Of such people he says here, these are the righteous; when they hear that their thing is nothing, they want to become senseless; these are the real devil's kingdom and his scales, through which he does the greatest harm. The others belong among the executioners and princes, but these also want to be ruled by the Holy Spirit; but it is only appearance and glitter. One should get used to understanding such things. Reason and human conceit are so deep in us that few people see it and approach it. It is hard to despise such brave, great people; no one can do it, because he who has the spirit, it fits reason and all people's sense.

## The seventeenth chapter.

**V.1-27. When Abram was nine and ninety years old, the Lord appeared to him and said to him, "I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be without change; and I will make my covenant between me and you, and will multiply you almost greatly. Then Abram fell on his face. And God spake further unto him, saying, Behold, I am, and have my covenant with thee, and thou shalt become a father of many nations. Therefore thou shalt no more be called Abram 4),**

4) Marginal gloss: Abram is called high father, but Abraham, the heap father; although the same heap is indicated only with one letter in his name, not without cause.

**But Abraham shall be thy name: for I have made thee the father of many nations. And I will make thee almost very fruitful, and will make of thee nations, and kings also shall come of thee. 5) And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, among their seed, to be an everlasting covenant; that I may be thy God, and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger within, even all the land of Canaan,**

5) The following, to the end of the chapter, is missing in the Wittenberg.



for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. And God said to Abraham, "Keep my covenant, you and your seed after you, with their descendants. Now this is my covenant, which you shall keep between me and you, and your seed after you, among their descendants: Every male among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the foreskin of your flesh; the same shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. Every male child that is eight days old shall be circumcised among your descendants. In the same way, you shall circumcise all that are born at home or bought from all strangers who are not of your seed. So shall my covenant be upon your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And if a child be not circumcised in the foreskin of his flesh, his soul shall be cut off from among his people, because he hath omitted my covenant. And God said again unto Abraham, Thou shalt no more call thy wife Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. For I will bless her, and of her I will give thee a son. For I will bless her, and nations shall come out of her, and kings over many booms. Then Abraham fell on his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto me an hundred years old, and shall Sarah bear ninety years old? And Abraham said unto God, Oh that Ishmael should live before thee! And God said, Yea, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name Isaac: for with him will I establish mine everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. For Ishmael also have I heard thee. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and multiply him almost greatly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. And I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee at this time in the next year. And he ceased speaking with him, and God departed from Abraham. Then Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all the servants that were born at home, and all that he bought, and all that was man's name in his house, and circumcised the foreskin of their flesh that very day, as God had told him. And Abraham was nine and ninety years old when he

circumcised the foreskin of his flesh. Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when his flesh was circumcised. On the same day they were all circumcised, Abraham, his son Ishmael, and whatever man's name was in his house, born at home and bought from strangers; all were circumcised with him.

(1) We have heard so far how the patriarch Abraham was first promised God's grace and protection, then a fruit and reward from his rightful wife. Now the chapter describes how God speaks to him again, and changes his name and his wife's name, and establishes the covenant of circumcision with him; and especially that he promises him the son Isaac from his wife Sarah. It is a large chapter and belongs to the scholars, but we will make as much of it as we can. The first promise is where God promises him, as [Cap. 15, 1.] heard, that he would be his protection and his reward, on which words he hung with faith, as before on the other. But, as I have said, when God denies His promise and His word, it is always a matter of a new and better faith. For because we are on earth, no one becomes so perfect, must always increase, and become stronger. Thus God has led this holy man on and on, and always held forth new pieces; thus he has always remained in One Faith, although the matter and the quarrels have changed in many ways, for the sake of which he gives the word again, to strengthen the same faith, as I said, even more.

Now this was a great mighty faith, that Paul also praises it Rom. 4, 18-20: "Abraham praised and gave glory to God, when he believed against all reason and hope, not considering his dead body and his wife," since it was impossible and unavoidable according to nature that they should have children. He put all this out of his sight, not judging it by the way he felt it and poked it under his eyes, but by the mere word, and so said: "God is true, faithful and almighty, therefore I do not ask how impossible it is; since I have His word and promise, I cannot lack it, if all other things are faithful.

For faith is a light that guides him and shines in the darkness where reason is blind and becomes a fool. It is impossible for nature, but it is possible for God. Therefore, where the word is: "God says," only listen to reason. Now in that you praise and honor God in this way, faith is counted to you as righteousness. For this, as said before [Cap. 15, § 9], is the right honor of God, when one considers Him to be and to be able to do everything that belongs to God; thus I have served and worshipped Him. But what belongs to God? That he is almighty, kind, merciful, just, true and wise, and all that is good. To give all these things to him is the right service of God.

4 Abraham does this here, as Paul says [Rom. 4:17, 21], in that he believed him who calls things that are not, that they are. For he knows well, Abraham, that if all creatures worked together with all their strength, they could not give him a son; all creatures must despair of this. But he thinks: Yes, God can do it, not only from an old woman, but also from a stone [Matth. 3, 9]. [It is "something great, 1) that he can believe such things, even though they seem easy. Because he believed this, he trusted God more than he should, that he would give him eternal life and all good things. If he proposed to us in this way, saying, "Here you have a handful or a grain, and I will feed you with it all the year," who would believe? Then we would see how impossible it would be for nature, for because you would see it, faith would have to fall.

5 This is how it will be when we die. There is God's word and the sacrament or sign that God wants to give you eternal life. There is the wretched being, sin, death and hell, and what one leaves in this life. This is certain, that is uncertain. Whoever could grasp God's word, which Peter calls a light in a dark place, and close his eyes and see through death into life, as Abraham does here, steps into the darkness, does not jump back alone, and is not frightened,

but is confident and joyful to it, that his heart laughs, that it must have been an exuberant faith, which conceived and said in the most complete way: Now it is certain. As if he should say: How great strange thing and miracle is this, how impossible it will be before the people! So that the laughter would not be understood as coming from doubt, but from great miracles of faith.

Now the example is also written for us, that we may learn everywhere the manner of righteous faith, that it has no light but the word of God, and that he who follows it does right worship. Therefore Paul says: "He was strong in faith, praised God, and knew with certainty that what God promises he can also do"; as if he should say: If God has spoken it, he will certainly not lie. So you see how Abraham gives God in one heap what he should give him, that he is almighty and can do it; in addition, he is wise, so that he knows how he should do it; item, truly, so that he certainly keeps what he says 2c. Thus he has served God to the highest degree; for where the heart does not keep such things and believe of God, there is no true worship, but all hypocrisy, which is invented for worship. Thus, faith is sufficiently explained that it is not necessary to say more about it. We will now see the pieces that the chapter deals with in particular.

(7) At the first God takes and changes his name, saying, "You shall no longer be called Abram, but Abraham," that the name may be lengthened a little, and gives the reason why it should be called, "I have made you a father of many nations," that Abraham may be called a father from whom many nations come. The former name Abram, of two syllables, is made from the word Ab, which in German means a father, and soi] Ram means high. Thus Abram is called a high father. He changes the name to him, he shall no longer be called high father, but father of many peoples; but not so that this word Abraham would completely give the interpretation, which he sets here. For there is not more than one letter, namely a sr] h put in between, that the name of a syllable becomes longer. Now this must be a mMerium. The letter h means in the

10

1) In the issues: Is but large.

Hebrew language especially before the others. Here, however, the word Hamon, that is, a heap, is decided in it; from it comes the word Mahamon, which we say Mammon, which Christ uses gladly in the Gospel; so that the one letter indicates a heap of nations. And has so strangely broken the name that it would be almost impossible to feel that it should be called so much, where God did not interpret it, because it is so broken and thrown among each other; will also remain so. It was undoubtedly made so that he would be a father to those who would believe righteously, as St. Paul indicates in Romans 4:11.

8 So he also changes the name of the woman. Before she was called Sarai, now, he says, she shall be called Sarah. There is one letter less, Sarai is called my wife; for the letter Jod at the end gives as much as the word my: as Eli, Eli, my God, Adonai, my Lord, Abi, my father, but Sarah is called äömina, a woman, not in general a woman's image, but who rules in the house; not like the man, but like a maid of one says: This is my wife. God wanted Abraham's wife, his legitimate wife, not to be his mistress, but his servant. He did not do this because it was important that she be called what she was called, without her having to be a figure, beginning and interpretation of the New Testament people. For this is what Paul says in Gal. 4:24: "Hagar was the mother of the saints called Ishmael, who were captives of good works, who were under the law, not merry and willing, but servants, not of the blessed seed, but of flesh and blood alone, without the word of God.

(9) But to this seed of the woman is added the word of God, which is the treasure, against which flesh and blood are nothing. It reads as badly to reason as if a cobbler had spoken it, but in the sight of God the treasure is so great that it is inconceivable. Therefore hath he called her Sarah, that she should be the right wife, that is, that we should be Sarah's children. Why? Sarah bore a son, not of flesh and blood, and yet is flesh and blood; ser] is her fruit, but not

Flesh and blood work. 1) The divine majesty pours out the power with the word, therefore he is a child of the divine word, but raised in flesh and blood. The miracle God wants to perform, that he lets a son be born of flesh and blood, but not through flesh and blood.

(10) Therefore, 2) God's children are not without being born through the Word. Isaac is also born bodily through the Word, [it] did not have to be through flesh and blood at all; otherwise Hagar would be sund]. Ishmael also mother and son. Thus everything that flesh and blood can do is laid down here, and a verdict is reached: What is not of God's word is lost, be it a spiritual life, as it may; if it goes by free will, even if it goes by God's law, it does not make it children of God. 3) But if you are to become an Isaac, you must be born differently and also have the promise that makes you an heir. It lies there so badly, like a dead word, nor is it so strong that it closes and judges the whole world. 4) Paul calls the children of Saree, the woman who is a wife in the house, who has power over the property, not a maid who takes the wages and goes away; but who cannot be put out of the house, and has the husband's property under her, rules the servants, and, 5) what is in the house, over it she is master. That is why Paul calls her the free woman, that is, no one's maid nor subject, but the house is her subject.

This is the Christian church, which is the right Sara, quite free, has no one above her, because her householder, Christ, that is her husband, has right to her. Thus she has what he has, word, spirit, baptism, sacrament; what she creates, that is done in heaven and earth; what she says, that he confirms; what she does, that God does; [it] is just as valid as if God himself baptized or absolved. The power is so great that no one can sufficiently measure and praise it. God has placed His power in her womb and given her the keys, as a woman, so that what she does and how she does it, she can do.

1) Jenaer: Work.

2) Erlanger: they are.

3) "Gottes" is missing in the Erlanger.

4) Erlanger: Da.

5) "and" is missing in the Erlanger.

She may do anything she wants, but only that she does not step over the line and follow another, that is, that she does not preach any further and that she drives with conscience, that she does not raise anything new, but keeps to what he does, then she is the dear bride. We are her children, we are born of her, we are also her heirs. Therefore it is fine here that we have what Christ and his bride have. But the gospel is her womb, with it she bears and gives birth; so we become God's children, Isaac's brothers, born after Isaac (that is, according to the promise) from the free one, who 1) we have God's word.

(12) Therefore we are not servants, saith Paul again, but only children and sons of a free woman; going forth of a free and willing spirit, doing all things in vain, not looking to the reward, as a servant. For they are born into the inheritance, that they may do no work to acquire it, are in the womb of their mother; therefore they do not look at their works, but do more than is required, have no other merit than that they are born. Birth means that the inheritance is their own; he is the father, who must think to make the inheritance and place them in his estate; they can do nothing about it.

(13) Behold, we see in all places in Scripture what a true Christian being should be, and how God has hidden and concealed such a thing in Scripture before; yet so strongly that everyone must say it is right, and can see that God had such in mind, that he once wanted such a sermon to go forth from faith. For here you see no work, no commandment, but only a promise, graciously given. 2) He sees no work, nor does he command it, but he freely says that she should bear him a child. These are words, not which command, but which give; therefore he is not born of his father's or his mother's merit, but comes from the word, so that Abraham could do nothing about it. As he therefore is born, so must we all be born; so shall we all come into the inheritance, and become Chri-

1) Erlanger: like.

2) Jenaer: "Geschenck".

We have never deserved nor sought to hear God's word, but he comes before every thought and says: Believe in Christ and you will be saved. From this we become other people, undeservedly and unawares.

(14) Now what does Isaac want to boast about? Whence shall he have an inheritance? Abraham gathered it, but did not make it nor think of it; it comes only from God's word making him a child and placing him in Abraham's bosom? Therefore he cannot take anything for himself, because God has placed him in the inheritance, not by his own doing, but by the word of God. So he cannot boast that he is God's child, because God preached the gospel to him and gave him faith. In the same way, we are not blessed anywhere except by the fact that God gave birth to us through the Word and made us children.

(15) Behold, these are the bad histories, when one considers it according to reason, that one should mock God; as some have done. But let them fool and jest; God has a way of dealing with human things, such as begetting children and the like, but is adorned and adorned with such gracious sayings and high interpretations for the sole purpose of making fools of the high-souled.

(16) So we conclude from history what is pleasing in the sight of God to make children; no human power, no commandment, no work. He must come first with His word, that we may become children with Isaac, that we may know that it is all grace, and that we may do it only by faith, which is so great that it makes us right heirs, and which alone is the right service of God.

(17) Since this is so, what then is done after the inheritance or new 4) birth? Answer: Therefore one must direct the works to other things, and say: You must not go idle, but do works, but with that you do not create the inheritance, because it is there before. How, then, shall one do nothing? No, but go and work so that the inheritance and goods may be increased and become great. So we have it by faith. But we do not do good works, for because of this

3) Erlanger: like.

4) "neuen" is missing in the Erlanger, but is in the text in the Wittenberger, and in brackets in the Jenaer.

preach and bring other people to it with words and works, so that our lives are directed toward helping other people as well. This teaching is given to us here in the piece that we have now seen and heard so often, that we may be sure and prepared, and not be carried away.

18 Thus we have the mighty promise, and the great faith of Abraham, and how his name and his wife's name are changed: his is abolished, and theirs is shortened, and so God turns it back. When the word comes, the kingdom of faith begins, and our works cease, and what is in us is no more. Faith increases and works decrease; otherwise they are great, long and many, but faith small and short. Therefore it must be reversed, that here something may increase, that Abraham's name may lengthen, and there something may decrease.

Now there is another piece here, about circumcision, which is also to be regarded as a rather foolish and shameful commandment. I have preached about it several times, and anyone who wants to may read it further in the posts. It is the piece that St. Paul refers to everywhere, and has a lot to do with it. For the Jews relied heavily on it.

20) But look at 2) the order: Abraham is promised that God would be his protector; item, to give him a son by his right wife, and to multiply his seed very much 2c.; after the same promises to all he commands him to perform this sign on his flesh, so that he outwardly confesses that he is his God, and he, Abraham, is his servant. Then he must do an outward work; it is not yet his righteousness, but must do it freely for nothing. For faith has already made him righteous and blessed beforehand, just as Isaac is born through the grace of God; but as soon as he is born, he is already the heir. Therefore circumcision does not help; if he had never been circumcised, he would still have remained the Son.

Now Paul interprets this in a masterly way when he says Rom. 4, 11: "Circumcision is no more than a sign, so that he may be seen by the

confessed to people. For before, because' he was justified by faith, he had to bear the sign to confess the God, all whom he believed. Therefore it is called Paul siZilluw ^ustitias üäsi, a seal of the righteousness of faith. For as with a seal is proved that which shall have power, so also by circumcision is it proved before the world, that every man said, By this Abraham confessed his God and faith. As also we, if we believe, are free from all sins, and are the children of God; which we prove before men by baptism, and by the foolish sign, as the heathen say, that we eat our God. For all these signs are such that reason must laugh and mock at them.

22 But God takes the sign to show the interpretation in it. He might have called Abraham circumcised in another place, but in the shameful place, because it is sin and shame in the sight of the world; therefore the Gentiles also mocked the Jews in the most shameful way and insulted them. It serves nothing to merit grace, but only as a sign of faith, required for confession and testimony before the world, that they may be offended and become fools, and yet no one may be saved except by the faith of Abraham, who was circumcised [Rom. 4:16].

(23) Therefore you must cast down your wisdom and become a fool. Laugh as long as you can that we are put into the water; yet it is decreed before God: If you are to be rid of sins and become blessed, you must become like the fool who comes out of baptism, or you will lack the kingdom of heaven.

God gladly takes such foolish signs, shameful and disgraceful in the eyes of the world, so that they get angry at them) For if he did not, the proud courage would remain stuck in us, that we and our wisdom were also something; then everyone would run to us. But he wants us to break our mind and crawl into another skin. And because God wants this, we should be pleased with it and not consider it foolishness. This is the original

- 1) "it" is missing in the Erlanger.

L) Erlanger: on it, on-

3) Wittenberg and Erlanger: deß.

4) Wittenberger and Erlanger: annoyed.

fʌltʌ is recently nothing else than to take off the old Adam, to go through the cross, shame and disgrace in death and all misfortune, as God sends it] to us.

25 But besides this it is to be noted that we can argue with the Jews and lead the text rightly, namely, that we do not consider circumcision higher than an outward sign, so that Abraham proves his inward faith, as we do in baptism. For this is how Paul presents circumcision against the Jews, and finally concludes that they cannot boast of the work before all the Gentiles, of which Abraham himself cannot boast that he became something before God through it, but was already something before, through faith in God's word. So also we, before we take the sacrament of baptism or the altar, must have faith, but the sign is a proof before the people.

(26) Thou shalt also say of all good works. Why are they commanded, when the

Is Faith Sufficient? It is true that faith alone is sufficient 1) in the sight of God, that no works are needed for it; but works must be done to prove faith before the world, so that God may be praised and my neighbor may also be provoked to faith [Matth. 5, 16]. I should not do anything for myself, but must love for the sake of others, to praise God and to serve my neighbor, so that other leaders may also come to us. Now that is born of Abraham, of the flesh and blood only, and is also circumcised, this does nothing; for Ishmael is also of Abraham and also circumcised, yet he is not counted for Abraham's seed. What then is lacking? Because he had flesh and blood, which he brought from Abraham, but he had neither faith nor word. For he that shall be his seed, saith Paul, must have the faith that he hath. Thus he becomes a father to all those who believe in Christ, since he believed in him. We have now heard enough of this.

1) Erlanger: enough.

## The eighteenth chapter.

V.1-20. And the Lord appeared unto him in the grove of Mamre, as he sat by the door of his tabernacle, when the day was hottest. And when he lifted up his eyes, and looked, there stood three men against him. And when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the door of his tabernacle, and bowed himself to the ground before him, 2) saying, Lord, if I have found grace in thy sight, pass not over before thy servant. Let a little water be brought unto you, and wash your feet, and lean down under the tree. And I will bring you a morsel of bread to refresh your heart, and after that ye shall depart. For this is why you came to your servant. They said: Do as you have said. Abraham hastened into the tabernacle to

And Sarah said, Make haste, and mix three measures of fine flour, and knead, and bake cakes. And he ran unto the oxen, and fetched a good tender calf, and gave it to the lad, and he made haste, and prepared it. And he took butter and milk, and of the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them, and stood before them under the tree, and they did eat. 3) And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he answered, Within the tabernacle. And he said, I will come again unto thee, if I live; behold, 4) Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it behind him, behind the door of the tabernacle. And they were both of them, Abraham and Sarah, old and well stricken in years, so that Sarah was no more able to go to the tabernacle.

3) The following text is missing from the Wittenberg.

4) Erlanger: "About a year, after the time the fruit can live, I will come to you again, so shall" 2c. - In addition, there are some variants in this text; we, as well as the Jenaers, have given the text of the Bible.

2) Marginal gloss: Falling down before him. He falls down before one, and also speaks as with one, and yet with three; there the Trinity in God is indicated.

**the women's way. Therefore she laughed with herself, and said, Now that I am old, I shall yet cherish pleasure, and my lord also is old. Then said the LORD unto Abraham, Why laughed Sarah, saying, Thinkest thou that it is true that I shall yet bear, seeing I am old? Should anything be impossible for the Lord? At this time I will come again to thee, and if I live, Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, and said: I laughed not; for she was afraid. But he said, It is not so; thou hast laughed. Then the men arose from thence, and turned toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to lead them. Then said the LORD, How can I hide from Abraham what I do? For he shall become a great and mighty nation, and all the fires of the earth shall be blessed in him. For I know that he will command his children, and his household after him, to keep the way of the LORD, and to do that which is right and good; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath promised him.**

1. This chapter shows how the holy father Abraham was a great man and highly respected in the sight of God; that the Almighty God wants to show all the world by example how gracious and kind He is to those who believe. It is ever true that there is no greater thing on earth, indeed in all God's works, than faith; which is so powerful that it takes away everything that is sinful, makes us children of God, that it thus deals with us as one brother with another. As here, with Abraham; how kindly does he behave toward him? [He looks at nothing but high faith; with this he has caught God, pleases him so well that he jokes with him like with a best friend, yes, like with a child: comes the third, eats with him, jokes with Sarah; but that seriousness is there. At last he himself starts and says: "How can I hide from Abraham what I am doing? As if he should say: He is my friend, so good that I must tell him everything. At the end Abraham talks to him, and he listens to him so long, and grants him as often as he asks.

2- Behold, there is explained and interpreted what Paul sTit. 3, 4.] means by the words: JpparuitetDsi , that.

is the kindness and affability of God, that he is so affable that everyone likes to deal with him and be around him, and he again deals kindly with everyone. The virtue he gives to God is actually revealed in the New Testament, through the Gospel, which has also abundantly proven it; as you see here, that one man could not deal more kindly with another. Now this is the price of Abraham's faith, to make us an example, that we too, when we believe, take comfort in him, that he deals with us in the most friendly way; but the fact that we neither experience nor taste it, makes us not believe. If we felt it, we would see how lovely histories these are that model faith so that Abraham is called God's friend. Summa, it is a high miracle and not to be measured, over all words and thoughts, the conscience must experience it itself. We do not think highly of him when he speaks, but if we thought what kind of person he was, we would fall down before him. Because we think it is just as if a cobbler were speaking, we never learn anything about it.

Let this be great and high, that God Himself should do this to him, go into his house and be his guest, speak so many words to him; then also, repeat the promise that He made to him in the previous chapter [v. 16], that his Sarah should bear a son, which she had not heard; but now it is so strongly urged that she must also hear it, although she does not believe so soon, but still doubts. What more is indicated in this, I do not know; so it looks to me as if Sarah did not believe Abraham, for he will no doubt have told her many times. Now, when she hears it from the three of them, it seems so strange to her that she speaks mockingly to it, as it were, and says: "Shall I still indulge in pleasure, like a young woman? She is still ashamed that she should deal with pleasure. There he also shows what a fine, chaste woman she has been, even in outward conduct; also how she is subject to her husband, and calls him master. Which St. Peter [1 Ep. 3, 6] considered good, that he put it on, and set her as an example to the women.

4 Now, we must stay on the one that Sarah herself must hear the word. She wants

no longer know pleasure in the world, stands in the sense that she now waits for death, and she was no pleasure to courage, as the text says: *erant ei muliebrii*, it went to her no longer after the woman kind. (It) was also not according to nature that she should have a child; therefore she throws it to the wind, does not believe Abraham yet, thus thinks: Who knows whether my husband has understood it right? Therefore God Himself comes and speaks to her so kindly. Which he would not suffer from another: She hears it from Abraham, and doubts; now, when she hears it from the angel himself, she starts to laugh. He would not have liked that from another.

5. further he goes on, and does not jest, saying, "Why does Sarah your wife laugh? should it be too hard for God?" Nevertheless it shall come to pass, "When I come again, Sarah shall have a son." These are vain words, that he speaks as to his daughter; which he would not do to others. That is what it does, where faith is righteous, God is there with all his goods and blessings, everything is bad, peace and tranquility, even though faith is still weak.

(6) For here we have a great, comforting example of what Paul says in Romans 14:1: "Take the weak in faith. There has ever been a righteous faith here, because she went out with Abraham before, in strong faith, in Egypt, in the king's house, as heard, which she would never have done if she had not stood in firm faith. Item, so strong was she, that she gave Abraham her handmaid to a wife, which she would not have done, if she had not been sure that she would have children by Abraham; still she stumbles and doubts here. This is called weak faith; nevertheless, God does not reject her for it, spares her for the sake of the former faith, credits her if she does not believe as strongly as Abraham; for he deals with her as Paul says [Rom. 8, 26.], that he helps her weakness, and speaks so much to her that she must believe. When she denies: No, I did not laugh; he says, You laughed. Then she saw that it was God's word, even though she did not know the person.

7 So now the summa about the price is

of faith, which is shown here; is also the example that God always leads His own from one faith into another, always proposes a new piece for training, improvement and increase of faith from day to day. That is why we live on earth, otherwise it would be better that we die soon. These are the pieces of faith in the example.

(8) Then these also are moral examples, that is, examples of love. For the epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 13, 2.] gives this example: "Do not forget to be hospitable, for by this some, without their knowledge, have sheltered angels." There he means Abraham and his cousin Lot, in the following chapter. With this work God has given us an example and praised the kindness that we should gladly shelter and do good to the strangers. To which virtue the Scriptures, especially the New Testament, often exhort, and such an example is not written in vain. Abraham was before in faith, which he now practices, and he also comes away in love; he has left his door open, whoever has come, he has received; yes, when he sees the three men from afar, he goes to meet them and compels them to stay with him. He sat there, the text says, in front of the door, and rested, since it was about dinner time (for otherwise he certainly did not walk much idly), and waited, where guests would come, whom he would receive. 1) There are no more examples among us of taking in poor pilgrims or strangers, or, if it is done, it is done for the sake of pleasure. But whoever did it out of love would undoubtedly have saints as guests, and even God Himself.

**V.20-33. And the Lord said, There is a great cry in Sodom and Gomorrah, and their sins are grievous. Therefore will I go down, and see whether they have done all according to the cry that is come before me, or whether it be not so that I know. And the men turned their faces, and went to Sodom. But Abraham stood still before the LORD, and stood before him, and said, Wilt thou then slay the righteous with the wicked? There might be fifty righteous men in**

1) Thus the Wittenberg. In the: other editions: "Das".



**Wouldst thou destroy them, and not forgive the place for fifty righteous men that were therein? Far be it from thee, that thou shouldest do this thing, and slay the righteous with the wicked, that the righteous should be as the wicked: far be it from thee, which art the judge of all the earth, that thou shouldest not do such judgment. And the LORD said, If I find fifty righteous men in the city of Sodom, then for their sakes will I forgive all the places. And Abraham answered and said, Behold, I have made myself to speak unto the LORD, though I be dust and ashes. There may be in it five less than fifty righteous: wilt thou then destroy the whole city for five? And he said, If I find in it five and forty, I will not destroy it. And he continued to speak unto him, saying, Peradventure forty shall be found therein. But he said: I will not hurt them for forty. And Abraham said, Be not angry, my lord, that I should speak any more, that there might be found thirty in them. And he said, If I find thirty in them, I will not hurt them. And he said, Behold, I have refrained from speaking unto my Lord; peradventure there shall be found twenty in them. He answered: I will not destroy them for the sake of twenty. And he said, Oh be not angry, my Lord, that I speak but once more, that there may be ten in them. And he said: I will not destroy them for the sake of the ten. And the LORD departed after he had talked with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.**

(9) Behold, there is another excellent example, wherein is seen the great earnestness of Abraham, how he was full of love toward his neighbor, when he heard that God was in earnest to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Then he takes care that God will let his earnestness go, and punish the land, as before [Gen. 7:17] the world with the flood of sin. Therefore he comes before him, practicing a noble work of love, that he takes upon himself all the sins they have done, and asks for them with all earnestness, not once, but six times. [These are nothing else than vain and right fiery words, and such a heartfelt and fervent prayer as I have never heard before.

knows in the Scriptures. Thus his courage stands, that he ever wanted to drive back the anger, holds on so firmly, and brings it so close to God, that ev must go away from him. This is ever a rather flush work of love. So we should also 1) do and pray where we see someone lying in sin, since it is certain that God's wrath and punishment are present, so that we may pray that He will not let the punishment go.

(10) So he first takes God's goodness before him in the harshest way; he does not say that they have not sinned, but calls upon his name, brings his honor upon him, thus saying: If you do this, you will bring dishonor and shame upon your name; spare yourself. What would the world say, but that you are an ungracious, horrible God? So he attacks him in the highest way, and wins him over with it, holds him up until he can no longer. That makes him think thus: In such a region there will ever be many pious people; ser] thought he wanted to stretch it close to him, and only count fifty; yes, there he asks the first, second, third, up to the sixth time; everything goes. He did not ask any more about that, so he thought: If there are only five of them, he will probably keep them, if the others go down.

11 Now notice that it is often said that there are still many righteous people in the world; yes, take comfort in this, Abraham also took comfort in this, that he would pray with confidence. If anyone had told him that there were not ten righteous people in the same country, he would not have believed it; nor does he find more than Lot, the third, the others all perish, without the stranger and sojourner; as above [Cap. 7, 13.] in the flood there are not more than eight people preserved in the great, wide world. Now boast, whoever wants to conclude that there are still many more pious people on earth. One relies on this, and then concludes further: "They cannot be mistaken, it is not to be believed that God is so angry. Thus God has snatched away our defiance, so that we do not rely on it. That it is not true that our papists pretend: so many people cannot err. Who should now resemble such cities to Sodom? as Christ resembles the city of

1) "also" is missing in the Erlanger.

Capernaum, on the other hand, holds and says (Matth. 11, 24.): "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom at the last judgment than for you."

(12) So I also consider it certain that the wrath of God that has been is nowhere equal to the wrath that has gone before among your ministry, and still goes on, that I may well say that so many books have been written, and doctors of the Scriptures made, and neither book nor doctor has preached the gospel. Whoever had the courage to do so, soon had to burn. Meanwhile, we have always said: "God is not so angry that he lets so many people err. If some are pious, they do not have the appearance nor the reputation that no one cares about them."

(13) Therefore, let this frighten us, and not be surprised if God destroys a whole country, because we know that it is proclaimed by God that the deception would be so great that Christ would have to say (Luc. 18:8): "Do you also think that when the Son of Man comes, he will find faith on the earth? I worry that it is all too true and all too true that everything that is only under and in the papacy is of the devil. It is certainly terrible, nor is it God's judgment; after all, everything is wrong that has ever come under the papacy. It is not a mean thing about a pious man; Abraham, of course, was the noblest treasure on earth at the same time."

(14) This is what is written to frighten all who are presumptuous, not for the sake of those who are foolish and fearful. God will not be kind to anyone, nor will he be kind to those who humble themselves, despair of them, stoop down and seek mercy from him; to them all is kind, but to others all is terrible.

(15) This is the example of Abraham, where we see how full of the Spirit he was, and great strength of faith and fervent love, that we are commanded to follow him also, how he even cares for the poor people as if he himself were in distress, how he has heard that he uses exceedingly excellent words, whether he would save them and avert wrath, and also that his prayer is heard everywhere, how often he asks.

1) itself --- itself daß. Wittenberg and Jena: itself.

That is now said after the history. What other deep and subtle thing is, I leave aside. Especially in the beginning of the chapter, where Moses says that he worshipped one, and yet he saw three. For the words are thus: "The Lord appeared unto him in the grove of Mamre, and when he had lifted up his eyes, he saw three men standing before him; and he ran and bowed himself down before him, and said, Lord, if I have found grace in thy sight, go not over before thy servant, and they shall bring you a little water. Therefore some say, as now said, that he saw three men, and talked with one; thus the trinity in GOD is signified. I leave that to the scholars to fight out. This is ever true that Abraham looked at One in God's stead, who it was. The text makes this clear when he says: "Lord, I have found grace in your sight", which is proven from the Hebrew language that it is the right name of God.

17) Whether he did this by accepting the person in God's name, or whether he himself was so enlightened that he recognized that he was 2) true God, I leave to the scholars. It is almost like him that afterwards he speaks so devoutly with God Himself, as if he had regarded the one person as the right God. For we have heard that he speaks to the Lord himself and that he answers him, which was done in a human person. Therefore, he must have had a high spirit that told him that among the three he sees One who is God and the other angels, and yet accepts all three as human beings, as they also give birth.

18 Summa, so much is it that Abraham has seen here an image and sight that God must be, and should become man; for he sees the human image before him, yet considers him true God, worships him also as a God. It is a great grace and a remarkable example, how the man is so pleasing to God, that he appears to him in such a way, and reveals his secret; so that it is written, that we should ever learn how great a good it is for a believing man. For what may it be written to Abraham? It is written for us, that we may see how GOD

2) "he" is missing in the Erlanger.

He has air and love for those who believe in him, so that he makes himself so close to them and deals with them as one companion with another, so that we also make ourselves available to him in this way and talk to him; but that this may happen through the Lord Christ. He who has faith may speak freely to God, and he will speak to him again as a brother, or as a father to a child. Now this is what 1) the Scripture has modeled here, to provoke to faith through Christ. For Abraham had to see God not only in the image of a man, but also in the likeness of a man: so must we also see him in the image in which he has set himself, which is Christ. If he does not appear, then it is lost; as the works saints do, who without Christ want to appear before God with their deeds.

19 Lastly, here is the confidence we should have to ask, that whoever is a Christian and believes, may ask what he will, so<sup>1</sup> he is sure to be heard. See how Abraham speaks so powerfully, and what he says must be yes. Yes, if he had continued to ask, he would also have had to be granted. There is no no, but only yes, prescribed for us as an example, not that we only look at the saints in heaven, but those who are on earth, as Abraham once lived on earth. Therefore let us take such an example, and only ask confidently. If it is asked, it is heard; if you can only believe, it must be done. Yes, you say, if I had such strong faith as Abraham. Answer: Yes, but it is not written for his sake; therefore it is not valid for thee to say, If I were so holy. Believe as he does, and thou shalt be as holy. Whence is he so holy? Joshua says [Cap. 24, 2] that he also worshipped idols and was also a sinner, but by believing he became righteous. Believe, then, and you too will be so pious. But we go in the sense that he acquired it with great works and holy life; but these are vain dreams. If he had not had faith, he would have acquired nothing everywhere. So we also must obtain these things by faith. It is an exceedingly great thing about the example that a Christian has such power that he can ask and God cannot refuse him anything.

1 > "nun" is missing in the Erlanger.

(20) Jacobus also referred to this in his epistle, and he uses it strongly; it is also the best piece in the same epistle: "The righteous prayer (he says [Cap. 5, 16-18]) is able to do much if it is active. Elijah was a man like us, and he prayed a prayer that it should not rain; and it rained not on the earth three years and six months. And he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit," actually adding the word, "He was a man like unto us." Thus we should also interpret all histories and examples to mean that they were men as well as we. For the larva only deceives us, that we make such a clamor with the saints. [We should say thus: If they are holy, then we are also holy; if we are sinners, then they were also sinners; after all, we are all born of flesh and blood, and God created us as well as them; one man is worth another, and nothing distinguishes us except faith. If you have faith and God's word, you are just as great; you must not worry that you are inferior to him, unless faith cannot be as strong.

21) And especially it is to be noted that such an example shows how powerful prayer is for the betterment of the good. One can find examples of how strong prayer has been to the detriment of the adversaries, as Moses, who was the most gentle man, did a short prayer, 2) so that Kōre, Dathan and Abiram swallowed up the earth (4 Mos. 16, 32.). Likewise one reads also of David and others more. So the saints can also sometimes harm and punish. But this example is even more noble, that the prayer is so strong, if it is to serve the betterment of the neighbor, and God is more inclined to hear that which is useful and good, than that which is harmful.

022 Elijah the prophet did both these things. He asked that it would not rain for four and a half years [1 Kings 17:1, 7], and it did. [But he did it because the land was so full of false prophets and idolatry that his spirit was enraged and embittered, and brought punishment on the land, so that the king was so angry with him that he sent him to the kingdom.

3) Erlanger: that he.

in all lands sought to slay him [1 Kings 18:10,j. Thus you see that they can obtain what they ask, but more and more for good than for harm. Let us be comforted and strengthened, and be sure that what we ask will be done.

23 Thus John also says in his most serous epistle [Cap. 5:14, 15]: "This is the joy we have in God, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us; and if we know that He hears us, what

we ask, we know that we have the request that we asked of Him." That is, when we believe, we are joyful and bold that GOD will not let us; as Abraham did not doubt until he came to the "ten." Had he continued to ask, he would have been heard. If I had a Christian who asked for me, I would be of good cheer and not be afraid of anyone. If I also had one who pleaded against me, I would rather have the Turkish emperor as my enemy.

## The nineteenth chapter.

(vv. 1-38) The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom. And when he saw them, he stood up to meet them, and bowed himself with his face to the ground, and said, Behold, my Lord, come in unto thy servant's house, and tarry overnight, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise early in the morning, and go your way. But they said: Nay, but we will tarry in the street overnight. So he almost compelled them, and they "returned" to him, and came into his house. And he made them a feast, and baked unleavened cakes, and they did eat. But before they lay down, the people of the city of Sodom came and surrounded the house, young and old, all the people from every quarter. And they demanded of Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men that are come unto thee this night? Let them come out to us, that we may know them. And Lot went out unto them at the door, and shut the door behind him, and said, Oh, brethren, do not be so wicked. Behold, I have two daughters, which have not yet known a man: I will put them out among you, and do unto them as ye please: but do nothing unto these men of God: for therefore are they entered under the shadow of my roof. But they said: Come hither. Then they said: Did you not come in as a stranger, and now you want to be a judge? Well, we will do thee more harm than they. And they pressed hard upon the man

Lot, and as they ran to break open the door, the men reached out and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. And the men that were at the door of the house were smitten with blindness, both small and great, that they could not find the door. And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any more a husband, and sons, and daughters, and whosoever is thine in the city, bring him out of this place: for we will destroy this place, and their cry shall be great before the LORD, which hath sent us to destroy it. Then Lot went out, and spake unto his oaths, which should take his daughters: Arise, and get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But it was ridiculous to them. So when the dawn was breaking, the angels hurried Lot and said: Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters which thou hast found, lest thou also perish in the iniquity of this city. And when he was gone, the men took him, and his wife, and his two daughters, by the hand, because the LORD spared him; and they brought him out, and left him without the city. And when they had brought him out, they said, Save thy soul, and look not behind thee, neither stand thou in all this place; save thyself in the mount, that thou perish not. But Lot said unto them: Nay, my lord, behold, because thy servant hath found grace in thine eyes, thou wilt not perish.

May you make your mercy great, which you have done for me, to keep my soul alive; I cannot save myself on the mountain; an accident may befall me, and I may die. Behold, there is a city near, whither I may flee, and it is small; there will I save myself; yet it is small, that my soul may live. Then said he unto him, Behold, I have looked upon thee also in this thing, that I turn not back the city which thou hast spoken of. Make haste and be saved there, for I cannot do anything until you come in. Therefore the city is called Zoar. 1) And the sun was risen on the earth, when Lot entered into Zoar. And the LORD rained down brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and turned back the cities, and all the coasts thereof, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and all that grew upon the face of the earth. And his wife looked behind him, and was turned into a pillar of salt. And Abraham rose up early in the morning unto the place where he stood before the LORD, and turned his face toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the country of the region, and looked, and, behold, there arose a vapor from the land, as a vapor from the furnace. For when God had destroyed the cities of the region, he remembered Abraham, and brought Lot out of the cities which he had turned back, wherein Lot dwelt. And Lot departed from Zoar, and abode in the mountain with his two daughters: for he feared to abide in Zoar, and so abode in a cave with his two daughters. Then the eldest said to the youngest, "Our father is old, and there is no longer a man on earth to protect us in any way. So come, let us give our father wine to drink, and sleep with him, 2) that we may receive seed from our father. So they gave their father wine to drink that night. And the first went in, and lay with her father, and he knew it not when she lay, nor when she arose. And in the morning the eldest said unto the youngest, Behold, I lay with my father yesterday; let us give him wine this night also.

Give wine to drink, that you may go in and lie with him, that we may receive seed from our father. So they also gave their father wine to drink that night. And the youngest also arose, and lay with him; and he knew it not when she lay, nor when she arose. So Lot's two daughters conceived by their father, and the eldest gave birth to a son, whom she named Moab; from him came the Moabites to this day. And the youngest also bare a son, and called his name the child Ammi: from him came the children of Ammon unto this day.

First, we hear here of the men or angels who went from Abraham to Sodom. As Abraham, his cousin, was, so also is Lot to Sodom. Abraham was a man who liked to give hospitality, so this one also does, so that he also urges and compels them to return to his house and be his guests.

2 This is an example of the custom of the people, that they were ready to do good to anyone. For it should not be thought that they alone were so willing to shelter poor strangers. They have been strangers themselves, and have tried how strangers are treated and how no one takes care of them; therefore they have gladly taken them in. However, it will undoubtedly have happened that they also had many ungrateful guests. [It is also fitting. For what is to be a Christian good work must be so skillful that the people to whom it is good will do all mischievousness against it. [They] have thought thus: done for God's sake, not left for man's sake. For one must always consider that God was pleased with the people. What he testifies to must be right and delicious.

(3) Thus both Lot and Abraham sat and dwelt among thorns and vipers and scorpions, as do all Christians and children of God. There nothing becomes different; it must go, as in the Song of Songs [Cap. 2, 2.] stands: "As a rose in the midst of thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Thus he has become a free man.

1) Marginal gloss: Zoar means small. - This marginal gloss is missing in the Jenaer. In the Wittenberg, there is only the text of the first three verses.

2) Erlanger: and become drunk with him.

He was a man of good deeds, who did good to everyone and harmed everyone, so that his life became bitter and sour enough. For he had to lead a different life than the world; he had to live among those who were not quite pious, and punish the unbelievers and charge them with the neck; so that his life deserved no more than always hatred and envy. Therefore God comforted him all the more, even through the angels; thus he dealt with him as if he were carrying him on his hands; yet he left him so miserably stuck among the unbelievers that one can never praise these examples enough.

004 There dwelleth the pious Lot in the capital of Sodom of the five. And consider how he sits there with his wife, his children and his servants, and how he has been a part of the people who were there, and how he has given daughters, and how he has had two wives, and how he has gotten along with them. Again, they were so disgraceful in their behavior, eating and drinking, and practicing all kinds of immorality, that they considered him no different than a Cinderella; he had to suffer all this. How often he also had to punish the people. For, as I said before, it behooves a Christian man to preach and teach against the wicked and not to remain silent. So he had to have great faith to be able to 2) live and help himself among such poisonous and 3) desperate people.

The apostle Peter uses this as an example: "God has redeemed (he says s2. Ep. 2, 7. 8.) justified Lot, who was deafened by the lewd conduct of the abominable. For while he dwelt justified among them, that he should see and hear it, they tormented the righteous soul from day to day with their unrighteous works." He saw that they led such an abominable vice, neither serving nor helping any man; but, as Christ says of them, "They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built," every man walking after his own pleasure and enjoyment, not looking after his neighbor. He was alone in the whole city, helping and serving the people as much as he could; had to

1) "Such" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) Erlanger: he him.

3) "and" is missing in the Erlanger.

yet be hated and oppressed by them. Thus he had to see what hurt him in his heart, even what might have broken his heart; yet he had to suffer it, could neither defend nor help.

(6) Therefore the prophet Ezekiel also said: "Behold, this was the vice of thy sister Sodom (he says [Cap. 16, 49] to the synagogue), courtliness, idleness, and plenty, that they were full of eating and drinking, they and their daughters," that is, the villages and towns around, "and no one gave a hand to the poor," and they went out and did such vices that I had to turn them to ashes. So Christ also describes it (as said above [Luc. 17, 28-30.]): "As it was in the days of Lot, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man; they did eat, and drink, and buy, and sell, and plant, and build, until Lot went out of Sodom: and it rained fire and brimstone, and destroyed them all." If you look at it now, this was the trouble in Sodom, as it is still today, that everyone looks out for himself alone and strives for himself, rightly and wrongly; let someone else stay where he can. God has given it that one builds and plants; but that one alone scrapes to himself all that he can, and leaves his neighbor to suffer hardship, takes care of no other man, that is the complaint and guilt of all with one another.

7 Therefore the prophet says to the city of Jerusalem, "Behold, even so doest thou, yea, Sodom and Samaria have not yet done half that thou doest," that they are still righteous, to whom: they are held against thee [Ezek. 16, 51.], as also Christ punishes the Jews, and passes judgment on them, saying [Matth. 11, 23. 24.], "And thou Capernaum, thou art exalted unto heaven; thou shalt be cast down unto hell. For if the deeds that were done in Sodoma had been done in you, they would still be there today. But I say unto you, that it shall be worse for the land of Sodom at the last judgment than for thee," so that we may not boast. If God has sunk the city because of its sin, He will not spare ours either; as St. Peter also says: "He has turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, and condemned them, so that an example might be made.

sets them that shall be ungodly in time to come." It is true that they have committed the sin called dumb sins, but the Scripture compares it especially to all those who hear the gospel, understand it, and do not follow it, and is set as an example for them to stumble against.

(8) Thus shall the examples be regarded, as the pious children of Abraham and Lot. When they were strangers among the wicked people, seeing nothing but what would have broken their hearts, shameful conduct, unfaithfulness and injustice, they still had to stay with them, could not leave the world; they did not act like our fools, the monks, who do not want to live in the world. God had led them to the land, [they] had to be in it; if they had lived elsewhere, they would have found it just the same. Wherever one goes, the devil is at home. Therefore these are great examples which God sets before us, that we hold fast to faith and love against the whole world. [It is a great cross, when we see that no one is a friend, must suffer vain envy and hatred; nor does God let the pious man fall, as we shall hear how and how warmly he does it.

(9) This is the great and terrible judgment of God upon the five cities. For although Abraham asked for it with great earnestness, but because he found no one who was good, he let it stand and let the wrath go on. Therefore, not to cast the example into the wind, but to form it in the eyes is the great earnestness of God, as it is said, that one should not take comfort in saying that there are still many righteous people among us, for whose sake God stops the wrath. As they were, so they are still, and much worse; but there have been more pious people. So that no one may take a cover and protection, that he may escape God's judgment.

10 It is finally decided that he wants people to be afraid of him and not be safe. That is why his anger has already begun, when he sees that it is thrown to the wind, and still wants to rely on other people's intercession. Therefore the scripture says: [sPs. 147, 11]: "He is well pleased with

1) Erlanger: "is. This is" 2c. - Wittenberger: the great seriousness.

To them that fear him, and trust in him"; as also in the Gospel of Matthew [Cap. 18, 26. 27.] of the servant who owed his master ten thousand pounds, that he obtained grace and mercy, and lamented the Lord of it, when he fell down and sum] begged mercy. Thus by and by the example is to be led that God is not gracious and merciful to anyone, except those who fear him, that will anger 2) and judge. Thus the prophets have set the example, and well blued and reproached, that they might keep the people in the fear of God. It is set to terror and trembling, as we have heard from Petro [2 Ep. 2, 6], for all the wicked, who will certainly also suffer as Sodoma and Gomorrah did, to be put off as long as they wish. God can watch their behavior for a while, but in the end he will come with terrible punishment, he will certainly not stay outside.

(11) Thus it is said what the sin was, because of which they were punished. Above it is said in the thirteenth chapter 4<sup>^</sup>, that the cities were situated in a fat, delicious land and right lard pit, where all things were abundant and sufficient, that Moses [Cap. 13, 10. It was as beautiful with trees and all the noble fruits, grain, wine and oil, as if God Himself had built it and prepared a garden for it; therefore the people who were in the city had good courage, thought they had a gracious God, and put off all fear. Such certainty led them to commit such an abominable sin; so that God showed what good riches and abundance do to people. Everyone strives to have enough and abundance, and to live well; but Scripture teaches that nothing more dangerous can come our way sPred. 2:1]. Therefore it would have been better if everything had been most precious, and if there had not been such a great abundance, then they would have remained pious; but because they all had abundance, and lived in misery, as Christ says [Luc. 17:27], they were thus punished.

12 Therefore we should also think that nothing is better for a man than poverty, that we have not abundance, but only fullness, around and about, so that of it.

2) Erlanger: zürnet.

3) "overlong" - superfluous, more than enough.

For, as it is said and true, there must be strong legs to endure good days; and: A man can suffer all kinds of things without good days; if he has too much food, he just goes, like the donkey, on the ice, and breaks a leg before good days. If some have been rich and pious, it is a special grace; otherwise it is not useful in the common multitude for one to be rich; as Paul writes to Timothy, fl. Ep. 6, 8], "But if we have food and covering, let us be content." We see daily by 1) all experience that yet everyone dies, bringing nothing from it, but that we fill the belly, cover and cover. Therefore we should not scrape so. Those who come after us will also work well.

We have also heard how God leads the pious Lot out of the city with miraculous signs; not only redeemed from sin, but also from punishment. Which example St. Peter gives in his second epistle fCap. 2, 7] to the comfort of all who believe. God is pleased with him and takes special notice of him, especially for Abraham's sake, because he stood with him in the same faith. Therefore he shows how he respects those who trust in him. For if you look at it, you will find him with his wife and two daughters, that is, four people in the whole city and region; the others all lived as they pleased, sowing and spluttering. He must be the Cinderella of them all, as they say to him in the text.

14 Then he suffered two things: First, as Peter says, that his heart might have broken against the life which he saw. His faith and spirit could not endure that he should not speak against it; therefore he had to separate himself from them and also punish them. Thus he brought upon himself hatred and enmity. Not all that he suffered is written, but St. Peter touches it a little when he says, "He saw and heard the torment of his soul." If he had been a decent man, he might have gone away; but now he is burdened with wife and child, and for this reason he must watch and suffer. Dar-

1) Jenaer: in.

2) Erlanger: saust.

3) "they" is missing in the Erlanger.

It is a mighty prize that he can sit among the people and speak and do against them alone. What God praises must be high and delicious; he gives it well to think what he has had to suffer, more than is indicated, because we see before our eyes what those still have to suffer who do not live as the devil and the world wants.

(15) Besides such sufferings, he nevertheless has a consolation against them. Because he has to live against many people, God is with him, and keeps an eye on him, punishes them horribly, and saves him, makes him suffer misfortune enough; but he preserves him, both from sin and punishment, so that we learn from this that it is no miracle if he lets the whole world be an enemy to us. We must consider that one alone must stand against all the world.

(16) No man shall enter into heaven, but to think that he goeth alone, as Christ and the prophets did; as he saith in the Psalter [Ps. 142:5], I looked about me, but there was none that knew me. If it does not happen before the world in life, then it must happen at death, that I stand there and condemn everything that is against me, as if I were wiser than the whole world; so it must go, otherwise it is not right. All this is written so that we may close our eyes and not be surprised if many blaspheme the gospel. It is still a wonder if you see only two who are Christians. We may praise them a lot and consider them so, but when it comes to the hit, just be prepared so that you can say: Here I must stand alone and forsaken, and no one will stand with me. That is why God gives these examples, so that we may take comfort in the fact that this has not only happened to us, but has also happened to other holy people, and rely on the fact that God has an eye on us and is watching over us, as He did with them.

(17) There is also a comforting example here, in that this Lot sleeps with his daughters afterward. The text says how the daughters made him drunk and lay with him, so that he was not aware of them when they lay down or got up. What is God interested in, that he lets such a fine patriarch, the great spiritual man, become such a shameful fool? It is ever strange, but for this very reason



that reason becomes a fool over such foolish histories. St. Paul said it well: His judgments are untellable to reason [Rom. 11, 33P So he does it with the saints, that he makes fools out of all wisdom [1 Cor. 1, 27].

(18) This man would not take all the world's goods to touch another woman, and sleeps with his own daughters; and they may with good sense and prudence deceive the father. What shall we answer to this? We want to leave it unanswered, but say that the two daughters have sinned horribly, even if they pretend and act out of fear, thinking that there are no more people on earth; they have done it in foolish devotion that they wanted to help the world. But good opinion is useless, one must first have God's word and be sure that it is well done. So I will not excuse Lot, even though he does not stumble so easily; but I will excuse them, the daughters, much less. But I believe that they also had a strong faith, otherwise they would not have been saved, because his own wife was not spared. He will also no doubt not have left it to teach his children how they should believe that there was no lack of understanding, that they fell.

19 Now this also is written for an example, that no one is so holy, nor stands so firm, who cannot fall again. 1) If the man can fall so high, what wonder is it if we stumble? But no one is given a cover or a help to find it, but a comfort is given to those who believe, so that they will not despair if they fall at times. It is a piece that belongs to the gospel of the kingdom of God, where there is forgiveness of sins. Fall down from time to time, only do not despair, and get up again.

20) So we will hear hereafter [Cap. 37, 35] that Jacob, the patriarch, also stumbled when he was stupid and despondent, 2) and made himself miserable. For if God had not thus made us believe, the saints would have fooled,

we would not be able to know His kingdom, which is nothing other than the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, it is written that the praise and glory are not based on man's works, but on God's grace. Lot and Abraham could become as wicked as I, and I in turn as pious as they. That is why we heard how he did not despise the Sodomites at all, but took care of them, admonished them, and wanted them to improve.

This is the way it must be in the kingdom of Christ, so that it is vain to build up, always to improve and to mend, 3) only that one does not become sure and insolent, and strike himself into the entrenchment, but creeps back to the cross. Let no one be ashamed of another. He that made me of flesh and blood made them also so; and as he made them holy, so can he make me also. Nature is equal in all, grace is also equal. Behold, this is what such examples of the fathers are to teach; therefore they are not to be exalted so high as our fools, who think that they have felt no sin at all.

22 Finally, to conclude, we want to briefly go over the secret interpretation of the chapter. There are two parts in this history, both of which indicate nothing but human doctrine, as the prophet Ezekiel [Cap. 16, 51] himself interprets it when he compares Jerusalem and the Sodomites together, and says that it has become much worse than Sodom. This is what happens when the holy seed, the word of God, is misused and corrupted so that it cannot bear fruit. This is the first thing.

(23) The other thing, that as the two daughters whored after their father, and conceived by him, so do all those who come before God with works, and teach of free will, not needing the seed where it belongs. Now this is as much as if the daughter slept with her father and begat whorish children. Lot is lex, the law; the two daughters populus, the people of the law, make the father drunk; of which Isaiah [Cap. 28, 1.] says, of the drunken Ephraim. So it goes: If we have God's word, and give it another mind, we make it drunk. The wine is man's doctrine, so with us

1) Erlanger: künne; Jenaer: künde; Wittenberger: kündte.

2) "was" is missing in the Erlanger.

3) "be" is missing in the Erlanger.

grows and is made, so one becomes pregnant by the drunken law, that is, misinterpreted and misunderstood. As they now understand it, so they bear fruit, Ammon and Moab, such children that must never come among Christendom and God's people. Just as they were bodily forbidden not to come among the children of Israel 2c. For there is none of them among Christ, who are thus taught according to the understanding which we ourselves have invented.

(24) If any man is to come unto Christ, he must understand the law and the gospel purely and correctly, and bear right fruit. Now the law is such that no one can do it by his own efforts: [Neither was it given for this purpose, but that it might bring us to our knowledge. Then, calling upon the grace of God, which is the gospel, keeps us righteous and sober, so that we become not Ammonites and Moabites, but true children of Israel.

25 The two names also indicate this: Moab, the oldest, is called in German from the father, as if it should say: the son.

I have from the Father; Ammon, Mus äoloris, son of pain, or BenAmmi, that is, a child of my people. These are the saints of works, who by their good works want to be children of God and neighbors with him, and yet have no faith. Therefore also Isaías [Cap. 16, 6.] says of the people: Moab is a proud donkey, I know his arrogance well, ser] is almost proud, and boasts more than he is able. So are they all who are of works, who have thought their thing alone to be right. The Ammonites are also like that. Before the world their thing seems delicious, there it is Moab; but inwardly in the conscience there is no peace nor confidence in God, no joy nor pleasure. Therefore it is a wretched being inwardly, as it is delicious outwardly. Before God they are Ammon, and before the world Moab. For by law and works the conscience can never be helped to have rest and peace. This is the interpretation of this history; that everything goes and is to be done so that one holds to the pure word of God and hears nothing else but the same, and condemns human doctrine in short.

## The twentieth chapter.

(vv. 1-12) And Abraham departed thence into the south country, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and was a stranger in Gerar. And he said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister. Then Abimelech king of Gerar sent for her, and sent for her. But God came to Abimelech by night in a dream, and said unto him, Behold, thou art dead, because of the woman whom thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife. But Abimelech had not yet touched her, and said, Lord, wilt thou slay even a righteous people? Did he not say to me, she is my sister? And she also said, He is my brother. Have I done this with a simple heart and innocent hands? And God said to him in a dream, "I also know that you have done this with a simple heart; therefore I have also put you on Luthr's works.

Vol. 111.

I have kept thee from sinning against me, and have not acknowledged thee that thou didst touch her. Now therefore restore the man his wife, for he is a prophet, and let him pray for thee, and thou shalt live. But if you do not restore her, know that you will die, and all that is yours. Then Abimelech arose early in the morning, and called unto all his servants, and told them all these things in their ears: and the people were sore afraid. And Abimelech called Abraham also, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this thing? and what have I sinned against thee, that thou hast brought such great sin upon me and upon my kingdom? Thou hast dealt with us, not as one ought to deal. And Abimelech said further unto Abraham, What hast thou looked upon, that thou hast done this thing? Abraham said: I thought, perhaps there is no fear of God in these places, and will ii

**strangle me for the sake of my wife. She is also truly my sister, for she is my father's daughter, but not my mother's daughter, and has become my wife.**

(1) In this chapter there are a number of things that belong to the scholars, which we want to explore further. It is a bad history to see that God Almighty deals so strangely with Abraham, keeps his wife, and creates her again for him, yet lets her be taken from him before. When it comes before reason, it is a bad lesson; there it tastes nothing, has neither juice nor strength, that it must say: Has this been so necessary to describe? How many more miseries are there in the world, that someone should come to a shameful loss of husband, wife and child, that would be more pitiful to read than this story!

(2) I have also said before, and I still say, that these histories are therefore to be exalted and set above all the histories that have ever been written, not because they were done by men, Abraham or others, but because they were done by the word and work of God. Therefore we shall hear even more hereafter of such lowly works and foolish things, that it is almost vexatious to read, since he speaks so much of them as if they were the most delicious things; all because God is hostile to reason with its conceit, and it thinks that what it esteems great, God must also esteem great.

(3) Therefore let it be seen, and all the works that are described be divided into two ways. One is done without spirit, which are sometimes beautiful, sometimes horrible and shameful, like the Roman, Persian, Greek and other histories, so that they are almost fun to read. Reason then falls on this, and considers it delicious, measures it according to history, if it is only a great, beautiful, brave work, it asks no further who did it; again, if it is small, it despises it, whether the person is great.

4 The other time they are done by and in the spirit. The Scriptures alone guide us in these matters; they also speak of great works, but they judge and evaluate them solely according to the faith in which they are done. Therefore, the precious jewel, God's word, which is to be found in

of others is not found. For this reason, such works may seem small, but when viewed with spiritual eyes, they are excellent, simply because they have been done in the good faith of God's Word and the Holy Spirit, of which I have said often enough.

(5) But it is still necessary that it be well blued until it is grasped (for it is too deeply torn, and blued to men that they see no more than what is great), that one may know rightly to judge what is best in a work, namely, that it goeth in the Spirit of God, not considering how long, great, or heavy it is, or who hath done it. Just throw everything to the wind, and see here if God has commanded it, and if it is done in faith. For this is the treasure, measure, and weight by which God measures and weighs all works; again, if it does not walk in faith and God's word, let it immediately wake up its dead, live as chaste and pure as the mother of God, and it is no better before God than public sin and shame.

(6) Thus the man Abraham is greatly praised and exalted in the sight of Abimelech, that God so highly esteems him, and smites the whole land for the sake of one man. How strange it is that a poor man's wife and daughter should be taken away from him, since no one writes about it, nor is it smelled, and no one pays attention to it. If it happened to another, without faith and God's word, who did not go by God's commandment, but went by reason, if he still suffered as much as all the saints, he would not respect it.

Item 7: Abraham is wandering in the land, has no certain place, sets out from Hebron in the middle of the land, goes to the south, between Egypt; the wandering must also be described, Moses must be concerned about it. How many are they that go astray, and are sore displeased, that put their wives and children, and their bodies and goods, into the way! Therefore Abraham was driven to go astray, not of his own will, it did not seem so good to him, he did not follow his own mind, but God told him to. The GOt"

t is the goodness and nobility of the work, which God cannot forget, he] has it written as far as the world is, precisely because he does not want to suffer anyone to do a work before him that he has not commanded.

008 Now therefore, behold not the work, which is little in itself, but the faith and heart of Abraham, and also of his wife, how he giveth Sarah, and let it be commanded of God, how he may keep her in honor, and bring her again to him, after that he had promise that he should have a son of her. For no reason can dare to make such a fresh journey to God and be satisfied with it. No one can see such a treasure, but the spirit sees it, therefore he also marks it out masterfully. If it were another who had such a pious wife, he would stake his life and limb, his property and honor, to save and protect her himself; if he could not bring it to that, he could not break himself that he would be satisfied and give it home to God.

(9) Now therefore judge of every work that seemeth great, that thou mayest say, Outwardly I let the work be greater than Abraham's work; but when it is weighed in the spirit, that is heavy, and outweigheth all the works of the earth. The devil with the damned must also suffer much; item, the wicked still here on earth must have two kinds of misfortune, that it is much more sour for them, that they deserve hell, than for the pious, that they deserve heaven. Look at the soldiers, what trouble they have, that they let themselves be strangled, how they kick against sword, spear and guns, and respect neither honor nor property nor life. Which saint dares so much for the sake of God, as those for the sake of a guilder? Nor do such works and sufferings all count for nothing, for they have no weight, that is, God's word and favor.

(10) So we conclude from this history that we should beware of all things, so that no one goes in some state or being unless he knows that it is God's will and can say that it pleases him. In the conjugal state it shall also be so. Whoever feels that he cannot be a virgin, he has

his profession, that he may be married, and is sure that God wills it so, since he is so created. What these things are, then, are vain works, which are sure of God's word, and where they are not sure, they are good for nothing. This is often said often enough, without one seeing how the holy scripture showers us, as with a downpour, is always one example on another, which admonishes and strengthens us enough not to do anything without his word and command. This is a piece of history.

(11) Secondly, it is also written for the comfort of all who believe in God and should still believe. For if God did not show himself friendly, who would or could trust in him? If he always thundered and thundered, and let pestilence come, and did not also do good, everyone would become hostile to him. That is why he has written so many examples, both of those who believe and of those who do not believe, and all the examples are directed to show us how diligently he respects us, so that we may be sure and bold that he will not leave us. He does this, as if he wanted to pull off his hand and leave us in the lurch, but he only does it to test us to see if we hold fast to the faith.

(12) So he does here also. What harm would it have done if he had received Abraham's wife without the ride, as he could have done if she had not been taken from him? What would he have liked to put her in the car and make him grieve, as if he wanted to have his wife taken away from him? and the greatest thing is that he had promised him that he would give him a child by Sarah; after the consolation, only the accident would come that he would doubt whether he would keep his word? No doubt he would have liked to stay in Hebron, he would not have wandered out of pride, but he had to escape because of evil people; so God lets him take his wife in a foreign land, so that he may say: You promised me that my wife would bring me a son for more than a year, and now you let her be taken away: where is it then that you said?

(13) Thus all the works of God go. If the strongest promises are given to us, we think that it should go as we think; but this is what he says: I will make it unknowable over your thinking.

I want to make sense of it, as if I wanted to lie and do just the opposite. This is how it will be when you die, or when you fight against God's word: then you will feel that you would like it to be otherwise. Why does he do this? So that we may learn to believe righteously; he wants to leave us in the lurch and pull off his hand, so that we will not doubt, but only become more certain that he will not leave us, and so comfort us: I know that he will keep what he has said.

14 So here. Although the king has sent for his wife and taken her to him, he could not think otherwise than that it is lost, the wife is gone; still he must believe that she will stay there or go away, yes, if she died right now before my eyes, I would still not doubt that he would give me a child; let it be as it may with Sarah, he cannot lie to me, even if she were already dead. He can make honor to all disgraces and all disgraces to honor, for he is almighty. Therefore he remains in faith, lets go of what is going on; thinks he is true; commands him the way he should do it, which no reason can ever do. She thinks no further than this: If I am to have a child by her, she must ever remain with me; now she is gone, and becomes a disgrace to me. So God says, "Not so, but so it shall be, as I have promised; but how it shall be, you shall not know; I will do it as I think best.

(15) Behold, this is our consolation, that we see how he sustains them that trust in him with simple hearts, under such appearance and appearance as if he were not there, and we know no counsel in our matters, and stand alone against the devil, death, and all things, and yet are sure that it must come true which he hath spoken. So now he does here, lets the king take the woman, but takes care of her and her husband in such a way that he seeks and punishes the sin that he did not do, as horribly as Abraham should not have wanted nor desired, so that he is not satisfied that he has given him back the woman.

(16) These are God's deeds and counsel, how we should conduct ourselves in such temptations. For with this he has indicated what his

And how he is minded toward the faithful, that he cannot bear what is done unto them: therefore saith he, He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of mine eye; but that we do nothing, we ask him. Despite that he had touched his wife; ser] had her with him in the house, nor could he go to her. Hence it is written in the Psalm [Ps. 105:14], "He let no man offend her, and punished kings for her sake."

(17) So do thou also now. Let us go whithersoever we go; let come and go whatsoever cometh and goeth, and he is with us, and will prove that he is able to keep his own, as an almighty Lord. This is the example of this chapter, written for our comfort and instruction in faith.

18 Now there are also several questions to be dealt with here. The first is that this Abimelech boasts before God that he did this with a simple heart. And he goes on to say, "Will you also slay a righteous people?" What a simple heart is, I let go. That our Latin text is called before porkoetum, a perfect heart, is not to be understood according to the way of the sophists, as they dream of perfection. But what shall we say to this, that God Himself says: "I also know that with a simple heart (that is, with a righteous heart and good mind) you have done this, therefore I have exalted you, that you sin not."

19 This is a great praise and argument to strengthen the papacy against us, for free will. There they say: Abimelech was a pagan king, did sin, and yet was not sin, and is punished, and yet God gives him testimony that he has a righteous mind: so it follows from this text that besides grace, the pagans may also be righteous before God, as he says here, not only before men; so we must leave it that he is innocent in this matter, even before God.

020 Answer: We cannot be sure from the Scriptures that Abimelech was God's child and a true saint, but it almost resembles him. But answer thus: The reason, which we have often said, thou seest, as it runs through all Scripture, namely, that without

Jesus Christ is neither a shell nor a mercy, he helped us for nothing; because we are all sinners, it cost his own blood and life. That is our reason. Now whatever pleas are made against it, if thou canst not answer them, be silent; for it is better that thou shouldst therefore deny such a clear and certain reason. Whoever then will, let him say that either he has been righteously holy, or that he alone is innocent in this matter.

(21) For it should not be denied that there have often been truly devout Christians among the Gentiles, as we also read [Dan. 3:26] about the king Nabuchodonosor, item, Naaman of Syria [2 Kings 5:17], who were also devout people, and many more among the Gentiles. Therefore it is believable that he was also a believer. For let it not be a reproach where God does such grace as to this king, that he comes to him and reveals himself, speaks to him, warns him of harm. It must ever not be a small man. He lets the heathen go in their reason; but to whom he draws so near, it is a sign that he has an eye on him, and is respected before him. One does not have to condemn the Gentiles who lived around the Jews, that some were also pious, like the queen of Sheba [1 Kings 10:9,1 and Hiram, the king of Tyro [1 Kings 5:7].

(22) Therefore, I will answer that Abimelech was a very pious man and knew God well and served Him well. But just as God sometimes causes other saints to stumble, as we have heard of Lot, so it is with the king. Nevertheless, he is so honest that if he had known that she was a wife, he would not have taken her to himself. Which piece also credibly indicates that he was a pious king, but sinned like other saints, and God also mercifully punishes him like other saints. For he punishes the wicked into hell.

If anyone does not like this, let him say, as St. Augustine did, that God does not bear witness to anything but the work. For it may well be that he was evil in other things, but not in this. But the fact that God bears witness to this does not mean that he

He has a righteously pure heart before him, but only in this case and works; so that even though he is a knave, he can still boast that he has not done this, with a good conscience. This is how St. Augustine interprets it. But I wanted to stick to the first answer, so that God's grace may also be shown among the pagans, and I consider it a great blessing and grace that God warns him and appears Himself. But, as I said, I leave it up to each person to decide.

(24) The other question is, how Abraham says of his wife, "She is truly my sister, for she is my father's daughter, but not my mother's daughter, and has become my wife"? This is what he means, that she is not his biological sister, but his stepsister. Moses speaks this with circumlocutory words, as if he should say: "My father has not begotten her, she is not of her mother's womb, be it stepmother or real mother; therefore he wants to say that she is not a sister by birth, but an adopted child, whom my father has taken to himself for his daughter, so that she also calls Abraham's father father, without him not having begotten her. Now we have heard above [Cap. 11, § 32] that she was Abraham's brother's daughter.

(25) For the scripture hath not so stretched the members, as the pope, who suffereth not that any man take a wife in the fourth member, much less in the third, yet is so gracious, that if money were brought, he suffereth it to be done. But it is called knavery when one sells women's flesh for sale, and sells it for money. But according to the Scriptures I may well take my wife to be reckoned downward, not upward, that is, my brother's or sister's daughter, but not my father's or mother's brother nor sister, though they are both in the same member, mother or wife, young and old. This is what God has decreed, that he will have more honor toward the old than toward the young, so that the young people will be instructed and taught by the old. I say this so that one may know how far one may be free according to the Scriptures. It would not be necessary to confuse it; it confuses itself more than it can be judged. Now, if in that case a couple wanted to be together, or given

If it were done with God and a good conscience, it would also be the best thing. I do not think too much of friendship that is so far away; it is better that the friendship and the good remain close to each other, as it happened among the Jews; but it is enough for us that we know from the Scriptures to instruct the consciences. Thus Abraham speaks further:

**V. 13. And when God had sent me away from my father's house, I said to her, "Have mercy on me, so that wherever we go you will say of me that I am your brother.**

26 This is spoken in Hebrew, which is a very divine, friendly language, gives the thing fine names, that [it] is pleasure, has the prettiest, most beautiful words of love and knowledge. So now a good work, which we call friendship, is called "mercy" in their language. So you will find it through and through; for this we say, Do to me friendship and love, or, Do to me so much benefit. Therefore, the grace that God pours into our hearts and makes us sincere is also called in their language Chesed, mercy; therefore, as one does a work freely for nothing, out of pure friendship, not that one is obligated to do it. So it is also with God, what He gives is nothing but mercy, gift, present, pure friendship, and comes from free, pure goodness, favor and love, without and against our merit. We must get used to such language in the Old Testament. There is one more thing that the text speaks:

**V.14. 15. Then Abimelech took sheep and oxen, menservants and maidservants, and gave them to Abraham, and restored his wife Sam to him, saying, Behold, my land is open to thee; dwell where it pleaseth thee.**

27. there must ever have been a pious king and have recognized god wphl, without him, as said, having stumbled here. However, he does not remain on it, the good man, or his son, as we will see hereafter. Further follows:

**v. 16-18. And said unto Sarah, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand silver pieces. Behold, the 1) shall be a lid of the eyes unto thee.**

1) Wittenberg and Jena: der; Erlanger: er. Compare s 33.

**be in the presence of all who are with you, and in the presence of all who are with you, and be an accountant. And Abraham prayed unto God, and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his handmaids, that they should bring forth children. For the LORD had shut up all the mothers of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.**

28 Then he himself also calls him her brother. It should also be so among the married, and much friendlier than brothers and sisters, it is one body and two souls. The thousand pieces of silver, however, according to the Jewish Seckel to count (which was almost as much, as with us a place of a guilder), the same thousand make almost three and a half hundred guilders; is a royal gift. This he gave her over the sheep, cattle, servants and maids, which are also all serfs' goods, like other cattle, that they sold as they wished. It would be best if they were still there, since no one else can force or tame the livestock.

029 And here thou seest that this Abraham and Abimelech keep this, and let the servants remain in the service. It would have been great friendship and mercy for him to let them go. How could love suffer that they kept it this way? Just as it can suffer that people are hanged on gallows or otherwise judged; think that one must also keep the physical, worldly regiment in the swing, so that one tames and forces the people.

(30) So they also dealt with it. For their part they would have let it go; but it would not be good, [they] should soon have become too proud, if one gave them so much right, or held them as oneself or a child. One must keep every one in his station, as God ordains, son, daughter, servant, maid, husband, wife 2c. He will not have it broken; nor can anyone keep the people in check except by the constraint of outward rule.

(31) Therefore there is such a great complaint about servants and servants in the world. It is the devil's and the pope's fault, and the princes' fault, that there is no government; everyone does as he pleases. But if there were a fist and restraint, as the time has been, no one would be allowed to rebel.

If they take women, they are naughty people, wild and savage, whom no one can use or handle. If they take wives, they are naughty people, wild and savage, whom no one can use or handle.

32 But it is in vain that we say it; only that we know that these have been pious, holy people, have had fine rule, even among the heathen; now it is nothing at all. In those days a servant was worth one guilder or eight, a maid one guilder or six, and had to do what the woman did with her. And if the world were to stand still for a long time, it would not be possible to keep it going again; it would have to be set up again. The Jews had the advantage that they sold themselves for six years, and in the seventh year they went free, as everything was finely arranged by God.

33 Lastly, that Abimelech says, "Behold, he shall be to thee a lid of thine eyes, and an answerer," is a dark text, siU do not know if we will meet it. That is, your husband and brother, or the 1) money that I give you there (for it is not certain whether it is said of Abraham, or of the gift), shall be a lid to you, that you may have your eyes

and gloss over yourself. That this is the opinion: I have taken you, and meant that you were the man's sister, not his wife, and have now been in my house; so that you now bring a testimony that you are unaffected by your honor, then you keep the gift, and the man with it, that he sees it and listens, so that he thereby answers for your honor. So the king will say that he has done it, that he has atoned for the sin honestly, but he has done it unknowingly; and he will say that he cannot put anything on him, and she will cover her eyes, that is, she will adorn herself and make herself beautiful in front of everyone, so that her honor will remain intact. If this is not the opinion, then I know nothing else; however, there is not much power involved here.

(34) So God healed the strange punishment and plague of Abimelech's wives, who had been beaten before, as heard above, with a great and terrible terror, so that he felt death and hell. His wife and maidservants, or his own people with their children, who were also the Lord's, were all afflicted by God, so that they could not get rid of the fruit; so that the fruit and the time, when they were to lie down (but could not), were in motion, and death was before their eyes.

1) "that" is missing in the Erlanger.

## The twenty-first chapter.

**V.1-5. And the LORD sought Sarah home, as he had spoken, and did unto her as he had spoken. And Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the time which God had spoken unto him. And Abraham called his son that was born unto him Isaac, whom Sarah bare unto him. And circumcised him on the eighth day, as GOD had commanded him. Abraham was a hundred years old when Isaac his son was born to him.**

Moses stands on the good father Abraham for a long time and will still say a lot about him. It is a history that God loves and especially pleases him for the sake of faith.

2. in this chapter there are two pieces; the

The first, how Abraham was born a son, and how it went with the stepbrother. The other is what he does again with the king Abimelech. St. Paul was also moved and attracted by this chapter [Gal. 4, 23. Hebr. 11, 11.], that there is also much in it. It looks as if it is an envious, hostile and hostile history, which is unkind; but we want to hear what it has in it.

With many words he starts and says how God had afflicted Sarah, that she became pregnant and gave birth to a son 2c. All these words mean that the son, as said above [Cap. 16, § 9], although he was flesh and sight of Abraham and Sarah, yet not by the power of man, nor by the power of God.



was born in the natural course. For they were both too old, and she was barren, so that it was very difficult, indeed impossible, that a fruit should come from it. Therefore, it is the miracle that God does with him, that he gives him the son of his right wife. He also prefers the son to the one from Hagar, even though the father's heart was also there, but here even more. This is the first thing Moses wants to show here.

4. but we have fCap. 17, § 19 ff] how God has commanded circumcision, and how the saints of works take offense at the Scriptures, thinking that it is a bad thing, that it is nothing else, except that the ancients have taken wives and begotten children, as is the common course; so they mock and laugh at God. [So it must go that he is thought to be a fool. Nevertheless, he always goes on; he could have done another miracle here, which would have been considered great, since the whole world would have opened its mouth and sung about it and said, so he takes that the whole world laughs and mocks, and she, Sarah herself, must laugh, and scolds, 1) that one should say, how the old woman slept with the man. As it was, that he called the old man to be circumcised; he might have been ashamed because of his age; why did he put him to shame? He takes pleasure in doing such a contemptible, mocking thing, letting the world laugh and mock, watching it as long as it can laugh. Therefore, we should not disrespect the hand of God that is in it.

5) It is a precious thing about life. 2) But where does it come from? But where does it come from? From flesh and guts, the muddy and noisy filth that one is ashamed to say. These are God's works and noble treasures, which He brings forth as the world expels its smiles. God has also joined husband and wife together, so that he may close the eyes of the world, so that it may see for itself how it cannot avoid it; it must have a home and children. What did it cost them, the parents, to give us life? Why should we then despise it, and not deal with children again as they do with us?

Why is it laughed at, because God has attacked it so, especially in the Old Testament, since he lifts it up so high and honors it; he does not want it to be laughed at, but let it be taken seriously, and put a special commandment on it, that one should honor father and mother [Exodus 20:12]. But the world must thus fool, that it laughs at God's miracles with women and children. That is why it speaks now:

## **V. 6. God has prepared a laughter for me, for whoever will hear it will laugh at me.**

6 The Scripture shows that she has been chaste and pious, as she said above [Cap. 18, 12]: "Shall I only have to deal with pleasure, because I am now of ninety years?" This is the laughter. So also Lucas [Cap. 1, 36. 57.] wrote of Elizabeth, John the Baptist's mother; she also hardly went about that she should eat shame. The holy women were so chaste and pious in the eyes of the world that they were ashamed of the rumor, since it was all honor and God's work.

7 God's work must be ridiculous and mocking in all places, so that it seems as if he is putting on a fool's cap, he lets it be laughed at, but he will put the bells on us again; therefore he wants everyone to close his eyes, just see where the word is. He thinks highly of it; although everyone thinks it is quite disgraceful, he keeps quiet, it must become honorable in the end.

(8) Neither shall it be seen that Sarah the old woman sleepeth with her husband, but that God saith, Sarah shall be put to shame; but I will make her to glory, that she shall be praised and preached before all women. How many queens and great women are there who have not come to be honored, so that their body and fruit may be preached and brought forth in all the world? It is an eternal honor, and an example to rule all the world. So God honors His own with His works, that they lie in disgrace for a time, which then becomes an eternal honor that no one can praise enough. If now the most powerful and richest queens would all do together, they would be glad that they should wash the swaddling clothes, since Isaac would have lain in them.

1) scolds --- jokes.

2) "that" is missing in the Erlanger.

Such honor now comes from the previous disgrace. Behold, these are God's miraculous signs. If we could close our eyes, let the world laugh, and keep to God's words, we would see how it makes the faithful to glory, but the world to all shame with its honor. Further it speaks:

**V. 7. Who could have told Abraham himself that Sarah had conceived children and given birth to a son in his old age?**

9 Then she becomes joyful and overcomes the shame. Before that she says: "God has made me laugh. As if she should say, "Oh, how it grieves me that it should be said of me. 2c. This is another female disease, that they are always weaker in courage than the man; therefore God also gives her credit for it 1). Again she looks at the great grace and says: "Abraham himself should not believe that I am with child. This is always God's work; if one keeps still, the pleasure and joy that follow are all the greater. After that the text continues:

**V. 8: And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast in the day that Isaac was weaned.**

(10) This is a strange thing: Why does he not make a great supper when the son was born? or when the six weeks were over (though perhaps they did not keep six weeks then), or on the eighth day? What the 2) means, I cannot know. I think it happened as women are accustomed to do in our country, that they sometimes go together and hold children's beer, 3) feast and demmen. So it seems that it was a country custom and way, around the time when one weaned the child.

(11) Now this is what the Scripture says, that he has made himself suitable for the way they behave in the country; because he sits in the country, he must make himself even with them, and keep the customs of the country, where it is not harmful or sinful. Therefore he has kept himself just and rightly so, like others. 4)

1) "also" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) So the Jenaer. Wittenberger: "dis"; Erlanger: es deutet.

3) The words "und Kinderbier halten" are missing in the Erlanger; in the Jenaer and in the Wittenberger they are in the text.

4) Wittenberg and Erlanger: like another.

(12) It is an example of love, that one should be according to one's neighbor, and make even that those with whom we dwell may suffer. Otherwise, each man's way pleases him, and not otherwise; ser] thinks that a whole country should be guided by his head. Therefore we are to keep ourselves according to the customs of the country, and let them please us, so that we keep peace with everyone, as Paul teaches [Rom. 12:18], not to set up and carry out our own way according to our own head. This, I think, is what he meant here. Now comes the other piece, that Sarah casts out the other son, Ishmael. [The text speaks thus:

**v.9-21. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, that he was a mocker, and said unto Abraham, Cast out this maid with her son, that this maid's son should not inherit with my son Isaac. The word displeased Abraham for the sake of his son. But God said to him, "Do not be offended by the boy and the maid; obey all that Sarah has told you. For in Isaac shall thy seed be called, and I will make the son of the maid thy people, because he is thy seed. Then Abraham arose early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and put it upon Hagar's shoulder, and the lad with her, and let her out. Then she went and wandered in the wilderness near Beer-saba. And when the water was out of the bottle, she cast the lad under a bush, and went and sat down over against 6) it afar off, a crossbow-shot far off. For she said: I cannot watch the boy die. And she sat down over against him, and lifted up her voice, and wept. Then God heard the voice of the boy. And the angel of God called from heaven to Hagar, and said to her, "What is the matter, Hagar? Fear not, for GOD has heard the voice of the lad as he lies. Arise, take the lad, and hold him with your hands, for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a fountain of water, and she went and filled the bottle with water, and watered her.**

5) "one" is missing in the Erlanger.

6) "of" is missing in the Erlanger.

**the boy. And God was with the lad, and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became a rifleman, and dwelt in the wilderness monitor. And his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.**

13 Ishmael was now almost thirteen years old, as can be reckoned from the previous chapter; a boy who had come to his years. So it was a long time later that the two sons were able to talk to each other. For he says she had respect for him, and saw that he was a mocker. This made her angry, so she wants to drive him out with the maid. And there you can see how she is a chaste, fine housemother. At the end [Cap. 16, 5] she also wanted to chastise the maid, because she was too proud. The text, however, does not express how this happened; here, too, many Jewish loose fables are invented.

14 But St. Paul touches it to the Galatians [Cap. 4, 29. 30.] and puts it to the mind: "As in those days he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit: so it is now also. But as the scripture saith, Thrust out the handmaid with her son: for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the free." He himself interprets this as follows: "When one preaches about faith, that works are not valid to make godly, this is a spiritual sermon; those who grasp this and keep it, these are spiritual people, Abraham's children. But the others do not like those who preach works; that is, the great carnal crowd mocks and persecutes the others. So there remains a dispute, because the world stands between faith and works; both want to have their thing unpunished. If the latter take much, those who deal in works are stronger; therefore they are above in time, and persecute the latter. But at last the verdict comes that God rejects them and gives the inheritance to the others."

(15) This is how it will be, as we will see in the saints of works. The mother Sara will have drawn the child, as a mother draws a right heir. But the other son is now tall, relying on Abraham as his father, and ser] as the first son, and he is entitled to two things

1) In the editions: those that have the.

Right. So (he thought) the father will also prefer me, and has always insisted that he wanted to be on top. Such a thing was not to be suffered; she could not and should not suffer it any longer, for he had undoubtedly done it for a long time and had done too much. And what his mother had done to Sarah before, the son now also wants to do. Before, she wanted to be a wife and did not regard Sarah as anything. Now, because she has the son, he wants to take after his mother and also wants to suppress her son. That is why she thinks that if it continues like this, I will have to leave with my son at the end; therefore, nothing better will happen, because I will divide her, give him what he should have, and let him go.

(16) But this displeased Abraham; it was also blood and flesh and a fatherly heart that moved him, and he was angry with it until God said to him, "Do not take offense at what Sarah has said to you"; "I will pass sentence," he said, "The son of the maidservant must go out, for your seed shall be called by the name of Isaac. There the saying stands, which Paul highly praises. (He) wants to say in this way: You must not look at Ishmael, that he is the right seed, from whom Christ will come, and all who belong to heaven, but Isaac is it: what comes from him, that shall be the right seed. So Ishmael is excluded, and by God's word Isaac is appointed, and put into the word, that Abraham may be assured that he is not an heir of flesh and blood only, but of grace. But he says, "I will also make the son of the handmaid a great nation," without which he shall not have the glory of Christ coming from him.

(17) Thus we have the two sons of Abraham the arch-father, and how they interpret two kinds of people on earth, the righteous believers, 2) and hypocrites or false saints: and how Ishmael is cast out with his mother, but Isaac remains with his and inherits. That this was the interpretation, that the Jews, who dealt in works, were cast out, because they were without faith; but the others, in faith, were to remain God's people. This should and must always be the case. That is why the Scriptures reproach us with making us certain of it. It is not

2) Erlanger: believe.

It is possible for all to be like Isaac; the greatest and best must be against the others. Follow on:

At that time Abimelech and Phichol, his captain, spoke to Abraham, saying, "God is with you in everything you do. Now therefore swear unto me by God, that thou wilt not forsake me, nor my children, nor my nephews, but wilt do unto me the mercy that I have done unto thee, and unto the land wherein thou art a stranger within. Then said Abraham, I will swear. And Abraham punished Abimelech because of the well of water, which Abimelech's servants had taken by force. And Abimelech said, I have not known who hath done this thing, neither hast thou told me; neither have I heard it but this day. So Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them to Abimelech, and they made a covenant with each other. And Abraham set apart seven lambs. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What are these seven lambs which thou hast set apart? And he said, Seven lambs shalt thou set forth.

thou shalt take them from my hand, that they may be a witness unto me that I have digged this well. Therefore the name of the place is called Bersaba, 1) because they both swore with each other there, and so they made the covenant at Bersaba. Then Abimelech and Phichol, his captain of the host, arose and returned to the land of the Philistines. And Abraham planted trees at Beer-saba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God. And he was a stranger in the land of the Philistines a long time.

18 Lastly, there is this piece about Abraham making a covenant with Abimelech for the sake of water; it is also written so that it will always be shown how the children of God on earth must suffer many evil deeds, because he sits in a foreign land, where he must be a sojourner, as the prophet says [Isa. 52:4], and must feed on sorrow. This is how it must be for us, too, if it is to be right. That is enough of this chapter.

1) Marginal gloss: Bersaba means Schwörbrunn or Eidbrunn in German; might also be called Siebenbrunn.

## The twenty-second chapter.

**V. 1. After these stories, God tempted Abraham and said to him, "Abraham, Abraham! ^And he answered, Here am I.**

1. there we have once again a piece of the legend of the holy old archfather. It is quite a fine piece, who could get it with words. Now we have heard how the good Abraham has stood in many a challenge and temptation of God, and has never had a certain place. It is badly described, but so abundantly indicated that admittedly not many legends are written thus.

When God praises a saint, he praises him in such a way that it is worthy of praise. This is what he has done to this man. [He is quite an example of faith. His life is full of trials; everything must be done in faith; he must still have a wife, a child, a large household, and money and property, but always

so that God will accept it. [He] hath often put his wife Sarah to the sword, and God hath given him his maid Hagar with her son; the land also goeth forth, that he hath not a foot's breadth. So God plays with him as with an apple; and he keeps so quiet, letting him do with it and go wherever it goes. If he has it, he can use it right; again, he can spare it when it goes away.

But here he attacks him in the highest way, takes from him the highest good, because he has nothing dearer on earth, for which he also had cause. For he was an only child, and had from him God's word and promise that from him should come the seed by which all nations should be blessed. Then God leaves the natural desire, because he has not taken the father's heart from him, breaks the nature of the child.

not, lets them remain as he created them, does not lift them up, even in the holy of holies; as you see that Abraham is such a great saint, nor does he let the natural affect and motion deep within him.

4 It is not, as some think, that we should so despise all things that we should have or feel no pain or sorrow. I should warmly accept my neighbor's harm and let him suffer as I do my own; yet be so skillful that I do not ask for it when everything is taken from me except a penny. True love takes care of the whole man and all his goods. But so it does: It keeps the greatest for the greatest; so it also helps for the temporal life. So a Christian respects nothing for his own sake, but what God puts into his hands he accepts, deals with it; if he takes it away again, he lets it go.

5 Thus God takes from the pious father the highest treasure of all; not wood nor stones, neither silver nor gold, but the only Son, whom He especially loves above the common love of the father, that he was born of the holy woman, so that God managed it so wonderfully in the days of old, and also the promise of the glorious seed is upon him, that he has great and much cause to love him. God Himself also loved him, and when He saw that He loved him so much and did right, He thought, "Wait, I must play with him," and said:

**V. 2-8 Take Isaac, your only son, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, 1) and offer him there for a burnt offering on a mountain that I will tell you. Then Abraham arose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took with him the two lads, and Isaac his son, and cut wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place which God had told him. On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off, and said unto his sons, "I will burn the burnt offering.**

**Boys: Stay ye here with the ass; I and the lad will go thither, and when we have worshipped, we will come again to you. And Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son. And he took the fire and the knife in his hand, and they went both of them together.**

He just attacks him with right words, from which the laughter must have gone out of him. Then nature had to recoil and hurt him, and, what is much harder, that he should do it himself, and not another, but draw the sword himself, and slay for a burnt offering; so that everything should burn to powder, so that not a hair would remain.

Now, these are great, mighty temptations, that God so urges the father to strangle his only, dear son, and to take him again, whom he had given him before, that he would have rather died twice himself, and given all his goods, wife, and what he had. For he had to think: Now the son is already gone; he did not think that he should remain alive. Therefore, it must have hurt him beyond measure in his heart.

But what does the Lord do? He tells him to go to a mountain, which he will show him. That was three whole days' journey. It would be even easier if he were to get away soon, but he tortures him even further, taking time so that he is well roasted and has to eat his way through. That of course a piece or ten have made his heart throb, that he might have said: How does God act so foolishly? what have I done to deserve that he tortures me so? No doubt he had countless such thoughts. Above that, when they come to the mountain, Isaac has to carry his own cross. There the son also gives him a push. It also hurt him that he alone knew about it; he must not tell his son about it, neither his mother, nor anyone else. Thus Isaac speaks to his father:

**V. 9-14. My father. And Abraham answered, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold, here is fire and wood; but where is the sheep for the burnt offering? Abraham answered, GOD**

1) Marginal gloss: Moriah is called a presentation, and is the mountain where Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem afterwards, and is called the mountain of presentation, that Abraham was presented there with the ram, and after that the right ram, Christ, was to be presented and revealed by God the Lord.

**will show me, my son, the sheep for the burnt offering. And they went both of them together. And when they came to the place which God had told him, Abraham built there an altar, and laid the wood thereon, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him upon the wood, and put forth his hand, and took hold of the knife, to slay his son. Then the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, saying, Abraham, Abraham. And he answered, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither hurt him. For now I know that thou fearest God, and hast not kept thy only son from me. Then Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw a ram behind him caught in the hedge with his horns, and went and took the ram, and offered him for a burnt offering in his son's stead. And Abraham called the name of the place, The LORD seeth. 1) Wherefore it is said to this day, In the mount where the LORD looketh.**

The word must have been a burning spit in his heart, as if he were to say, "Oh, dear son, be silent, I want my heart to break. He must eat that too, and his heart must boil. Then he continues, and writes how it went, simple, but gives each one to consider how the father's heart stood. Isaac is obedient to his father, gives himself to him, and is as much as if he were already dead. It is wonderfully great that he was able to overcome the heart in this way.

But the greatest thing is that God speaks against Himself here. This is a riddle that no one can guess except the Holy Spirit. For God has commanded that one shall not kill [Ex 20:13]. Now he says it here himself, although Isaac was not guilty of anything. Item, ser) promised him before to give the seed of Isaac. Abraham had to believe this word, so that his heart was like this: "The son must become a father of many children and be spread out into all the world. Now he is turning against the weather, and speaks the contradiction, and the son must now die; what will become of this? What can reason say? It is completely

beaten that she does not know where out, and must say it is now over.

Now both of these things had to be true: Abraham believed and knew nothing else, because the son would have to die; again also that he should become a father of many nations [Rom. 4, 17]. How do the two rhyme together? So, as St. Paul interprets it in Heb. 11, 17J, he had to think: God is almighty and true, the Son is already dead, I must let him go; but God still has so much, if I and all the world were dead, he can raise him up again, even over a hundred years, and make him a father. So God leaves him no more than the one consolation that he holds on to in the highest temptation, that God would make him alive again if it pleased Him, because God cannot lie. Now this is the very highest dispute, when God thus presents Himself as if He were lying, that His word is against one another.

(12) Let us learn these things well, whether we are also tempted in this way, especially when we are about to die. Because God gives us the gospel and comforts us, it is all sweet. But what if he says at death, "I do not want you? If you have almost thought that you stand firm and believe in Christ, that he is yours, then a spear comes into your heart, so that God says: I do not want to give you Christ, therefore give him to me, and you remain alone. What else can the heart say but: It is lost? And when it says, "You have given him to me," then it says again, "I am God, may I not do it as I please? Why do you ask, since you are mine? What shall I do now, when it is so contrary to one another? You shall have the saying in the 81st Psalm, v. 9. 10: Israel, si auäisris nie, uon erit in te Deus alienus, "Hear, my people, I will testify to you, Israel, you shall hear me, that there is no foreign God among you, and you worship no unknown God" 2c. Therefore, if you obey him, you must not think that you have a GOd who changes. Lemel loguitur Dons 6t6, "if GOd speaks once (says Job [Cap. 33, 14. 1], he does not repeat it." Jtem, Malachias [Cap. 3, 6.] speaks: HZo Dons et of mutur.

13 Therefore God has the way that He will have over the first word that He has spoken.

1) Marginal gloss: Behold, that is, GOrt takes care of everything and watches.

What then is contrary to this, he wants us not to assume, but to be sure that it is God's temptation. This is already commanded in the fifth book of Moses [Cap. 13:1-3): "If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams stand up among you and give you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder comes, of which he has told you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods whom you do not know and serve them,' you shall not obey the words of such a prophet or dreamer, for the Lord your God is tempting you, that he may know whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul." These are excellent words: When a prophet comes and gives you a sign, God must ever do it: nor must you believe it; and give cause, for God is trying you, if he will repeat the word. Therefore, hold fast to the first word, and let the rest go, but do not let that go. God is so strict about this that he will not heed even all the signs that are contrary to it (even if they come from him).

14) St. Paul also admonished the Thessalonians: "I beseech you that ye be not soon moved of mind, nor troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letters, as sent by us, that the day of Christ should be at hand. 2) And soon after, v. 9, of the Antichrist: "Which is to come according to the working of the devil, with all manner of lying powers, and signs, and wonders"; as also Christ warns [Matth. 24, 24.] and says: "False Christs and prophets shall arise, and shall do great signs and wonders, that even the elect, if it were possible, should be deceived" 2c. Now everyone has gone there, and if anyone preaches against it, they say: There is the sign before your eyes. Thus the devil has hitherto wrought his will, and I believe that many righteous signs have also come to pass. Why should one not follow them? Here you hear it, he will not suffer you to make him a liar, but tempts you. Therefore you must not be driven by the first word, even if he sends an angel from heaven and turns you away.

1) "dawider" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) Erlanger: is.

You shall not believe nor follow it badly, but the first laid word shall come to pass against all miraculous signs and doctrines, full of God or the devil, whence they come.

(15) There is also an example in the first book of Kings [Cap. 13:9 ff) of a godly prophet sent by God to Bethel, who was commanded by God not to eat or drink in that place, Bethel, with the king, which he did. But when he returned home, another prophet came to him and told him to go home with him and eat. But when he refused, the other said to him [v. 18], "I also am a prophet like you, and an angel has spoken to me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'Lead him home again, that he may eat bread and drink water';" so he goes with him, leaving aside the first commandment, thinking that because he said God had spoken it, he must do it. "But as they were eating, the word of the LORD (saith the text, vv. 20-24.) came to the prophet that had brought him again, and cried unto the other, saying, Because thou hast been disobedient to the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD commanded thee, thy body shall not enter into thy fathers' grave. And as he departed, a lion found him in the way, and slew him."

16 Behold, what was this prophet about to say? Can he not speak: Have you deceived me yourself? But what will God say? He will say: You should have taken me for the man who does not lie, and should have stayed on what I commanded you, if I had told you differently. Therefore the prophet Ezekiel says [Cap. 14:9): "I have deceived the prophet who comes in my name and preaches lies," that is, I have made him come and tempt the people.

(17) We should do likewise. If I have rightly received Christ in the sacrament, and have his word and sign, then faith and conscience stand in good courage. If death should come, and God should hear or feel that he would be ungracious and not have me, yet I should not waver or back away; even if Moses or an angel or Christ should come, I should hold fast to it, for the word of God cannot lie. But if thine heart say, Yea, is this also

God's word? You answer: He will probably do it and interpret it as he means it. So we must overcome him with his own word. This is almost the highest fight and dispute that the holy fathers have practiced.

18 Thus it went here with Abraham. The first word had to remain; but how the other should also be true, and agree with the other, he had to command God. Therefore, whoever wants to be instructed in temptation, let him take hold of the sayings, so that God does not deny or change what he once said; but what is contrary to this is to be interpreted as him trying the faith. Let him interpret it, but it is a difficult piece.

Nineteenth Thus we ought to have done, when Pabbacy and monasticism arose; and every one saw how greatly it increased, and said, Well, this is right and delicious. There was no one so wise as to say, "Although the papacy continues so blissfully, the first word must not fall, but still remain, that faith alone makes blessed, and all doctrine and being based on works are damnable. But this has been abandoned; so the devil broke in with false signs and won that everyone was afraid of it, and no one could resist until it took over with full force and completely wiped out the doctrine of faith.

This is the great story of the strong faith of Abraham, in which you see how God so abundantly restores his son to him and showers him with blessings. For while he holds fast to the first word, he turns the word back again, and shows him that he has only tempted him. There follow the contradictions that God does. Now, according to this example, we have much history in the histories, as also among the Jews many burned their own sons [Deut. 12, 31.]; that was their spiritual order, considered it the most delicious work, had an idol for it before the city Jerusalem, with name Moloch [2 Kings 23, 10.], and many horrible things came out of it. 1)

21 For because this work that Abraham does is a good work, they imitated him, until

to the Babylonian prison. Some fine people thought that they also wanted to do God a great service; prophets were also there and strengthened them with this example; then the crowd plummeted afterwards [Jer. 32, 35]. Then the right prophets also came and said: You murderers and bloodhounds, you 2) strangle your children to the devil. Then they said again, "How can you speak against what God has so highly praised? Many a noble blood has been shed over the abomination, just because they insisted on this example.

22 Now, what is lacking? Why doesn't God also like it and like it here from Abraham? That is what I said, if God had not called Abraham, he would not have thanked him. It is a great work, but God does not respect it. It is to be done only for the sake that Abraham does it out of his word and command; if this were not so, he would have committed an abominable sin. Thus says the prophet Micheas [Cap. 6, 7]: What shall one do to God that is pleasing to Him, shall one sacrifice a son to Him? No, he says, God does not want it. Why not, did Abraham do it? He still does not want it. Why not? If he had commanded it to be done, it would have been done; if not, let it be done. For the fools have followed the example, and have not seen that here is God's word and faith; but with them is nothing but presumption and their own conceit, that they may do a work of their own, and a service that is pleasing to him, to blot out sin thereby, and to merit heaven; it is a righteous devotion of their own devising, which is an abomination in the sight of God; but what is done according to his word, that he is pleased with.

(23) Thus have we done hitherto, that we have taken the examples of the saints, and gone thither with multitudes, which God would not have. King Solomon built a temple for God and was praised for it [1 Kings 6:1 ff], so we also fell for it and thought that whoever founded a church would have great merit with God. Not so; but, if thou then be Solomon.

1) Cf. Tischreden Cap. 5, 8 5 and Cap. 24, z 2. Walch, St. Louis Edition, vol. XXII, 243 f. and 704 f.

2) "their" is missing in the Erlanger.



build one too. He had God's word for it, so you have nothing, and you want to master God, what he should please him. He also did it in vain and in faith, not that he thereby made God gracious to him; but you come and want to buy God with the work and make it your own. Therefore, it is wrong for you to seize the saints with examples.

(24) Therefore it is dangerous to preach the legends of the saints, except those found in Scripture, which are all directed to faith. In other legends, it is not so much the faith that is shown, but the works that are brought up, how much and long they fasted, watched and led a strict life. Therefore they are considered holy, and everyone wants to imitate them in this way; thus faith goes to the ground.

25 Now therefore let these things pass away. See what these examples teach. They do not say whether the fathers fasted much or not, but that they heard God's word, walked in it, and kept it. Where this did not happen, Abraham did not go either. So also the epistle to the Hebrews teaches f<sup>1</sup>Cap. 13, 7], we are to follow the faith of the saints, he says, not their works. Each one must have his work, but we must all have one faith.

(26) Let this be said, that one may know how to judge it, and that no one may do any worship that God has not commanded, or else one will go in blindness, and cover it up for good works. For if one does gross sin in other ways, everyone sees that it is not right; here one wants to boast about it. Therefore, God is not so hostile to any "thing as to one's own devotion; [it is also the most shameful plague on earth. Therefore, behold, if the example of the Holy Father has turned out so badly, yet it is described so purely, what will become of our works? What will our mad fools do, who are not half as wise or pious as those? They can still boast that God will not let them err.

27. so far 1) we have now had the noble and fine example of faith, how the pious father Abraham so firmly believed in the word

1) Erlanger: Up to here.

that he also fought against God Himself and won. Now he says here further in the history that God promises him again with an oath that he will bless his seed 2c., and reads thus:

**V.15-17. And the angel of the Lord called Abraham again from heaven, saying: I have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, because thou hast done these things, and hast not restrained thine only son, that I will bless thy seed, and multiply it as the stars of heaven, and as the sand of the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gates of his enemies.**

028 Here he saith, among other things, that his seed shall possess, that is, take the gates, that is, the cities, the land, and the people of his enemies, repeating the words and the promise which he had made unto him before Isaac was born. And thus saith he:

**V. 18, 19: And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast hearkened unto my voice. So Abraham returned to the boys, and they arose, and went together to Babylon, and dwelt there.**

(29) Let this saying stand according to history, as it sounds and reads. Bad, low words they are, as you see; but God has another way of speaking than men. When he opens his mouth and lets a word go, it is valid. One does not have to divide his sermon into pieces, like the teachings of men, here a piece, and there a piece; there be chaste, there obedient, there fast, there pray, that it may be divided. But when he speaks, he speaks even as he grasps it and has it; as he has it all in one heap in his hand, so he also gives it out in heaps.

(30) Thus, in these short words he has summarized the whole gospel and kingdom of Christ, so that no one can sufficiently delete it. Abraham understood it well, the prophets also, but few Jews, as they do not understand it even today. If we had no more, we would still have Scripture enough on it. I also think that the holy fathers had all the books on this saying. What the scripture wants to grasp, it grasps all in one heap,

that one must not make many extractions, but more extractions. 1)

31 What then is it said, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed upon the earth? For blessing is not to be understood as the Jews interpret it, that it means that he will praise the Jewish people among the Gentiles; so that they only look at the tongue, as if it were well spoken, wishing something good; but God's works are righteous, go to the ground, are all serious and perfect things. Therefore the word sweepeth all his works together: which he will send forth, not only upon the Jews, but upon all the earth; and it shall be by the seed of Isaac.

How is this to be done? So: We all fell into curse and sin through and in Adam, and also condemned to eternal death through sin (Gal. 3:10). The curse is on our neck, in it we are born. Everything that comes from a woman is a child of curse and wrath [Eph. 2:3], of death and eternal damnation, subject to the devil. This is a curse on the whole human nature. For as Adam is, so he begets children, all damned and cursed. He testifies to this here first of all with the word "bless". For, if they are to be blessed, they must not have been blessed before. If the blessing were before, what should we of this seed? but because he promises such blessing to Abraham, it is so much concluded: You are all cursed.

(33) So the word blessing alone overthrows all that man and nature is and is able to do. Now let a heathen man, or one of us who call ourselves Christians, and yet do not have Christ and faith, with all his wisdom, good works, virtues and free will, and all his life, come to nothing and be accursed before God. Cause, it does not come from the blessing; if it does not go from this, it is not right, yes, it is all of the devil. He does not say: The Gentiles will bless themselves, or obtain the blessing for them; the blessing must grow out of them. Because it does not grow out of them, they must be forgiven.

be cursed. For what is not blessing must be cursed, there is no third.

(34) Therefore I say, when God speaks, he opens wide his mouth, and is not straitened, but strikes the whole world, and puts it entirely under a curse; as Paul says Rom. 11:32, and Gal. 3:22: "The scripture hath decreed it all under sin, that he should have mercy on all, and that the promise should come through faith in Jesus Christ. He does not curse, but shows us what we are, namely, that we are even in the curse: but he wants to bless, not two or three nations, but the whole world. From this we should have enough evidence that all men with all their works and worship are of the devil. Abraham was able to judge all things and doctrine from this, as it came to him, and thus said: If the blessing is there, it is good; but if it is without the blessing, it is lost, let it be what it will.

35 The blessing is now upon all the Gentiles, but that it may be done in Abraham's name. This is the gospel. But the saying does not mean that all the Gentiles will receive the blessing. St. Paul is a master in interpreting such sayings. It is promised herein (he says [Rom. 10, 18Z] that God would let the gospel go forth. sHe] does not say, all will accept it. How so? So: The gospel is such a word, which offers us God's grace and mercy, merited by Jesus Christ and purchased with His blood, who is the Lamb of God that bears sin [John 1:29], and lets it be proclaimed to all the world: Believe and hold on to me, forsake works, and you will be blessed and free from death and all misfortune. The blessing has gone as far as the world, come both over Gentiles and Jews, and still continues.

(36) This is the meaning of this saying: I will send a blessing upon all nations under the sun. For one must allow the word: all Gentiles, Hebrew sohn Col Gojim, to be understood also by the Jews; as Moses says to them in the 5th book [Cap. 4, 7.]: "Where is such a Goi, to whom God is so near", but to you? Therefore, the addition "over all the Gentiles" should mean whatever people are under the sun, God grant, they are Jews or Gentiles.

1) That is, one should not restrict it but stretch it wide. Compare A 34.

(37) Behold, the saying is so far stretched that God would make the gospel known to all the earth. That is what he means by "blessed". The blessing is there, offered to everyone, but not everyone accepts it, and it is a serious blessing that goes over the whole person. If you believe in the seed, your sins are forgiven with one another, and death is abolished, hell is conquered, and heaven is yours. He wishes and brings all this to you at once, but there are few of them who accept the blessing. God greets all the world, but few thank him. It is still true that they are all blessed, that is, it is offered and presented to all of them; but the fact that not all of them become Christians makes them reject such a salutary blessing, yes, persecute it for the most part. It is not said that God wanted to convert everyone. St. Paul [Eph. 1, 13] points to the gospel alone, that it is a shout that he lets go out over everyone, that it should be a blessing; whoever is struck by it is struck by it, whoever sows it has it.

38 Furthermore, a goal is also set for the Jews here, so that they cannot boast, says Paul [Gal. 3:18], as if they had deserved it in any way. For at the time when God promised the blessing to Abraham, we were not there, neither were the Jews; there was neither people nor good works, neither Moses nor prophets nor anyone, so that no one could boast as if he had earned it. That the gospel is given to us is only God's goodness, which He poured out to us before anyone asked for it or thought of it. For he had it in mind to give before we were born. If he had let us be pious before, and had given laws to the Jews before he made the promise to Abraham, they would say, "We deserve this. If the law had not been given, and if we had not done good works, Christ would not have come. The glory he will lay up comes first; before the Gentiles are there, who are to be blessed, the promise and grace is there.

Therefore, whoever hears and recognizes God's word must say: I never deserved it, nor asked for it, nor took it into consideration. Therefore, the words are so profound that they are not to be falsified. Where blessing

is said, there is the gospel; where the gospel is, there is God with Christ and all goods. Thus, God can comprehend all things in one word. Thus all the Jews are exalted in glory and holiness, and the Gentiles in wisdom; all must say: Praise and thanks be to God, who has given us the gracious promise.

40 And this text shall be the gloss and light of all the laws that are written hereafter. When the Jews say, "We have received from God the Ten Commandments, which if we keep, we are righteous, and may not keep Christ's," this saying is there, and it concludes that God promises and promises out of pure grace. But where are the ten commandments? Answer: This is the first word before the ten commandments were given and written; it is not to be said that God lied. The seed and blessing over all the world is there; whoever does not have it is lost.

41 Why then are the commandments given? Not that by your works you might become righteous or fulfill the law, but that you might tame the body, live honorably, and enter the promised land; and especially that by it we might be known who we are, and where we lack, that we might thirst the more for this promise. It is for this very reason that this seed is promoted and the blessing is driven.

. Thus the prophets have done and written: O Lord God, who can keep it? The more you command, the less one does. We should trust God and keep His commandment; we do not, we find nothing more in the law, that is, that there is nothing good in us. That is why Moses gave it to reveal the curse, and when we see and feel it, we lift it up and say, "Now come, Lord, give us the blessing, deliver us from this curse. Therefore, the law does not help the conscience; the blessing alone must do it.

(43) So all the Scriptures are arranged to do this saying always. [It] is also in the whole of Moses the main saying, and everything goes on it, what stands before and after, so that all the world must say: It becomes nothing good out of it, here is vain death and GÖTTEL wrath: now this is your word, therefore hold what

You said that you would bless us and send the seed to give us these things, and to save us from death by life, and from sin by righteousness.

44 Behold, this is the gospel, whereby all the world is brought low and condemned under sin and death and the devil, with all their glory and godliness and good works. For it is found that it is not the blessing. Again, before and without all works, pure grace is established through Christ, that no one should boast, but that everyone should give thanks to God for raising up the seed through which rich and eternal blessing comes. This is the whole theology in one heap, of which neither scholars nor high schools have understood a word.

45 Now we must also deal with the little word "seed." Here the Jews would still have an excuse, that they might say: Why should such things be drawn to Christ? Are Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets and saints Abraham's seed? Answer: We can do no more than defy not only the Jews, but all the world, angels, death, devils, to give us a seed confirmed with such miracles as our Christ. The work is there, of which the words are, and it is known that he is Abraham's seed; so all the world, without its thanksgiving, must confess that he is preached as far as the world reaches. This has never happened to anyone, nor will it ever happen to anyone; and also that the Gentiles have accepted him, as it was proclaimed before, and everyone believes him to be true, and the gospel to be true. All the world has dealings with him, and yet they are Gentiles, who should rightly be hostile to him; confessing that he is not only Abraham's seed, but also hearing and preaching that he has brought blessing, conquered death along with sin and hell. He also proved this with great miracles from heaven through the gospel and the apostles. There was a miracle for God to confirm the preaching. Now give us another who has done all these things, and is still going through the world, so that all power is against it, the Jews also; it has not yet helped, it has had to break through; if even such mighty kings on a house of God are still in power, it is not yet possible for them to break through.

If they did that together, they would not be able to go that far.

46 Further, in these words is also understood all that we believe about Christ, that he had to be born of a virgin, suffer and die, rise from death, ascend to heaven, and sit and reign at the right hand of God. For that his mother should be a virgin, it follows therefore: All Gentiles are cursed; that which is born of the flesh is already a child of wrath and death j^Eph. 2, 3.], so he must ever not come of flesh and blood, or be born of male and female, if he is not to be cursed, nor to be blessed, but to bring blessing, that all who are blessed may be blessed through him. Again, he must still be a natural man, having flesh and blood like Abraham. For the Scriptures commonly call the children seed. Now if he is to be a natural child and son, he must come from a woman, for no one is called a child unless he brings his being from his mother; but if he is not to be cursed, he must be conceived in a non-natural way. Therefore, it is necessary that the mother not be pregnant by a man, but still be pregnant, so that she is called a true natural mother, and the child is her blood and flesh. Therefore, there is no other means, except that he be conceived of the Holy Spirit without all corruption. Thus it entails that she be a virgin, and the child's mother, in right natural being.

47 The prophets have also led out of this saying, as Isaiah chap. 7, 14: "Behold, a maid or virgin shall conceive and bear a son. So the Scripture calls him Lruetuui veutris alone, a fruit of the womb, not a fruit of the loins; that is, a child by a female image alone, not by a male. Behold, the sayings all flowed from this, that they saw such things; so that the saying does not go to Christ, as in the 51st Pfalm, v. 7, it is written, "Behold, I am made in iniquity, and my mother conceived me in sins." Because he is without the curse, he is also without sin and death. So it is found that he is not conceived of man's seed.

(48) Further, all that are born of woman must be natural men, and die as the children of other women; so must this seed also die, as all other men. Again, if he should be the one who blessed all the world, he] cannot remain bodily on earth to be king in Jerusalem and rule the whole world; the kingdom is too great. If he himself is to reign presently, he must be in such a being that he is with everyone and in all places; therefore he must be born a bodily man, like others, through the Holy Spirit, that he may walk in mortal life, but through and out of the same being enter into another, immortal, spiritual being, that he may reign with everyone in the heart; otherwise he could not accomplish it, that he may be in everyone's heart and speak with him, and create over a thousand miles of way. Therefore, he had to rise from death, go to heaven, and sit in the place where he can see all creatures, fulfill them, and have them in his hand, having power over all things, angels and devils.

49. He must also be God. For if he is to promise such great good and give the blessing, he must also have the power; otherwise it would be ridiculous if he promised something and could not help. Since he now promises to deliver us from death and the kingdom of the prince of the world, and to give us eternal life, he must have power and be omnipotent, and also wisdom, so that he can and knows how to preserve us in life, against death and sin. Otherwise, if he only wished the same, and yet was not with me, he could not help me. Therefore, because he can save us when we are in the midst of death and hell, he must have the highest, divine power, and everything must be under his feet [Ps. 110:1], which power no one has but God alone. Because it is given to the seed, he must irrefutably be a true God, and yet remain the seed, that is, be both true God and man. Thus we have all things with one another in Christ, birth, death, resurrection and his eternal reign. Who would want to summarize all this in such short words if the Holy Spirit himself did not speak?

(50) That is enough talk about the text, which would be worthy to be drawn with letters of gold. But it lies alone

so that the blessing may be properly recognized. It should be a blessing that God gives; but what God blesses is blessed in deed and work. For He does not bless as people do, with words alone, since 1) nothing follows, but is such a living blessing that brings all good. It is not a greeting alone, but a work and busy thing that soon takes place. The fruit that follows such a blessing is that no one can prevent or hinder it. When God blesses, speaking and doing are one thing, as it is written in the 33rd Psalm, v. 9: Oixit, ot kaetum est, "he says, so it stands." Therefore, the blessing must say what it says and be active. If it comes from God, it must affect sin, death, the devil, hell; that is how deep his word goes.

(51) Therefore you will find so many sayings in the prophets, drawn from this. It is a great, rich mine, from which they have dug and taken everything they have written about the future Christ and his kingdom. Now the Jews do not see this, they are blinded, they cling to Moses and stand on their works, they do not understand that he promises such great things before he has given the law.

This is the history in which we learn how powerfully God speaks. And even if the words do not give all this, the history should give it through the spiritual interpretation. Thus we shall also see in Isaac how Christ is portrayed in it. [It is such a broad word that it goes beyond all works, and even includes Christ and his kingdom. Let us now proceed with the interpretation.

(53) I have often said that he who wants to study the Bible well, especially the spiritual interpretation of the histories, should draw it all to the Lord Christ. For it is all to do with the interpretation of the preaching ministry, or gospel and faith, in which Christ's kingdom stands, as we shall also see here. Now our faith holds that we firmly believe that the seed of Abraham is truly God and man; and although it was impossible that the person, as God, should be born, suffer, die, rise again, and do other things which he did on earth, therefore that

the Godhead is even insufferable and immortal: nevertheless, it is true that it is said that the Son of God suffered and died.

(54) As it is said of a man, whose soul no one can wound with iron, for it is a spirit: nevertheless, when one is cut in the head, it is said, "The man is sore. Item, so one says also: The man is dead, if nevertheless the soul cannot die. Thus all works are attributed to the whole person, whether it be the body alone that does or suffers, because both are put together and become one. So also here; although the man Christ did and suffered everything, yet because he is one person with the Godhead, God is also said to have suffered, to have died, and to have risen. This is our faith, let us now see it here.

55. Isaac is laid on the altar and bound, the father takes him by the head and wants to cut him down and slaughter him, so that he is sacrificed in truth, if one looks at the father's heart. For there goes free, both will and hand, but death is completely in his father's and his eyes, so that no one knows or sees otherwise: he still remains alive, and the goat is sacrificed for him. Also he dies in appearance and prestige, and yet remains alive in death. This is the Lord Christ, who appears and poses in all ways as if the Son of God were dying; yet he does not die, but the man truly dies: this is the goat in the thorn hedge. So now the Scripture says that God truly gave His Son; yet He did not die, but man died. Thus Isaac is a figure of the Godhead, the goat of the humanity of Christ.

56. secondly, here is meant the resurrection from the dead. Because Isaac was promised to Abraham that he would become a father of many nations, and yet he is answered to death that the sayings must both be true, that he would become a father of many nations, and yet die under the hands of his father. There the kingdom of Christ is even pictured. So the saying is true that he should be a king and savior of all the world [Tach. 9, 9. Joh. 4, 42. 1 Tim. 4, 10]. But how does he stand up to this? s<sup>a</sup>He] lets himself be nailed to the cross and dies; just like Isaac, when he was supposed to become a father. Now this has the weak

The apostles are going to the king and redeem the people. The apostles go to, think that will become the king and redeem the people [Luc. 24, 21.], so he will be martyred and crucified in the most shameful way. Now where is the kingdom? They were too weak to think that Christ would be king and savior, and that even if he died now, the Father was powerful to make him alive again. So it had to happen. Christ falls and dies, but rises again, becomes a king, as it is written; is king on earth, but no longer sits as before, yet he reigns in our hearts, has only to do in them, preaches and enlightens them; and in sum, what happens in all of Christendom, that he does.

57 Therefore it is true that Christ is a king, and reigns as far as the world is [Ps. 72:8], that all things must be subject to him; lives truly also in the flesh, but in immortal and spiritual life. Now what reason could conceive such a thing, it could see no further than that he should visibly reign with great splendor on earth. If this were so, there would be no faith in the world. So now the scripture insists: Isaac remains alive, [f]es] is only a form and appearance of death there. So also with Christ. He dies freely in his own eyes and in the eyes of all the world, but through death he comes to life, becomes a king and reigns forever. So here the whole kingdom is conceived. For where the resurrection stands, all things stand together.

58. Further, the goat in the hedge with the horns, as said, is Christ after mankind. Now we see how the gospel goes, and all the Scripture before says, that it causes tumult, does not hang among roses and lilies, purple nor wool; there is nothing soft, but vain thorns; therein the goat is confused, cannot come out. This all means the preaching office. Horn is called in the Scripture: *Mysterium verbi ovanZolii*, which is the power of God. For as the goat prods with his horns, so also the preaching of the gospel prods before the head, which is great; [it] cannot suffer any to be wise and pious, and to rely upon it. When the beast gets under the thorn hedge, it gets confused in it.

59. thorns are the ungodly, especially those who persecute the gospel, prickly and un-

Powerful kind. For the pious Christians like to be pushed. But the other is a quarrelsome, heretic people, as Paul says Rom. 2:8: 8is, M suut ox eontontiono, as they are preached to, so it is not right; ssie^ are vain hedges, which at last belong to the fire. Thus thou seest in the figure that it is so and must go. Therefore let no one be surprised if strife arises against the gospel, that Christians are driven out and persecuted; only say: It must be so, and not otherwise, the ram must hang in the hedges. What the devil esteems great on earth, all Christ must pursue; so it clashes with him, but does him no harm; he has hard horns in his head, but he gets tangled up in them, is seized and sacrificed.

But what does it mean that Abraham leaves the donkeys and boys far down from the mountain, and he goes up alone with the son? Our legalists 1) and preachers of works have interpreted it thus: When one goes to church, prays vespers, matins 2c. and sings, one should leave the carnal thoughts behind, and prepare oneself with good thoughts, so that it is a good work; and it remains so. But we have said that the outward service serves to teach and practice the Scriptures always, and to build up the faith with them, and that no one should pray and read in such a way as to do a good work, but to build up the conscience and strengthen the faith. Therefore the jugglery is of no use at all.

61 The donkey is the lazy rascal, the old Adam, blood and flesh, who must also be there if one is to serve God; for Christ's kingdom must reign on earth in our hearts. Therefore, the two parties must be separated from each other. The two go up to the mountain; the donkey with the servants stays far away. With the Gospel, one does not lead the mouth or feet to God, but the heart; it cannot be grasped in the ears, mouth, or tongue, but must live in the heart. The world does not see this, the servant and the donkey do not see it, no one sees it except Abraham. The donkey, however, must nevertheless have a regiment; the

The body is subjected to the law in the external regime, as the donkey is kept by the servants. 2) That all who govern the people outwardly and keep the flesh under restraint are meant by this. The lazy old man cannot come before God, yet Isaac is there, that is, the soul is in the body, which comes before God.

This is how it should be divided. Through faith in the gospel we come to God, offer ourselves to God, as Isaac did here, and are given to him as his own. Thus the heart is sacrificed with faith, but the donkey remains behind the mountain, cannot come here, because it is still full of sin. The heart becomes pure through faith, is a new man and holy sacrifice, but the old Adam is still full of evil desire, he must be tamed, forced and compelled, so that he is swept from day to day, 3) and always has masters who chastise him.

- For this reason, the law must not be applied to the conscience, but nothing must be preached to it but faith, without all law, so that it may go freely to Christ. 4) The conscience must be kept in a state of restraint. According to this, one should also preach to the lazy ass, so that he is held in bondage and subdued. The law alone should serve this purpose. Soul and conscience shall have no servant to lead them, but shall remain free. Now here are two servants, that are Moses and the 6) prophets, who taught the law and drove it into the people. This is the interpretation, this is the preaching ministry altogether, law and gospel, meets both, inward and outward people, and the whole world.

64 The last is from mount Moriah. Abraham dwelt in the land of the Philistines, near Gaza; from thence he went up three days' journey; and on the third day he saw the mountain afar off; about a crossbow-shot or two, he left the others behind him, and went up alone with Isaac. The mountain is called Moriah, and is the very mountain on which King Solomon built the temple [2 Chron. 3:1], not, as some say, where Christ was crucified. And therefore it is called Moria, because it says: The Lord looks upon it, because Moria is called in German so much, as, the

2) Wittenberger and Erlanger: vom Knechte.

3) Erlanger: will.

4) "demselbigen" is missing in the Erlanger.

5) "the" is missing in the Erlanger.

1) That is: law teachers.

The Lord's face, so that the Lord sees into it. And the name of the mountain remained so because God looked so closely at Abraham, prevented him from strangling his son, and showed him the ram, so that it might also be called the Lord shows. This is interpreted to mean that Christ should come to the mountain where the temple was built, and preach the gospel, and then send it out into all the world; as in the stories of the apostles [Cap. I, 2) and in Isaiah [Cap. 2, 2].

But we remain on the spiritual mona, because we make everything else spiritual, therefore we leave it to be the Christian church, which is the kingdom of Christ, or faith. Now in the Old Testament it was commanded that no sacrifice should be made in any place except that which God chose, but He pointed nowhere except to Jerusalem. This means that it does not matter what works we do, unless they are done in faith; the judgment has already been made, as Paul says: "Everything that is not of faith is sin"; even if you torture yourself to death, God does not inquire about anything, nor does He look at all your suffering, as Paul also says, where it is not in faith. Thus the Jews also did great works and sacrifices, but God did not inquire about them, because they were not done in the place that God chose for them. So the word is to strike down everything that is not of God's word and of faith, as now are the foundations, monasteries, and all kinds of spiritual beings.

This mountain Abraham still saw from afar. (It) was not yet quite Moria, belonged still far away, yes many hundred years, before "Christ should come, and his kingdom by the gospel should start, still he has seen it; as Christ says in John [Cap. 8, 56.): "Abraham, your father, was glad that

1) Jenaer: not.

he should see my day, and he saw it, and rejoiced." So now the sacrifice is all in faith, from which it becomes a holy, pure and pleasant sacrifice.

That is enough of the spiritual interpretation of this story, which preaches both faith and the cross, that the old man was killed. Summa, it is all about Christ. Scripture wants to know nothing but about Christ; nor has the devil deceived us, as if it were not enough, and in the meantime we have had to learn and preach vain dreams of man. Lastly there is a piece in the chapter, how Abraham was told that his brother also had children by his Milcah, namely eight sons, and by the Kewsweibe four; as follows.

**(V.20-24) And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah also bare children unto Nahor thy brother, Uz the firstborn, and Bus his brother, and Kemuel, from whom the Syrians come, and Chesed, 3) and Hazo, and Pildah, and Jedlaph, and Bethuel. And Bethuel zmgete Rebekah 2c.**

68] Therefore it is written, according to the history which we shall hereafter hear, in the fourth and twentieth chapter, how Abraham took a wife for his son, of the same generation, Rebekah his brother's son Bethuel's daughter, that it might be known whence his wife came. [But it is also indicated here for the sake of spiritual interpretation that this means how Christ, when he rose again from the dead, then took to himself a wife, that is, the Gentiles; he did not take her from his own country, but sent for her from a foreign country; he rejected the Jews and sent for the Gentiles through the apostles, as we shall hear later.

2) Jenaer: would have to.

3) Jenaer: Caded; Wittenberger and Erlanger: Ceded.



## The twenty-third chapter.

V. 1-20. Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old, as long as she lived, and died in the capital city, which is called Hebron, 1) in the land of Canaan. Then Abraham came to lament and weep over her. Afterward he stood up from his dead body, and spake unto the children of Heth, saying: I am a stranger and a sojourner with you; give me an inheritance burying place with you, that I may bury my dead man that is before me. Then the children of Heth answered Abraham, and said unto him, Hear us, 2) O Lord, thou art a prince of God among us, bury thy dead in our pleasant sepulchres; let no man among us hinder thee, that thou bury not in his sepulchre thy 3) dead. Then Abraham arose, and bowed himself before the people of the land, that is, before the children of Heth; and he spake unto them, saying: If it be your mind that I bury my dead before me, hear me, and pray for me against Ephron the son of Zoar, that he give me his twofold cave, which he hath at the end of his field. For the same money he will give it to me among you for an inheritance burial; for Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth. Then Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham, that the children of Heth heard him before all that came in and out of the gates of his city, and said, Nay, my lord, but hear me. I give thee the field, and the cave that is therein, and give it thee in the sight of the children of my people, to bury thy dead. Then Abraham bowed down before the people of the land, and spake unto Ephron, that the people of the land might hear, saying, If thou wilt obey me, I pray thee, 4) Take of me the money of the field, which I give thee, and I will bury my dead man there. Ephron answered Abraham, and said unto him, My lord,

5) Hear me, the field is worth four hundred shekels of silver; but what is that between me and you? Just bury your dead. Abraham obeyed Ephron, and weighed to him the money which he had said that the children of Heth heard, namely, four hundred shekels of silver, which was common in the purchase. So Ephron's field, wherein is the twofold cave over against Mamre, was confirmed unto Abraham for his own possession, with the cave therein, and with all the trees of the field round about, that the children of Heth looked on, and all that went in and out of the gates of his city. Then Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field, which is twofold, over against Mamre, which is Hebron, in the land of Canaan. So the field and the cave therein were confirmed to Abraham for the inheritance burial of the children of Heth.

This is a foolish chapter to look at. What has he to make so many words about such a small thing, as Abraham buys a pit, because he puts in a dead man? Above [Cap. 22, § 30 ff/ we have heard that he sums up the whole kingdom of Christ in three or four words, since it would be necessary for him to make a hundred thousand words, and makes so little that he cannot make less, sums it all up in one word: blessing. Here he washes away a whole chapter of that, since nothing is needed. It is a foolish thing in the sight of reason, and useless talk. What shall we make of it? According to history, I know nothing to make of it, because it is written contrary to the superstitious and hopeful saints, who like to tighten their consciences, and think that he who serves God does not have to deal with such worldly things, so that one learns from it to be in the manner of the people with whom one deals.

1) Marginal gloss: Hebron. Hebron is Kiriath-Arba, says Moses, that is, the four city. For the high capitals of old were all Arba, that is, divided into four parts, like Rome, Jerusalem and Babylon. Gen. 10:10.

2) "us" is missing in the Wittenberg and the Erlanger.

3) Wittenberg and Erlangen: den.

4) "please I" is missing in the Erlanger.

5) "doch" is missing in the Erlanger.

6) Marginal gloss: Seckel. Seckel is a weight on the coin, a place of a guilder, because before times one weighed the money thus, as one does now with gold.

7) "man" taken by us from Walch's old edition; in the other editions: he.

That it may be an example of love. When one comes so far that the faith and the gospel remain, one should not turn to how people live, what laws they have, but should always be according to their nature; and that it is not a sin for a Christian to act and deal with people, to become a merchant, to keep the way as the others do, and especially to express the giving of money, 1) which is common and customary.

2. it is not a small virtue of love, as Paul says, to send oneself in every man's way, for we shall not bring it to pass that a whole world shall be after us. [It] is enough if we receive this, that s<sup>t</sup>he<sup>^</sup>gospel and the faith remain. After that we must think, the world will not do what I want, therefore I will send myself into it and do what it wants. Therefore Paul says [Rom. 12, 11]: "Send yourselves into the time", and make yourselves even with everyone. Item sPhil. 4, 5.]:

vestra nota sit oinnibus  
uominibus, "Let your gentleness be known to all men," that is, that you keep it so in your nature that no one may complain about you; so also 1 Cor. 10:33: Do as I do; "I make myself pleasing to everyone," that is, I yield and give way to everyone, letting go of my right and mind, where I see that another is opposed to me ever coming to him, so that he may have pleasure in me.

(3) It is a fine rule: He that will please any man, let him please every man; and again, He that will please no man's way, shall please no man. So shall a Christian do. They do not. If one laughs a little too much, and runs over the string, they purr and purring; everyone says that his sense is the best, that everything else is good for nothing. So everyone who walks in his own way always makes himself believe that the other is not as pure as his, no one pleases him well; and yet he wants his way to please everyone. These are false gleaming works, which do not walk in love.

Therefore, the work of Abraham must be praised, even if it does not seem worth writing. Could he find no other love.

according to the high example of faith? Yes, it is certainly the greatest, highest work that is indicated in this according to history. He who has love must not do much more.

5. that Abraham buys the field around four hundred Seckel, one must know that sielus is two kinds, gülden and silbern. The silver one is almost as much in coinage as a local florin, so four sovereigns make a florin. So the four hundred coins make a hundred florins; that is how much he bought the field with trees and everything on it; that was his treasure. Thereby the cross is indicated, as he was a sojourner, and did not have a foot wide in the land, which God had promised him, as Stephen says in Acts 7, 5J.

6th The grave in the cave was over against Mamre, which is Hebron (says the text); f<sup>d</sup>as was its old name, perhaps from a great man who lived there, as is said above in the fourteenth chapter, v. 24, from the three men, Aner, Escol and Mamre. The text also calls this city KiriathArba, that is, a four-city, from Greek that is, one of the great capitals that were commonly divided into four parts, like Jerusalem and Babylon, as stated above in the tenth 2) chapter.

(7) Now here, among other things, it is also indicated how one should behave Christianly toward the dead, that it is a good work. It is a good work to bury the dead, otherwise he would not have said so much about where and how Sarah was buried.

8 Item, that Abraham lamented and wept over them, is also written for this reason, that it is not evil to grieve, to mourn, and to suffer for the sake of the people who die to us. Although we must all die, yet we are so constituted by love that each one should grant life to the other, just as we are all united in being poor and living in sweat: nor should love have anything to do there, and be concerned about 3) the neighbor's poverty and other hardships. According to faith we may neither live nor die, but according to love we must take care of our neighbor; as this life bears,

2) In the editions: "eleventh". Luther Werst hiedurch auf, was in? 9 of the tenth chapter.

3) "um" is missing in the Erlanger.

it is good that we rejoice with him, and again, as Paul teaches Rom. 12:15: "Rejoice with the glad, and weep with those who weep."

(9) Let every man therefore take care of his neighbor, even of the need of the body, as it may be; lest the trusting saints come, and think to cast it to the winds, that a Christian may be of good cheer, and live as he will. Let no one be such a great saint who does not let himself be struck by and accept the needs of his neighbor. Christ also had enough before him; and although among all the miracles he did, the greatest was that he preached the gospel, nevertheless he helped all the sick, as Matthew writes: "He took our infirmities upon himself, and our sicknesses he bore."

(10) You must not judge a Christian otherwise than according to faith and love. According to faith he takes care of no thing on earth; according to love he takes care of all things. God does not want to uproot nature through the gospel, but lets remain what is natural, but directs it to the right path. It is natural for a father to love his child, for a wife to love her husband, and to be happy when he is well, and again. A Christian does not accept this in the sight of God according to faith, even if everything goes to ruin, but according to love we should accept it as our own need and judge it according to love. Otherwise, he would not have written that the great patriarch wept for his wife when she was not supposed to serve him. So God sends us that such movements of the heart remain, and still wants us to overcome them with faith, and therefore not to despair, nor to fall from God. So you are a truly Christian person, who obeys God in all things, and yet 2) worries when adversity befalls another. Therefore you see that it is nothing that some spirits pretend that one should be so completely free of creatures that one does not care at all about how others are.

11 Now this is from the love of Abraham

1) Erlanger: with.

2) "itself" is missing in the Erlanger.

He said that he would take such great care that he would have a property for the dead. Before the world it is done that everyone thinks where he wants to stay and what he wants to have in life, before death. Here it is the other way around. Throughout his life he was a stranger, so that he did not have a foot wide for his and his wife's body; now, because she is dead and never enjoys it, he first wants to have his own property; so that one might think him a fool, that he now wants to provide, and did not do so before. Everything came from faith, as also this burial.

(12) Which I believe came from the holy Scriptures. For the heathen, especially the Romans, burned their dead; but the Scripture calls it burial, and flows, I think, from the third chapter of this book, where God [Cap. 3, 19.] says to Adam, "Until thou return to the ground from whence thou wast taken, for thou art dust, and shalt return to dust." There is the little word s<sup>3</sup>) Apha, that is, such earth as is loose, as if it were crushed, as the moles throw up, or as one throws out of the grave, which is crushed. Now if one buries the man under the earth, earth becomes again from it; so it goes all from God's words, as he had heard from his fathers.

(13) Now he has a certain promise that the land he held would be given to his heirs. He relied on that word, not caring if he did not have it while he was alive, knowing that they would take it after his death. Thus he looked to the resurrection of the dead, thinking that it would be another life and land that God would give him, as the epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 11:10] indicates. This is what he meant by despising this life, and he respects the dead as much as he looks to another life. God also indicates how he takes the dead into his care and guard, that is, that this Sarah is better provided for now than when she was alive. As if he should say: Because you live, you always care; so you must leave the care when you die, 3) and let me care for you. So Sarah is now lying on her own property and land, which is theirs.

3) In the old editions: gesterbet.

God had promised, which had nothing of its own before. God comforts us all with this, and secretly points to the resurrection of the flesh, because he cares more for the dead than for the living; he would never do this if he did not have in mind to raise the dead. This was the comfort of the holy fathers when they died, that they now lie and rest in the bosom of God.

Now, to touch the spiritual interpretation of what the burial means, we have from St. Paul, Rom. 6, 3. f.: "Know ye not that all we which are baptized into Jesus Christ are baptized into his death? So we are ever buried with him through baptism into death. "2c. Item, v. 5: "But if we have been planted together with him unto like death, we shall also be like unto the resurrection." When one baptizes a Christian, one baptizes

him to death, that he should die. Just as a grain is thrown into the ground when it is sown; it is buried, so that it must die in the ground, and again a new grain grows up. Thus we are planted with the Lord Christ in baptism, pass through and in baptism into his death and grave, and through death into a new and eternal life. This is the sum of it: He who is baptized has no more to do than to be buried. For even though I am in the body, I deal with it by always closing it up, creeping deeper and deeper into the grave, until I rot; so that I daily break off desire, dampen and strangle lust, and die to the world, until I decompose under the earth; so I must be buried to the world, if I am to live with God. This is the mystery.

## The twenty-fourth chapter.

Abraham was old and well-born, and the LORD had blessed him in every way. And he said unto his eldest servant of his house, which had charge of all his goods, Put thine hand under my thigh, that I may make thee swear by the LORD God of heaven and earth, that thou shalt take unto my son a wife of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; but that thou shalt go unto my fatherland, and to my friendship, and take unto my son Isaac a wife. And the servant said, If the woman will not follow me into this land, how shall I bring thy son again into the land whence thou camest? And Abraham said unto him, Take heed lest thou bring my son thither again. The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my friendship, which spake unto me, and sware unto me, saying, This land will I give unto thy seed; and he shall send his angel before thee, that thou mayest take a wife for my son there. But if the woman does not follow you

If you want to take my son, you are free from this oath; but do not take him there again. Then the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master and swore to him. So the servant took ten camels from his master's camels, and went, having with him all his master's goods, and arose, and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. And he made the camels lie down without the city by a well of water in the evening about the time when the women went out to draw water, and said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, meet me this day, and have mercy on my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water, and the daughters of the people of this city shall come forth to draw water. If therefore a damsel come, to whom I say, Incline thy pitcher, and let me drink; and she shall say: Drink, and I will drink thy camellias also: that she may be she whom thou hast given to Isaac thy servant, and that I may know by her that thou hast shewed mercy on my lord. And before he went out

When he had spoken, behold, Rebekah came forth, the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, who was the wife of Nahor Abraham's brother; and she bare a pitcher upon her shoulder; and she was a very fair damsel in appearance, and a virgin, and no man knew her: and she went down unto the well, and took the pitcher, and went up. Then the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me drink a little water out of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord. And she hastened, and let down the pitcher upon her hand, and watered him. And when she had made him drink, she said: I will drink unto thy camels also, until they all drink. 1) And she hastened, and poured out the pitcher into the trough, and ran to draw water, and drew water for all his camels. And the man marveled at them, and held his peace, until he perceived whether the Lord had well directed his journey or not. When the camels had all drunk, he took a gold forehead clasp weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets on their hands weighing ten shekels of gold, and said, "My daughter, to whom do you belong? Tell me. Have we room to dwell in thy father's house? And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bare unto Nahor. And she said unto him, There is plenty of straw and fodder with us, and room enough to lodge. Then the man bowed himself, and worshipped the LORD, saying, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, which hath not left his mercy and his faithfulness upon my master: for the LORD hath led me by the way to my master's brother's house. And the damsel ran and told all these things at her mother's house. And Rebekah had a brother, whose name was Laban. And Laban ran unto the man without by the well: and when he saw the browbands and the bracelets upon his sister's hands, and heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus said the man unto me, he came unto the man, and, behold, he stood by the camels by the well. And said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD, why standest thou without? I have the

1, Erlanger: to drink. In the Bible: drunk.

He cleared the house and made room for the 2) camels. So he led the man into the house, and unharnessed the camels, and gave them straw and provender, and water to wash his feet, and the men that were with him, and set food before him. But he said, I will not eat until I have first advertised my cause. They answered: Tell me. He said: I am Abraham's servant, and the LORD hath blessed my lord abundantly, and waxed great, and hath given him sheep, and oxen, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses: moreover Sarah my lord's wife bare a son to my lord in his all, to whom he hath given all that he hath. And my lord took an oath of me, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Cananites, in whose land I dwell; but go to my father's house, and to my family, there take a wife for my son. And I said unto my lord, What if the wife will not follow me? Then said he unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and make thy way, that thou mayest take a wife for my son of my friendship, and of my father's house. Then shalt thou be even with my oath, when thou comest to my friendship: if they give thee not, thou shalt be even with my oath. So I came to the well this day, and said, O LORD God of my lord Abraham, thou hast made my way, whence I journeyed: behold, I stand here by the well of water. Now when a virgin comes forth to draw, and I say unto her, Give me a little water to drink of thy pitcher; and she shall say, Drink thou, and I will draw for thy camels also, that she may be the wife which the LORD my master's son hath given. Now before I had spoken these words in my heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with a pitcher upon her shoulder, and went down to the well, and drew. And I said unto her, Give me to drink: and she hastened, and took the pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thee thy camels.

2) "also" is missing in the Erlanger.

3) "they" is missing in the Erlanger.

also water them. So I drank, and she also watered the camels. And I asked her, and said, What daughter art thou? She answered: I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor, whom Milcah bare unto him. And I put a brace on her forehead, and bracelets on her hands, and bowed myself, and worshipped the LORD, and praised the LORD, 1) The God of my lord Abraham, which led me in the right way, to take my lord's brother's daughter unto his son. Now if you are those 2) who will do mercy and faithfulness to my lord, 3) tell me; if not, tell me, and I will turn to the right hand or to the left. Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said: This came forth from the LORD; therefore we cannot speak against it, either evil or good. Now Rebekah is before thee; take her, and go, that she may be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken. When Abraham's servant heard these words, he bowed himself to the LORD to the ground, and drew out silver and gold jewels and garments, and gave them to Rebekah; but to her brother 4) and to her mother he gave spices. 5) Then he ate and drank, and the men that were with him dwelt there overnight. And in the morning he arose, and said, Let me go to my lord. But her brother and mediator said: Let the damsel stay with us a day or ten, and then go. Then he said to them: Do not stop me, for the LORD has prepared my way; let me go to my master. Then said they, Let us call the damsel, and ask what she saith. And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she answered, Yea, I will go with him. So they sent Rebekah her sister away with her nurse and Abraham's servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou a thousand times a thousand, and thy seed possess the gates of his enemies. So Rebekah set out with her

And she sat down on the camels, and went after the man. And the servant took Rebekah, and went. And Isaac came from the well of the living and seeing, because he dwelt in the land toward the south, and was gone out to seek b) in the field toward the evening. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw that there came camels. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and saw Isaac, and fell down from the camel, and said unto the servant: Who is this man that cometh to meet us in the field? And the servant said, This is my lord. Then she took the veil 7) and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all the things which he had set forth. And Isaac brought her into the tabernacle of Sarah his mother, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and loved her. So Isaac was comforted concerning his mother.

In the next two chapters we have heard about the dead, dying and burying; 8) here we hear again about life. Because that woman died, we must have a new bride again. Therefore, the chapter is no more than a history of the wedding, as it has approached the time. [But someone would like to say what a useless talker Moses is, that he makes so many words for the sake of the bride, describes it so exactly that he also says about camels alone. Now, we want to deal with the history first. But after this you will see a consolation, which all believers have, how God takes care of their things so hard.

2 Isaac was promised to be a father of a great nation, so it was certain that he would be married and have a wife. God also takes care of him. His life, his death, his honor, his goods, and all that he has are in God's hands; so also the wife he is to have, and yet does not know where she will come from. We fools do all things before we ask God for them, and do foolish things with them; afterward, when we see that the reproach is over, and the earnestness is lifted up, we grumble and are impatient. If we were Christians, and looked at man and woman in such a way that

1) "den HErn" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) "so" is missing in the Erlanger.

3) "wollt" is missing in the Erlanger.

4) Erlanger: to their brothers.

5) Jenaer: delicious fruit.

6) In the Bible: pray.

7) In the Bible: cloak.

8) "heard" is missing in the Erlanger.

it was God's creation, and that we had to take everything from His hand, that we would not draw even a drop of water if God gave it, we would not make a mockery of it. The holy fathers accepted it all as a good gift from God, but we go along as if we had done it and God did not know about it or accept it.

(3) Behold, God thus provides for His own before Abraham, Isaac, and the servant, to whom they give thought with their friendship. To show that everything should be done in faith, that everything we have should be commanded to Him, especially the marriage state, the fruits of which are common in all the world, and for which reason it is established that people should be governed in the knowledge of God, and that children should be taught to fear God, and that care should be given to God.

4 But Abraham does not let this go; even though he and Isaac both ask God where the woman comes from, he still does as much as he needs to do. He shall leave off worrying and trust in God; he shall not leave off crooked work. I shall do my part, but how, when and where it is done, I shall command him. Therefore he commands God what he should take for one; but he sends his servant out among friends, not knowing where. As if he should say, as he also says: You will probably find one, only do not worry about what and how, you will have a great vile man. God from heaven has sworn to me and said, "This land I will give to your seed, who will send his angel before you, that you may take a wife for my son there." As if he wanted to say: If he wants to give my son the land, he will also give my son a wife; so he defies and insists on the promise. But if God will not provide it, then come again, he says, he will surely find where it is to come from; yes, he defies and insists even more, that he says, "He will send his angel before you"; so firmly does he hold to the promise of God. This is a piece that he makes the servant to seek as far as he is able to seek.

005 And he went further, and took an oath of the servant that he would never take a wife of the daughters of the land where he dwelt. This Abraham knew, that the Amorites, and

who dwell in the land of Canaan were all to be destroyed, as it is said above in the fifteenth chapter, v. 16. 21. They] must all depart, if his seed should take the land. From the word it followed that he should not mix with the people, nor make friends with them, because God had already pronounced the judgment that they must all be cast out. So Abraham, as much as he had in him, did not spare work and effort, but commanded God to take care of him. Now, the servant is a pious, holy man, in great devotion and trust. Abraham will have drawn his servants in such a way that many of them will have been devout, but also many will have been wicked.

6th But that he laid his hands on Abraham's thigh, I had, must have been a usage, as we swear by the gospel or the saints; so that especially the great lords had the manner of taking an oath thus. Some interpret it spiritually, because Christ was to come from Abraham's blood and flesh, he therefore put his hand under Abraham's waist, so that the oath pointed to Christ. I let that go in his dignities.

(7) History also has this in it, that a pious Christian may also leave the world its right. Otherwise, one might have said, "What is he doing with this gilded work, that he lays such great things on it, and gives the servant ten cameos, gold and precious stones, and makes great splendor and gifts, so that he might give them to poor people? For this very reason it is written, that no one should think it a sin to ride with the bride more gloriously than he does in common life, that he should not be so tightly bound. It is not a sin to adorn a bride more beautifully than a maidservant, and to make a greater show of it, because these fathers did it. God allows it to happen in honor of the wedding, so that it may be praised.

Therefore one must leave the world its right, except the abundance, that one decorates a bride fairly, goes, eats and drinks, also that one dances beautifully, one must make no conscience about it, only that one resists, where it is abundance 1). God can well

1) Erlanger: exceedingly.

If one does a little too much at times, let no one's conscience be troubled.

9 But where one does not seek joy in it, but makes swine out of it, as we Germans do, 4>it is no good, one should resist. So it is also with the jewelry; now one must have so much pearls and silk, just as if the bride should not be adorned, but let it be seen how heavy she can carry. If that means adorned, then one could also adorn a cart, which could carry a lot of the thing; but there is a lack of regiment, which should see into it, and set measurements. It is also the fault of mad men who give women as much as they can hang around them; so it is a mad beast for a woman who cannot be satisfied with adornment. I say this because God is not angry if a man adorns himself well and lives well.

(10) So Abraham had the servant bring some gold jewels and ornaments for the bride, one of half a gold coin, the other two of ten gold coins. One gold coin is ten local florins, which is three and a half florins, so that it was all worth thirty florins.

(II) So now one would speak of dancing as we speak of adornment. That one says of it that it brings much stimulus to sins, is true, if it goes beyond the measures and discipline; but also one can well court with one who has neither jewelry nor beauty; for love is blind, falls so fchier on a cow dung, 1) than on a lily leaf. Therefore, because dancing is also the custom of the world, of the young people who take up marriage, if it is also done demurely, without shameful manner, words or gestures, only for joy, it is not to be condemned. This is what God has indicated herewith, that he lets it be written in such a way that the hopeful saints do not make sin out of it so soon; if only it is not brought into abuse.

The bride's side of the story is more delicate, so that one can see how the daughter is finely dressed. How kindly she receives the foreign servant, how willingly and servilely she 2) acquires herself,

1) Erlanger: Dirt.

2) Erlanger: beut.

that she serves him according to all need, runs and tells her father, and provides him shelter. This is how the children were raised in the past, so that they were able to serve, to be willing to accommodate everyone, especially guests and pilgrims, which virtue is often praised in the Scriptures. Item, afterwards, when he leads her home, and she sits on the camel, sees Isaac from afar, she falls from the camel, wraps the veil around her, and veils herself, has finely humble and chaste posed against the people, and led an honorable gesture, as the virgins look fine. It is also the best and loveliest adornment when they are chaste in their behavior, when they lower their eyes and do not throw themselves about; it is lovelier than all the gold that one may wear, as the wise man says: "Whoever has a chaste wife is not to be paid with money; but she is a strange animal. For it is a weak little flower around a woman, cannot keep itself nor govern itself.

(13) Now we should speak further of the marriage, how it should be done. The pope has forbidden in his rights the secret vows; but again, when it is done, he binds it, so that he has broken so many marriages, and tied them together again, that [it is] a pity. So now I have said, Let father and mother be mighty over the child. For there is no greater obedience on earth than father and mother obedience, nor greater authority. Where there is not father and mother, there shall be cousin, and whatsoever is next of kin, and guardians. Therefore I have said further: A maid or a boy shall not betroth himself; for hitherto the married life has been made a laughingstock and a disgrace, so that the young people have been ashamed to desire a married husband, and so they have been secretly driven into corners.

This is how it should be: If one is engaged behind the will of the parents, it shall stand with the parents, whether it is valid or not. You must not go to Rome for this; father and mother should do it, if it pleases them to confirm it; if not, they should only tear it up so that it does not bind. If this were to happen, much error and fornication would remain, since otherwise all misfortune and heartache would follow.



(15) Again, the parents should be wise, whether the children should and must follow them, that they may advise them 1) of their will, as Abraham does here. For it is Isaac's will that the father do as he pleases. Item, when the servant comes, and woos the bride, they say: "There is Rebekka, take her"; so they were already given together; still the brother goes to, and lets them also ask. All this is written, that Christian beings should be free, yes, go with will, out of desire and love; as Paul says to Philemon, v. 8-10, "I would have authority to command you what is your due; but, for love's sake, I admonish you" 2c. And soon after, v. 14: "Without thy will I would do nothing, that thy good might not be compelled, but be self-willed." So that a seriousness may remain in the matter, and not a joke be made of it. It is a high, noble estate, and with others it is nothing compared to this; for it must provide for and govern all, therefore it should also be raised to God's name. But what more is to be said of the marital state, how often marriage is broken up or separated and permitted, you may read in the booklet written about it.

(16) Thus we have the marriage of the patriarch Isaac, prepared by the Father, and provided for him by God; as I have often said, that it behooves a right Christian man to wait for all the goods of God, and only to be idle with care. From this, no doubt, Solomon took the saying [Proverbs 19:14]: *Domu8 6t äivitiuo llaoroäitas purontum; a Domino autom uxor pruäons*; "House and goods inherit the parents; but a sensible wife comes from the Lord." Parents can do much to provide a house and goods, but that it will be well with a wife is in God's hands alone. That is why a wife is more valuable than a house and a farm. Man has power from God to rule animals and all that is on earth, so that he may be master [Gen. 2:20]; therefore he has in his power the house and what belongs in the house, but he does not have the power to rule the wife. For no one can govern the soul of man, but God alone, through

the word and gospel. Where this is not, it remains ungoverned; but if it is governed, it becomes hypocrisy, and does not come from the heart. Hence the cry about married life, that it is a strange thing for a woman; for they are evil to rule.

(17) Therefore it is written that whoever wishes to begin a married life, to begin it in faith and in God's name, pray to God that the estate may succeed according to his will, so that it may not be made a laughingstock and a juggler. It is an annual thing, and as great an earnestness as there may be on earth; therefore, it is not to be slipped into, as the world does, to follow frivolity and levity, and to seek pleasure therein, but to ask God beforehand that one may lead such a life in honor of God. If they do not do so, they may thank God; if they do not do so well, they should not be surprised, because they did not begin it in God's name and ask Him for His blessing, but are under their own authority to govern people who are not in their hands. But whoever lets God do it and master it, it goes happily. I do not know much more to say about the chapter according to history; the best part is the faith of Abraham, who sends his servant to the defiance of the promise, promised to him. fWe] now also want to see something of the secret interpretation.

(18) Now here we have to mention Christ, who must always be there; if he is not found, it is not right. Isaac is an image of the Lord Christ, and he also has the right name, namely, as a laughing man who laughs for joy, so that he also indicates Christ by his name. He is the joyful child who makes people laugh, so that all hearts that know him must overflow with joy.

19 Now Abraham is here, that is, God appoints him a wife and brings her from another country; that is, Paul says in Eph. 5:25, 32: His bride is called the Christian church. For the marriage state is a sacrament and spiritual interpretation of Christ and Christianity, that we are all one body with Christ, who believe, and his bride; as he also says to the Corinthians [2. Ep. 11, 2.]

a pure virgin to Christ". Christ has a bride, whom he wants to remain a virgin and pure, like him. But she would not be pure if he had not made her pure, as St. Paul says in Eph. 5:25-27: "He gave himself for her, that he might sanctify her, and cleanse her with the bath of water in the word, that he might present unto him a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, but that she should be holy and without blemish." He found them unclean, but added the word, preached the gospel, and thereby cleansed them when they believed. So Christianity is his bride, which has the name from him, that she is called as <sup>^r</sup> is called, and what the bridegroom has is all hers.

(20) But where did the bride come from, who fetched her and brought her so that 1) they could come together? The father had to send a servant with camels to fetch her. The bride does not seek the bridegroom, nor is this the usage, but he must have the first word and woo her. This also means that it is not in us to seek a unified good work. Thus the heavenly Father sends his messengers, wooing them, so that we 2) may not boast that we were the first and started it; he wants to keep the glory that he did the first work by his word. But the servants and messengers are the holy prophets and apostles, sent by God into the world to guide His word and bring Christianity to Him. But how does he send them? So that they do not know where he is sending them. (He names the country, the city and the friendship, but he does not say which maidservant they are to be until they arrive, when she appears before his eyes unawares.

(21) With this, the essence of the gospel as it works in the world is all explained. They just go and let the word go, let God take care of it, who can find it and send it under eyes, so that it is there before one looks around. Before he enters the house, the bride goes out and meets him. So, if they just let the ministry go, preach the word, the Rebekah who is supposed to be there comes out and meets him.

1) Erlanger: da.

2) Erlanger: they.

and believes, thus becomes the bride. Now the servant of his master gives her goods. Paul interprets this from 1 Cor. 4:1: "For this reason, consider us servants of Christ and stewards of the mystery of God. First, the servant gives her special jewels, like those given to brides, innaures, or forehead bracelets, of half a shekel of gold, that is, almost one Hungarian florin; then also an armlet, which she puts on her hands and arms, ten shekels of gold, that is, four and twenty florins; the two he expresses specially. The first jewel on the forehead is not precious, the other is still twenty times as precious on [the] hands. Now the spiritual goods which he brings with him, and gifts which he gives to the bride, mother and friends, these are the mysteries of God, as Paul calls them, and in short, nothing but the gospel; which brings with it brow bands and bracelets, that is, it brings with it faith, and then the gifts of the Spirit.

22 Thus the two are put on in the Revelation of John [Cap. 14, 9.], the forehead and hands, which the end-Christ forbade, that no man should buy nor sell, except he had a mark, seal, and mark of the forehead and hands, as here. These are the two pieces, faith and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The hands signify the outward life that a Christian man leads; but the forehead is the face before God. Faith seems to be small, but it is much nobler and better; love seems to be much greater, as it is, therefore it spreads widely and serves everyone. For, faith alone acts against God, and goes to one person; but love goes to all people. Summa, this is how the jewels indicate the manifold gifts of God, as Paul calls them and tells us in 1 Cor. 12, 4 and also in Rom. 12, 6, which are given to Christianity when it believes. But faith must be first, after which God comes with all His beautiful gifts and adorns them with them, as. Prophesying, ruling, wisdom, understanding, discerning of spirits 2c. All these things have now passed away in the time of the apostles, who were sent into the Jewish land.

3) "also" is missing in the Jena.

To offer and distribute the Gospel with its goods and gifts.

23 Further, Laban, the bride's brother, is called in German white, glistening, which shines brightly and glistens, with whom one finds the bride. This is the synagogue and Judaism, which was finely decorated and adorned, but all shiny and glistening. For the gospel does not strike the most wicked spirits, but those who have practiced, who would gladly be pious; there it commonly finds poor, wretched consciences, among whom it finds the bride, [who] is imprisoned under the law, whom it must set free and bring to Christ.

(24) This also means that she goes out with the jar from her father's house to fetch water. First of all, she is a maid, not a woman; this is the Jewish people, who carried themselves with the jar of the law, which is vain water that waters only the animals, the external people who know nothing of faith; carries it on his back, this is the burden that those carry who handle the law.

(25) But the law serves to keep the people finely in check, so that they may lead a fine, chaste life, like Rebekah here, who is now to become a woman. The ministry of preaching is nothing but a water jar, from which the camels are watered; but the camels are the great, hopeful saints, for which the apostles must also drink of the water. Thus we have two preaching ministries, law and gospel. The law is a gleaming, the gospel comes and brings us to the Lord, who makes us a woman.

26. the bride's name is also Rebekka, that is, a fattened woman, or a fat woman 1).

1) This is how this word is written in the Wittenberg and in the Jena. Erlanger: Plüntzsch.

and fat boasting, that is the synagogue, fattened and fat with great works, but must afterwards draw in and slenderize themselves by the gospel, is still fat and full of their own works, that they may throb heavenward, like the fat Eglon [Judges 3:17].

27) This is the meaning by which the preaching ministry and the gospel is modeled, what it accomplishes in the world, how Christ reigns, and lets the apostles bring his bride, whom they do not know who she should be, whom he then takes to himself; their mother and friends he leaves in the country, and gives them gifts, but to the bride he gives it all, puts her in all the goods that he has. Christianity is made up of Jews and Gentiles, 2) has come to Christ even with one another; but the Synagogue has only a piece and a part, a small jewel of it.

028 And Abraham's commanding the servant that he should take no wife for his son, save of his own friendship, and not of the Canaanites, signifieth that Christ is not promised save unto the Jews. Then the bride had to be fetched; but we were added, like the harlot, so Rebekah led along. But the head and best of Christianity was the Jewish people, that is the blood. Christ is their cousin, coming from the fathers; the apostles were actually sent to the Jews. But since they did not want to listen, they turned to the Gentiles, like Rebecca takes her nurse and maids with her, and what she belongs to. That is the historia with the meaning; now we want to bury Abraham, and make out his legend.

2) "und Heiden" is missing in the Erlanger.

## The twenty-fifth chapter.

V.1-10 Abraham took a wife again, whose name was Keturah, and she bore him Simeon and Jaksau, Medan and Midian, Jezbak and Shuah. And Jaksan begat Seba and Dedan. And the children of Dedan were: Assurim, Letusim and Leumim. The children of Midian were: Ephah,

Cpher, Hanoch, Abida and Cldaa. All these are children of Keturah. Abraham gave all his goods to Isaac, but to the children he had from the concubines he gave gifts, and let them go from his son Isaac, because he was still alive, toward the east.

**Now this is Abraham's old age, that he lived an hundred and five and seventy years, and was sick, and died in a quiet old age, being old and full of life, and was gathered unto his people. And his sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him in the twofold cave of the field of Ephron the son of Zoar the Hittite, which is toward Mamre, in the field which Abraham bought of the children of Heth. There Abraham is buried with Sarah his wife.**

001 In this text we have what the Scripture calls eoneubinas, that is, concubines; not concubines or pimps, but wives in wedlock. [They are called concubines because they were not righteous women, for Sarah was the right matron. Hagar was also Abraham's wife, for the text says that she gave Sarah to her husband, but she was not the wife of the house. Such are now called eoneubinao, concubines, not the chief women, but those who go to the right wife's hand, like other maidservants, and yet are wives.

2 Thus the text says here, how Abraham took Keturah in marriage, and begat children with her, and yet counted her among the concubines, because it says: Abraham gave all his goods to Isaac; but to the children he had by concubines he gave gifts. Thus Sarah was the chief wife, the others did not have so much power. Therefore, since the Scripture says of King Solomon [1 Kings 11:3] that he had seven hundred queens and three hundred concubines, it is also said that the queens are the right wives, and the others are their subjects. This is the scriptural custom and way.

(3) But I will not dispute much here what Abraham longed for, that he should take a young maid, and beget so many children, when he could hardly have had a son before. What the cause was, I do not know, the text does not say it either. It is not to be believed that he did it out of sheer presumption; but because he had the promise that his seed should be spread out as far as the world, he thought, "Although Isaac is the right seed, from which the spiritual seed should come," he nevertheless gave the other seed to the father.

also want to spread out, so that God's word would be fulfilled. Let no one think that the holy old father was so carnal that he had a desire for pleasure; he has been tempted so much and so highly that he has lost the thrill and become full of life.

4 The histories of the dear fathers are so foolish to look at that flesh and blood must laugh at them and consider them foolishness. But it is only because of this that hopeful, intelligent spirits are offended by them and become fools; just as St. Augustine, before he became a Christian, considered these histories so foolish and mocking. Such spirits, falling into it as they are, also judge the words of God according to the flesh. Meanwhile God is there, making Abraham walk in the spirit and do such works that if another did them, they would be useless; because he does them, it is all good. So a fool enters into it, cannot judge himself in it, nor see into Abraham's heart.

5 Therefore he that will read the scriptures must go with fear, and always read the fathers' legends, that he may never judge by works. If he does not, he will be grievously lacking, and will count the highest works for sin, and again. As above [Cap. 4, 5/ of Cain's sacrifice of the best fruits; that was a beautiful work; nevertheless God will not look at it, but takes care of the other. Therefore, reason must close its eyes to this and consider itself a fool.

(6) Therefore, whether or not such examples are found of the fathers, care must be taken that their deeds are not regarded as carnal, killing, murdering, raging, and avenging, (1) though they sometimes fall, that no one condemn them so soon, but look first at the spirit, as they have been minded. Was it not foolish of Samson, since his wife was taken from him, he said Mcht. 15, 3/ "I have once a right cause against the Philistines, I will do you harm", that is, I will avenge it, and put all misfortune on you? Was this also evangelical of him? What should reason judge? After all, it is publicly forbidden [Matth. 5, 39], one should not strike again: still he continues, and since his people punished him,

1) Thus the Jenaers. Wittenberg and Erlangen: zörne und räche.

why he had done it, he said [Judg. 15, III: "As they have done to me, so have I done to them again." Therefore, if reason should judge, it concludes that it is an unchristian work. God has always done so, and still does so, and will probably do so forever. We should let it close, so we want to master it.

7 So also the good Abraham must take a wife in his last days, only to make fools of us, that the whore, the reason, may be silent and leave her judgment. So also that which Samson did by the Holy Spirit, another cannot do without the Holy Spirit. It is the same work, but the Spirit separates it, just as Cain's and Abel's are separated. For Samson's mind was like this: He did not care that his wife had been taken from him; but he was set up as a protector and judge over the people, for which God had ordained him; therefore he was guilty of his office, that he harmed the enemies, and sought only cause as he could, that he might oppress the Philistines, and protect and save his people. For this reason he accepted this cause, that they had taken his wife from him in sacrilege, so that they themselves had to say that they deserved it. So learn to look at such histories and examples properly.

8th What now the children Keturā are, from it large people became, almost all in Arabia, as one finds in [the] prophets, have both Arabia in, realm Arabia, and stone Arabia, I let go, it does not belong for the laymen. Now that the children have freiet, Abraham died when he had lived a hundred uyd five and seventy years. [He was a pilgrim and a stranger in the land for over a hundred years, for he had just departed in the fifth and seventieth year of his age; so long was he a stranger there, having no possession of his own. What misfortune will have come under his eyes in the hundred years that his heart will have had to endure many a hard struggle; he will never have been safe, always tossed to and fro like a leaf from a tree; at last, however, he will still have his own burial. It is briefly described and said, a hundred years; but it is a long time to live.

What more does he do? [He makes an order in life, that Isaac, the son of the

The first wife shall remain in the house and sit in the property and inheritance, the others he shall abandon and give them their share.

(10) So he died in a quiet old age; he was full and satisfied with life, says the text. And it is also a great praise of the dear fathers, and a noble gift from God, that they have been weary and full of life, and have longed for death; they have died gladly and finely in peace. God has martyred them so well that they have had enough of life, have longed for death, and have become happy.

(11) So the two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, buried him. From this it is to be noted that the son Ishmael is not expelled as if he should never come back, because he ever comes here again to the burial. Therefore it is not unbelievable, but not certain, how some say, Keturā was Hagar, whom he took again after Sarā death. But it is certain that he took Ishmael to himself again, but in such a way that he was not allowed to live in the house; of course, the mother was often with him, so that he remained in the confession of his father.

12 Because Abraham is dead, we will henceforth hear another legend from the other father, Isaac, about how he was blessed after his father's death. But Abraham's legend is almost the greatest and noblest in this book, in which we do not see a bit of the jugglery that we have done with our legends and works, praying, fasting, watching 2c. We find nothing about what he ate or drank, how he put himself in time. If something of it [there] stood, how should they boast of their works and spiritual life; but now nothing stands there but faith, that God always drives and practices his word with persecution, and his nature always goes in love and holy cross, so the world becomes a fool about God's words and God's saints. But look at it, and learn from it, that no life is valid, it also goes like this. We will see and hear more about this in the following stories of Isaac and Jacob.

End of the history of the archfather Abraham.

1) In the old editions: reprimandable.

2) "again" is missing in the Erlanger.

**V. ii. And after the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac his son, and he dwelt by the well of the living and the seeing.**

God has blessed Isaac (says Moses), so that it can be seen that the first birth of Ishmael, his brother, is not valid before God, yes, he is rejected, and his blessing is given to Isaac, which was due to the firstborn before the world, as a sign that the flesh or physical birth does not make Abraham's children before God, as St. Paul explains in his epistles [Rom. 9, 8. Gal. 4, 28. For if the reputation of the flesh should apply here, then it would be right and just that this bodily and firstborn son, Ishmael, should have retained the preference and blessing, and not have been withdrawn from him without cause and guilt, as reason considers it. Since this one is not accepted, how much less should the other Jews, who are not so close to Abraham's children, and yet boast of the flesh, be considered before God.

**V.12-18. This is the lineage of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar bore him, Sarah the maid of Egypt, and these are the names of the children of Ishmael, of which their families are named. The firstborn son of Ishmael, Nevajoth, Keder, Adbeel, Mibsam, Misma, Duma, Masa, Hadar, Thema, Jetur, Naphis and Kedma. These are the children of Ishmael with their names in their courts and cities, twelve sovereigns. And this is the age of Ishmael, an hundred and seven and thirty years: and he was sick, and died, and was gathered unto his people. And he dwelt from Havilah even unto Sur over against Egypt, as one goeth into Assyria; and he overtook all his brethren.**

(14) This order the Scriptures always keep, as we have seen, from the beginning, that they first describe those who are born of and after the flesh, and then put those who are born of the Spirit, so that all of us, as St. Paul says, must first be born naturally of the flesh, and then spiritually through the Word. (There) is also in this the secret interpretation that the law and the law's people must come first, then the gospel. Grace is not given unless wrath is first given through the knowledge of sin.

felt. The old man must be executed and die first, and then the new man comes and lives.

(15) Secondly, it is shown here, as we heard above [Cap. 4, 17], that Cain with his children first possesses the land, and invents all kinds of handling, and continues to multiply and spread out; so also here: this Ishmael sits down, thinks to stay in the land and to rule, begetting twelve sons, all of whom he makes rulers of the land, becomes a mighty, powerful lord, [it] goes well with him according to his command, comes over twelve rulers sooner than Isaac has two sons. God thus increases him as abundantly as if he did not want to increase Isaac, whom he had blessed, and raises him up in the land to sit quietly and rule, and lets Isaac go astray in the land as a stranger, to whom he had promised through his father to give the land. So God does it with his own, arranges the game so strangely that it seems as if only the antagonism should happen; lets it go to the faith so that it is exercised, remains pure and free, and becomes strong. Now he lets Ishmael be in charge and rule; but after Isaac's death he made his children so great and strong that they brought everything under themselves.

(16) Thirdly, Moses wants to show what kind of character, rule and trade Ishmael had when he says: "And he overcame all his brothers, that is, as was said about him above [Cap. 16:12], he became a wild man, who did not want to obey anyone or be a subject, and not only attacked Isaac, but also the other brothers; as was also written about the Nephilim or tyrants in the sixth chapter [v. 8] and about Nimrod in the tenth. Thus he lived with the sword, overpowered the people with it, brought them under himself and won. Has also had tzin great land under him, almost all of Arabia; therefore the Jews even to this day a part of the country, so one calls 'atraeam, that is, Steiu-Ara-.

bien, call Kedar, after the one son of Ishmael.

(17) Behold, all the children of the flesh, that is their nature and trade, have great happiness,

Wealth and power, especially the works saints, who have the name that they are called God's people. On the other hand, the right ones are children of God in spirit and faith, must be despised and regarded as nothing, and must also be overpowered and persecuted by them. Now the interpretation and figure is that this is actually the way of the saints of works, who live in the law and seek godliness in works, that they always fight against those and 1) persecute those who walk righteously in faith; as St. Paul points out Gal. 4, 29. This is Ishmael. Now follows the story of the other son:

**V. 19-23. This is the lineage of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham begat Isaac. Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as his wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Mesopotamia, Laban the Syrian's sister. Isaac asked the Lord for his wife, because she was barren. And the LORD was entreated, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children joined themselves together in her womb. Then she said: Since it should be so with me, why did I conceive? So she went to ask the Lord. And the LORD said unto her, There are two rooks in thy womb, and two manner of men shall depart out of thy womb; and one people shall be superior unto another, and the greater shall serve the lesser.**

This patriarch does not have a long legend, like Abraham and afterwards Jacob. But there are again two brothers starting from the hour. There is a great deal of trouble 2) with the wife of Isaac, so that in the sight of reason it seems as if God were fooling. Therefore beware that you do not fool with the Scriptures, for God has done more to make fools of all the world with one small work. The first thing that is written here is that Isaac is tempted, who had the promise that his seed would become like the sand on the seashore: so God foolishly sets about it, as if nothing would come of it. Isaac takes a wife in the fortieth year, goes there five, ten, fifteen, until the twentieth year. How

1) "and" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) A lot of festivities are raised - a great being is made. (Dietz 8. v. Fest. Vergl. Cap. 26, s 1.)

He has seen many marriages, that it had increased around him daily, to whom God had not promised anything; he also sees his brother Ishmael, that he has so many children. Why does he not take a wife, as Abraham did [Cap. 16, 1. ff.], because he saw that his Rebekah was barren?

(19) The first thing that strengthened him was God's word, to which he clung firmly, and God provided when and how He would fulfill His promise. On the other hand, he also had the example of his father, that Abraham still had a child by the barren Sarah in his old age, when he had her at thirty years or longer, and had now learned how God fulfilled His promise against and above human reason and understanding. [He] may also have seen that the other children of Abraham were wronged by the other wives, and that he was not well with them.

020 Now when Isaac had tarried a long time, and tarried so many years, he prayed unto God, doubtless not once, but often and much, that his wife might be fruitful: and it was heard, that he had two children for one. There you see what the prayer of the devout believer is capable of, that it must be heard, and abundantly obtain what one asks for. So we see in all this nothing but fine examples of faith, as before in the patriarch Abraham.

21 The text also gives us something to preach about pregnant women. When Rebekah became pregnant, she experienced a special hardship, so that she had to suffer the children in her womb to bump into each other. Of course, this was not good for her, because she had to consider her life and feared that she would have to stay with the children. That is why she laments and cries: "Since it should be so for me, why did I become pregnant? Such distress and strange nature lead her so hard that she goes to ask the Lord; otherwise, if she had not been in fear of death, she would not have gone to ask. Where then did she go to the Lord? She has not gone to heaven.

22. the Jews say that she went to the old father Shem, the son of Noah, and

The same asked, who according to the account was still alive at that time, and after that at fifty years. [It is also well believable. For he was the oldest father, lived a long time, well experienced and practiced in spiritual matters, and full of the Holy Spirit, that he knew how to advise in such matters. Besides him, there were several others of the same sex, also holy fathers. She went to them, no doubt not without orders, but with the advice of her husband, and asked what would become of them, or what she should think of them.

23) Then she gets this answer: Do not be surprised that it is so for you, because "you have two peoples in your body" 2c. "and the greater will serve the lesser". This seems as if it were a magic word, when such things were common among the Gentiles; but this is a special work of God, that He says the greatest shall serve the least. This is what we have said so often, and will see much more hereafter, is also decreed in heaven, that [it] must always go thus, as with the two children, that one must lie on top, and the other must allow itself to be trampled underfoot. In spiritual things, I say, not in outward being and goods; so that in the people who boast of God, his word and law, they must thus divide into the two heaps, and those who are the least and the lowliest must be drawn out and lifted up, but the greatest and most powerful will be rejected. This is so much said: God's people win when they are at the bottom, and the other bunch, when they are at the highest and firmest, they fall and lose. How is it possible that he who lies below should win? In the sight of God it must be seen; so it is said: Lost in the sight of the world, won in the sight of God; and again.

24 Thus this saying and figure was fulfilled in the apostles' time, as long as the gospel was preached, when they were persecuted and driven out by the Jews and the Gentiles; then reason and the world cannot say otherwise: With the Jews won, with the apostles lost. But what happened? In that the Jews win, they are under, and those who lose retain the victory. How so? Because the Jews are just by the apostle's word, for the sake of Christ's blood.

The apostles and martyrs, however, are held in the highest honor before God and praised above all the earth, because no king or emperor has ever attained such eternal honor and glory on earth.

(25) It will be the same in our time, if we are worthy. The pope with his bishops and tyrants will boast hostilely and cry victory when they have persecuted, tortured, burned and killed us, who have the gospel right, enough. But when they think that it is over with us, God will reveal who has won, and they will be overthrown and go to ruin, but we will remain forever. Summa, this is God's way and work, which He is always doing: He who is defeated is above. In worldly matters, things are different, where it is said: God helps the strongest; here, however, God helps the weakest.

### **Allegoria [or secret interpretation].**

Rebekah, the mother of two children, means the Christian church or holy scripture. For thus God calls the Scriptures or His Word His 1) womb and His breasts, out of which His Christians are born, as a child is born of the womb and nourished therein; as Isaiah [Cap. 46:3] says: "Hear Me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of Israel, who are carried in My womb, and by My mother." This is where the quarrel arises, that the two are at odds with each other; this is what she must feel and suffer, that she thinks she must stay with the children, that is, that the two peoples set themselves against each other. And the rumor rises over the Scriptures, which the right Christians have for themselves; but the works saints want to take them by force to their thing, and persecute those about it, so that it seems, and reason must say, that they must go to ruins.

27 Therefore she concludes that it is not good that there should be such discord in the world; surely a common council should be held, so that all may be at one, and each may know what he ought to do. How then do the best and brightest in the world think? Yes, wait

1) In the issues: his.



until that happens, and in the meantime go to the devil. The pope also did it, wanted to stop such discord and make a unified regiment, so that the quarrel would be quieted, so that the children would no longer fight in their mother's belly. But what did he accomplish? Nothing but the devil and death.

But God says thus: Nothing will come of it, nor would it be right nor good that it should be quiet; I will have it so, that of the children there shall come two peoples, which must be eternally against one another; therefore St. Paul says [1 Cor. 11:19], "There must be divisions." But the strongest and greatest multitude are the Esauites, who deal in works and are without faith; but God finally does not suffer them to be superior, but turns it around, and makes Jacob trample Esau under his feet.

(29) So it goes with our lines now. After the gospel has been revealed and is in the daylight, we must oppose the papacy and say that it is a vain doctrine of the devil, as Paul says [1 Tim. 4:1]. We cannot be silent, or we must have God as our enemy; then they cannot stand it, have power and the sword, and want to have us dead. Therefore, to have peace in Christendom is just as much as to have no Christendom.

030 Conclude therefore, that where the gospel is concerned, strife ariseth, that they come into the scriptures, and must fight on every side with the brethren; and where it is not, it is a sure sign that there are no Christians. Because Rebekah has good days, she does not bear children.

(31) But God causes such discord only so that the small group may rise and prevail, that it may be seen how all power and strength must be won, and be unable to do anything against God's word and His own, how small and weak they are.

32 Now, this saying, "The greatest shall serve the least," St. Paul drew on and interpreted Rom. 9:10-13: "When Rebekah was with child by Isaac, before the children were born, and had done neither good nor evil, that the purpose of God might be according to election, it was said to her, not for merit of works, but for the sake of the children.

by grace: The greatest shall serve the least; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated." [He] wants to conclude that Jacob can boast of nothing, except that: "What I have was given to me and bestowed upon me by God before I was young in my mother's womb. Thus, this text forcibly puts down free will and all merits. For what could they do, or by what should they deserve, that this one should be subject, or that one should be subject?"

33 Thus we have the divine judgment of the two brothers, that what is high is nothing before God and must be thrown down; and what is low is high before Him and must be subjected, so that both may be resisted, all arrogance and despair, and the poor have comfort and defiance, but the great and mighty fear and humble themselves.

**V.24-28. When the time came for her to give birth, behold, there were twins in her womb. The first one that came out was reddish, all rough, like fur, and they called him Esau. Next came out his brother, who held Esau's heel with his hand, and they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born. And when the boys were grown up, Esau became a hunter and a husbandman, and Jacob a simple man, and dwelt in the tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his pasture: but Rebekah loved Jacob.**

The scripture wants to show the miraculous work that the children did in their mother's womb, and after that, how everyone would have liked to be the first one out. The first one, says Moses, was reddish, not that he was completely red, but finely tanned, hard and brave; as one also reads of David [1 Sam. 16, 12], that he was a tanned one, with pretty eyes 2c. [XXX] But Esau is called in German, *thätig* or *schäftig* and *wacker*, as we say in our way, *Thätereich*, 1) therefore that he should become a hero before the world.

1) Thus the Erlangeners. Wittenberger: *Dittereich*; Jenaer: *Ditterich*. We have given preference to the former reading because Luther (Walch, old edition, vol. XIV, 1292, § 8) gives the name "Dydrich" the interpretation: "rich in GOtt, holy, divine".

35 Jacob's name is derived from the heel or sole of the foot, as one who kicks with his heels or feet, because he holds his brother here by the heel, and afterwards in chapter 27, v. 36, Esau himself says, "His name is Jacob, because he has now kicked me twice. This one, says the text, was a simple man and lived in the huts.

(36) Simple, in Hebrew *Tham*, means as much as we say, an innocent, pious man, without evil, who does no harm or harm to anyone. This man dwelt in the tabernacles, that is, he stayed at home with his mother, and did not break forth. Esau, on the other hand, became a farmer and a hunter; he prepared himself for food as if he thought he would live forever; he became strong and active in his work.

37 Now behold God's judgment, so that Isaac also is deceived, and sets his date on the son of Esau, and has him for his favorite, because, says the text, he ate of his pasture. [He] has thus thought: Rebekah is a fool, thinks much of Jacob; but this son, he thinks, should do it; Jacob, however, had to be the Cinderella, without Rebekah loving him. Therefore, you can conclude that this Esau was a delicious man, who walked along in the highest appearance and fine, respectable character, that it pleased the father quite well that he thought badly that he was the right son, on whom the blessing and promise was. [It also deceived him that he was the firstborn, as the text says; but of Jacob he thinks nothing, because he goes about so badly and simple-mindedly.

(38) But God allows the good father to err for a while, but at last he turns it around and always does it differently than we suggest, because he wants it badly that people fear him. Whoever does not do this, but lets his mind and conceit please him, he will surely overthrow it. So Rebekah thought, "Oh that God would look upon my son, that he might be blessed!" for she had for herself the saying, "The greatest shall serve the least," although it seemed much different to her eyes. Jacob also half doubted, because he saw how the father thought so much of his brother. So they stood on this side in fear, but Isaac and Esau thought they were the

thing certain; therefore they also are absent. But how Isaac sent himself into the word, which was spoken of the two brethren, I know not, that he thus erred and lacked, when the words were bright and clear: The greatest shall serve, and the least shall be lord. [This shows how God sometimes causes His saints to err, so that no one relies on saints, nor on conciliarity, and everything that seems great, but does not want to see or hear anything except what God's word says.

**V.29-34. And Jacob cooked a dish. And Esau came from the field, and was weary, and said unto Jacob, Let me taste the red dish, for I am weary. Therefore his name is Edom. But Jacob said, Sell me this day thy firstborn. And Esau said, Behold, I must die: for what shall my firstborn be to me? And Jacob said, Swear unto me this day: and he swore unto him, and so sold Jacob his firstborn 2c.**

The word *Edom* means "red" in German, from which Esau gets the name here. Above, when he was born, the text says, he was reddish in the body, or a tan. But the scripture does not give him the name because of this, but because of the red soup; so that they wanted to indicate the secret interpretation, as we will hear.

40 This text now shows how Esau was a proud saint, that he respected the first birth so little, and gave for the red soup; thus he thought: Ha, I am the first, that all dominion and right of the first birth remain well with me. For it was at that time and always with the Jews a precious jewel about the first birth, so that it brought with it both the priesthood and regiment, plus two parts of the inheritance. The firstborn was to be seated in his father's estate, and the lineage was to remain on him, so that the line of the family would continue after him.

41 But this was much greater, that Christ was promised to Abraham and his seed, therefore the honor of the first birth was even greater. But because they often strutted and defied such right, God also turned it around and rejected them, that the youngest were chosen for it; as we have also seen in Adam's and Abraham's children, and afterward of Jacob's and Joseph's sons; for He wills

neither look at anything nor suffer anything that does not go in fear.

(42) Jacob may be excused here for not giving the red dish to his brother without the first birth, that he did it out of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, for no doubt his mother always told him the words: The greatest shall serve the least.

43 But that the sophists say that Esau sinned by selling spiritual goods, and call it Simoniam, I leave aside, it is their dreams. The Scriptures punish him for despising the first birth and for taking it to the wind, which was a fine gift from God, and for giving it to the red pulp. He should have left life and limb over it before he would have let such honor and freedom, given by God, come from him; but because he so arrogantly despises it, God despises him again, and deprives him of all right and also of blessing.

44 Therefore Jacob has not sinned in taking them to himself, as the children of Israel [Ex. 12:35] did not sin when they took from Egypt silver and gold utensils and garments, as God had appointed them. For the Egyptians were God's, with all that they had. So also Esau's first birth was God's, that he might take it from him and give it to his brother. As it came to Jacob, whether stolen or bought, it belongs to him. So this example teaches how God punishes presumption and arrogance, and exalts humility. Now let us see what is meant by this.

... (45) We have heard how these two brethren are two peoples who boast of God, and are not separated outwardly from one another, for they both abide in one house, but inwardly according to the faith of the heart; these are the two, Jews and Christians. The Jews were Esau, active and quick, freshly practicing the works of the law. When the gospel went out, Esau was the first to come forth, and he was of a fine reddish color; that is, the saints of works shine beautifully in their fine works, so that they alone are thought to be children of God; and they must be reddish or brown, that is, a fierce, hot, angry people, as brown people commonly are. That is it

Also that they are hairy and rough, like a skin, that is, of a stiff-necked and rude kind, not clean nor kind. [There is no more unpleasant, unpleasant and bitter people than such saints of works; therefore Christ also calls them viper-bred; they can have neither patience nor mercy with those who stumble because of weakness; they judge everyone, purr and purge, as soon as one does not do right to them.

(46) But the true Christians are gentle and mild, able to bear and mend the weak. These, as I have said, must be the firstborn, that they may have greater honor, name and authority before the world. But Jacob also wanted to be the firstborn, because Christians like to see that everyone recognizes the gospel, but nothing comes of it. Esau must come first before the world; however, Jacob 1) holds Esau's heel with his hand, that is, the works saints push the pious Christians under, outside before the world; but before God it turns around again, that they tread those under the feet, as we will hear.

47] Further, I have said above 26] that Rebekah means the holy Scriptures, but Isaac, the father, means God. If we now compare the benefits that God has bestowed on the carnal Jews and also on the true believers, it seems that God preferred the Jews to the apostles; [He] sets Himself against them as a father, but these He calls to go, as everyone's servants, and sets Himself as if He did not know them. To the Jews he has promised much land and good, and to the apostles he allows sorrow and hardship; but Jacob has the best part for himself, that his mother is devoted to him. So this simple, pious little group has the Scriptures and God's word for itself, so that they can comfort themselves and be satisfied with it; they do not ask much about the world.

048 But what is the meaning of Esau's giving the firstborn for the red soup? What is written of eating and drinking is to be interpreted to the doctrine. This is the doctrine of temporal goods, which was practiced throughout the Old Testament, as they say in the 144th Psalm, v. 12: "That our sons may grow up like plants in their youth, and that they may have a good life.

1) Erlanger: er.

our daughters, like the hewn-out oriels, like the palaces; that our corners be full, which give forth victuals, unto victuals again; that our flocks bear a thousand and an hundred thousand without"; such also have we just been taught, that is, the brown soup, after which he lusteth. If it happens that we have no shortage, but cellars and floors full, then they say: Here dwelleth God; as they there, v. 15, say, "Blessed are the people that thus prosper." Now the rough Esau means the same preachers who know nothing of faith, and preach what is gladly heard and serves for good days.

(49) Now that he comes from the field and has grown weary means that such preaching does not suffer persecution. So Paul says Gal. 5:11: "But I, if I still preach circumcision, why do I suffer persecution? So would the vexation of the cross have ceased." He who preaches of works is not persecuted. For what reason can grasp, it delights in; but what it cannot grasp, that

They do not want to suffer. Therefore they do not want to preach about faith, how it alone justifies, but preach that the belly also has enough; the red soup tastes too good to them, so they do not leave it. Jacob, however, abandoned the red dish and allowed Esau to have it, but he was given something higher and better, namely the firstborn.

50 Thus it was in the days of the apostles. The Jews kept the red mush, remained on works and temporal good; but they left outward things, and took the firstborn by faith, and became kings and lords of eternal goods. Therefore the Jews and saints of works are called Edom to this day, because they love to hear the doctrine of men and works. And as Esau despised the firstborn, saying, "What use is it to me, I must die?" so do these also, saying: Oh, if we were to give up our possessions and all temporal goods, it would be too hard for us; we have no more of them because we are alive, and yet we lose both temporal and eternal goods.

## The twenty-sixth chapter.

(vv. 1-33) And there came a tempest into the land above that which was in the days of Abraham: and Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines to Gerar. Then the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt, but tarry in the land which I tell thee; be a stranger in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee: for unto thee and unto thy seed will I give all this land, and will confirm my oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father. And I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all this land, and by thy seed shall all nations be blessed; because Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my statutes, my judgments, and my judgments. So Isaac dwelt at Gerar. And when the people of the same place asked of his

He said, "She is my sister," because he was afraid to say, "She is my wife; they would kill me for Rebekah's sake, because she was beautiful to look at. When he had been there for some time, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looked through the window and saw Isaac joking with Rebekah his wife. Then Abimelech called unto Isaac, and said, Behold, it is thy wife: how saidst thou then, she is my sister? Isaac answered him, I thought that I might die for her sake. Abimelech said, "Why have you done this to us? It would have been easy for one of the people to lie with your wife, and so you would have brought guilt upon us. Then Abimelech commanded all the people, saying, Whosoever toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death. And Isaac sowed in the land, and found the same

year a hundredfold. 1) For the LORD blessed him, and yet ye hate me, and have driven me from you. They he became a great man, and went and increased until said: We see with eyes to see that the LORD is with he was almost great, that he had much substance of thee, therefore said we: Let there be an oath between flocks and herds, and a great company. Therefore the us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee, Philistines envied him, and stopped up all the wells that thou do us no hurt; even as we have not touched which his father's servants had digged in the days of thee, and as we have done thee nothing but all good, Abraham his father, and filled them with earth: and and let thee go in peace. But thou art now the blessed Abimelech said unto him, Depart from us; for thou art of the LORD. Then he made them a feast, and they become too mighty for us. Then Isaac departed, and did eat and drink. And they rose up early in the pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. morning, and sware one to another. And Isaac let And when he had sat down, he digged the wells of them go, and they departed from him in peace. And water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants his father, which the Philistines stopped up after came and told him of the well which they had digged, Abraham's death, and called them by the name which and said unto him, We have found water. And he his father had called them. Isaac's servants also dug called it Sheba, 5) therefore the name of the city is in the valley, and found there a well of living water. Bersaba, unto this day.

But the shepherds of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's shepherds, saying: The water is ours; so he called the well Esek, 2) because they had mocked him there. Then they dug another well, and there also they quarreled: therefore' he called it Sitnah. 3) Then he departed, and digged another well, and they quarreled not against each other: therefore he called his name Rehoboth, 4) saying, Now hath the LORD made room for us, and caused us to grow in the land. And he departed thence unto Bersaba. And the LORD appeared unto him that night, and said: I am Abraham your father's God; fear not, for I am with you, and will bless you, and multiply your seed for my servant Abraham's sake. So he built an altar there, and called on the name of the LORD, and pitched his tents there, and his servants dug a well there. And Abimelech went unto him from Gerar, and Ahusath his friend, and Phichol his captain of the host. But Isaac said to them: Why come ye unto me?

(1) Thou hast shown how Moses is a useless launderer, that he makes so many tests of useless things. What business is it of ours that God Almighty should proclaim such things in the world, so that everyone must read about them? But all reason must say it is vain foolishness; have we nothing else to do nor to read, but how Isaac digs wells, and jests with the woman? Is this such a delicious story, since the power is on? Since he wanted to write about holy fathers, he could not write about good works and examples, such as praying, fasting, celibacy, etc., and leave such foolish things at home, which are especially annoying for spiritual people to read, because they should not study useless worldly things. He has indeed given cause enough for the Bible to be pushed under the bench, and has not considered it worthy that our high doctors should study in it. Why does he also write such foolish things?

(2) The first, which we have often heard, we also see here: Isaac had to become one of the greatest of the fathers, in whom much was due in the sight of God. Therefore, even if we do not understand what Moses means by this, we should not proceed with mad reason and conclude that it is foolishness. For (as often said) God has

5) Marginal gloss: Saba means an oath or vow, but Ber means a well.  
6) Fests - fuss.

1) In the editions: "hundred bushels". But afterwards, where this text is repeated: "hundertfältig"; only the Erlanger has also there: "Schäffel".  
2) Marginal gloss: Esek means mockery, when one does violence and injustice to someone.  
3) Marginal gloss: Sitna means resistance, hence the devil is called Satan, an obnoxious one.  
4) Marginal gloss: Rehoboth means space or width that is not narrow.

He has a desire to make fools of us; he puts such foolish works before us, so that he may put down the great saints, that it may be seen how he is all in faith alone, and cannot suffer any work to be praised, but his mere grace. Now if it has its glory and price, it is not because it is a work, however small it may be. And the most foolish work is as worthy of praise as the very highest and most exquisite. [He has such small works praised and preached throughout the world, since he does not want to see or know any of the great saints of works.

Therefore, the highest part of this chapter is that God speaks to the man twice. Work now back and forth, live otherwise or so, when God's word sounds, open your eyes, ears and heart; when the majesty speaks, it has strength and power, because he now holds two strong sermons with Isaac.

4. the first is almost long, which are vain excellent, strong promises, as given before to Abraham, that they are also confirmed with great power, oath and oath. [But it passes before our ears, and because it does not strike us, we turn a deaf ear to it. But if we look rightly at what words they are, and what they have behind them, we would be astonished at them, and consider them great enough.

(5) Because we hear (I say) that God speaks twice here with so many words, you should certainly consider that He is much more interested in the little works, jokes, digging wells, eating and drinking, than all priests, monks and nuns, and much higher to praise than all their prayer, fasting and holy life. What is the cause? None other than that here is God's word, which Isaac kept, but our clergy go without word and faith.

(6) It was the same for me. Before I became a fool, and still wanted to be a learned doctor, I was hostile to the book only because Moses made so much talk, and told how God talks to the fathers, as one cobbler to another; therefore I thought no more of this example, than if one made a legend of me, and wrote how I wandered over the field, or sat at home and slept.

7 So it throws all reason to the wind and does not look at what wonders are there.

that happens that God Himself speaks; that she only sees: O this is a loose work. But again, he fasted for so long, ate dry bread and drank water, and wore a hair shirt for the rest of his life. St. Jerome lay so long in the desert, and had a stone under his head for a pillow, and beat his breast with stones. O these are great, holy works! Moses, however, knows nothing to write, but how Isaac drags himself with the woman and jokes and fools with her.

(8) Therefore, God is always busy resisting the foolish whore, reason, which wants to measure the goodness of works by their greatness and length, proposing to her against and in defiance of such works that she considers to be nothing. Therefore conclude that nothing depends on many, great, long works, but only on God's word. If this is attached to it, consider it neither a joke nor a jugglery; as soon as it sounds and is spoken, it is a delicious thing. So that God does not want to be judged according to works, but according to his will. Reason says, "The work is great, therefore God will regard it; for what is great should be exalted. For this reason it is useful and necessary to describe such examples, lest reason should master God and tell him what he should or should not do. We must often say this, because it is so often indicated that we see how the whole of Scripture insists on it, even though it has not helped.

9) Notice, then, that Isaac must be a chosen one, because he is honored that God Himself speaks to him; for it is the greatest 1) wrath that he shows when he is silent and does not speak; and again, the greatest 2) grace when he lets his commandment and will be heard. But this is an exuberant grace, when he speaks so kindly and fatherly. Therefore look on the words, and hold them against each other, "I will be with thee (saith he), and will bless thee." If God thus promised us, as he does through the gospel, even if we should go into fire, hell and death, what would we rather hear than that he should say, "Go in fresh,

1) Wittenberger and Erlanger: large.  
2) Erlanger: large.

I want to be with you? What defiance and consolation would we have, that our hearts might be filled with joy, and not be afraid of a thousand dreads? 1) For if God, who has all things in His hands, is with me and will not leave me, what harm can come to me? Therefore, if all devils were one devil, I still go fresh.

(10) No one has felt such comfort except Isaac, for he is in a foreign land and in the precious time. How can a stranger be afraid, to whom everyone is hostile, and who does not want the bread crust? Where shall he go? All lands are closed to him, he has wife, child and servants with cattle. Where is the house, and the corn, and the hay, and the straw, and the stall, and all manner of food? [Moreover he is among the enemies; where will he go out? All this must have hurt him. Then God comes and does not let him go, saying, "There is no need; the temptation shall not kill you. Do not go to Egypt, which is a full land, but stay here in the land, and I will feed you, so that you will have enough; when it happened that he got a hundred bushels, where another got hardly one; he must have enough, if the whole country should starve.

(11) Therefore he has always thought, 'Here is a wife, child and servants, but nothing to feed them. Well, God has said that he will be with me and bless me; I know that it will be true. [He might have said, "How long will it last? It will come to nothing! But he held fast to the word, believing not only the promise of temporal nourishment in the time of trouble, but also of the seed by which all the world should be saved; therefore his heart was glad, and thought, Before I should suffer trouble, an angel must come from heaven and feed me.

(12) Now this is the right core of the Scriptures, which no reason sees or perceives, that such power is written in God's words, and such faith. Because they preach in the name of the devil about works, so that one should go to heaven, they do not see how in this history there are thoroughly excellent examples of faith, which one should preach, and thus say: See Isaac's faith in God.

1) Wittenberg and Jena: Todte.

not the works. It is a bad work that he goes from one country to another; but he goes there at the word of God, he is sure of it; but you go and do so many works, and have no word of God.

Therefore his work is mighty and great, and yet only a household work, not fasting, praying, nor establishing churches and masses, and keeping orders, which our fools consider delicious, yet God does not consider any of them, even rejects and condemns them to hell, because everything is without faith. But all this is so important in his sight that he has it written and preached to the whole world. Now name me one work that is like it. It is a small thing, but if you were to do it with all the priests and monks, you would not know how to do it, but would despair of it and go to the devil. Ah! God have mercy, how we mad fools have taught and acted.

(14) This is the first part of how God's word is preached to Isaac, and how he so vehemently accepts it, written as an example for us; he proved it, preached it and practiced it, but also suffered many blows. For God would not have spoken such words to him in vain if there had not been great need to strengthen and comfort him. Therefore the office of bishop, to preach [and] to govern, rested on him, but [he] will sometimes have faltered here and there; there was also still flesh and blood, that he must have needed such comfort, so that he might also continue to comfort and strengthen others. There must also have been pious people who followed him and clung to him; it is written that some also ran away from him. So it went with him, and is written for an example to us, who have the promise, every man for himself. We shall have enough, we live or die.

(15) Yea, sayest thou, if God had promised me as he promised Isaac, it were well to believe. Answer: Who knows how he told it to him; it is probably written that he told it through one of the oldest patriarchs, as Shem or Eber. But if an angel spoke it from heaven, is it ever so certain, if 2) he told it to us through men in the scriptures,

2) In the editions: "as if". The "as" seems too much for us.

or through priests. The tongue is not man's, but God's tongue; thus also the sermon. Therefore, if God Himself stood there and took a child in His hand and baptized it, it would be nothing 1) more certain than if He commanded the Christians and did and spoke through us men. It is his word and not ours; the only thing missing is that we do not have faith. Isaac will also have had many people who did not think much of him and even mocked him; therefore he must have always kept his word. 3) So he wants us also to look at the word alone, he speaks it how and where he wants. That is the main part of this chapter; let us now go through it according to the text.

**V. 1: And there came a tempest into the land above that which was in Abraham's days. And Isaac went to Abimelech the Philistine king to Gerar 2c.**

16 The first part, that in the time of the holy father Isaac there was a theurge in the land, gives us a question: how does it happen that God commonly sends theurge in the land, especially when His word goes out? as we also heard above [Cap. 12, 10.] in Abraham's histories, and afterwards under Jacob and Joseph [Cap. 42, 1.ff.] and often among the children of Israel. When, under the prophets Elijah [1 Kings 17, 1. 18, 2.] and Elisha [2 Kings 6, 25.] was a noticeable theure time, and so from then on. Also in Christ's time, and the apostles, one reads of great theurge under the emperor Claudio [Apost. 11, 28.]. Now it also happens now and then in countries, after the gospel has arisen again, that everyone starts to complain, more than ever before, that there is a lack of money and food everywhere, just as it happened in the time of the prophet Jeremiah, as he writes [Cap. 44, 17. 18.]: Then came together woman and man, and said, Is it not a plague that, while we served and sacrificed unto the queen of heaven, we had bread enough, and were well; but because we have ceased to serve her, we are in want, and are by the

Sword and hunger consumed? Therefore they also went and did it as before.

(17) Thus it is: as soon as one is to do God service, there is a lack everywhere, and everyone wants to starve. [I have said the cause, and it is quite possible, where the gospel remains in momentum, that everything will become too narrow for us. One cause is that where the gospel goes forth, sin also goes forth, that it is despised, condemned, persecuted, and blasphemed. Before, one could give two hundred guilders, but now one does not give one to poor people; then all cities were built and endowed with churches and monasteries; now we all cannot accomplish anything.

(18) This is one cause that God again afflicts the world, and makes the food short, because the gospel is despised. Nor will the plague remain, but will afflict us greatly when the gospel has run its course and there is room enough for repentance. God will not let the sin go unpunished, that one acts so shamefully and contemptuously with His word. The longer he bears with us, the worse we make it, and the more senseless they become, the more he must strike.

19 The other cause I give to the devil, but by God's will. For since he is a prince of the world, as he boasts against Christ in Matthew [Cap. 4, 8. 9. 1, it is also due to him to resist things that are not for his kingdom. Now that one does not give as much because of preaching the gospel as before is not a miracle. He would be a fool if he allowed it. Because we now fight against him, he must hold us so that we must die of hunger, as much as is in him.

020 Therefore it is not a bad sign, if he resists and resists, that now one cannot feed one good preacher, when before one filled two hundred monks. For before they served him; therefore he also had to provide for his servants; therefore he provided so well for all monasteries and convents, and gave enough to all; but now he sees that one wants to tear a hole in his regiment, he resists on all sides.

(21) I once heard an example, which, if it were not a lie, would probably rhyme with this: "As a householder once was,

1) Erlanger: not.

2) "him" is missing in the Erlanger.

3) "have" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Erlanger.



A ruthless, crude Christian who swore and cursed without ceasing in his house and taught his children to do the same; he had everything full, cellar, floor, house and yard, until once a pious man came to his house and asked him to stop such things, so long that he allowed himself to be persuaded and stopped. Soon it began to be missing in all corners. The devil was also right in not wanting to serve and reward him, because he no longer served him.

(22) One also reads of St. Ambrose, whether it is true I do not know, but it is not unlike the truth: that he once came into a rich man's house, where he saw that everything was abundant, and the man confessed that all his days had been according to his will. Then the pious man was afraid, and said to those who were with him: Here is high time that we go away, for there the devil reigns. And when he came out, the house fell down, and the earth swallowed up all that was there.

This is how it shall be: The devil is master of the world, therefore he will not give food to God's servants. But if you are to have it, God must give it and feed you. Therefore, God has decreed that those who are Christians must live in the time of trouble. When such cries and complaints arise because the gospel is being preached, you must be wise and know how to respond properly. Before, the devil gave everything enough, since we were his servants; but now the gospel has arisen, he withdraws his hand. So God also punishes the world, as is right; but stand firm, and believe in God, and you will have enough in the midst of the temptation. And methinks that the saying in the 37th Psalm, v. 25, goes here and sees: "I have been young and have grown old; but I have never seen a righteous man go hungry, or his children go after bread."

(24) God causes the pious to live in the present time, that He may prove His word to be true, and that He may feed His children by faith. And [it] is a sign that the gospel is true. That it bringeth forth fruit, and is not preached in vain. If it were not, I would think,

1) Erlanger: theurer.

The devil did not feel it. But because he feels it, you see that it has power in the people and pulls them back. But let him go, it will still remain Isaac. He who does not believe, let him die of hunger; but he who believes will have enough, for God does not lie, even if it rains grain from heaven. God only does it to punish the unbelievers and to try and strengthen those who believe. That is one part of this chapter. The other follows:

**V. 6-8: So Isaac dwelt in Gerar. And when the people of the same place asked of his wife, he said, She is my sister. For he was afraid to say, She is my wife, lest they slay me for Rebekah's sake: for she was fair of face. When he had been there for some time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through the window and saw that Isaac was joking with Rebekah his wife.**

(25) It is easy to see why the good father was so afraid. At that time, the gospel had not yet come forth, so that it could have been hoped that there would be some pious people in the land; it was only a regiment according to nature and reason. But where God's word and grace do not live among the people, nothing good can be provided for them; reason and nature cannot remain pious there; they are all liars and scoundrels; or, if they must be pious, they do it out of compulsion. Therefore you can think that this country and kingdom had to be a worldly being, that everyone did what he wanted, and especially the king may take his wife with good grace.

26) And it is but one, 2) that Moses suggests God's foolishness, that he writes such foolish work as Isaac said she was his sister, and the king looked out at the window, that he jested with her; not that he saw anything lewd, but that he perceived from outward gestures that she was not his sister, but must be his wife.

Did he have to write that just now? As I said before, I still say. When you see in the Scriptures such words of God as these

2) again - again.

Works, that thou mayest know that it is to scandalize the world. Therefore the lowly saint must stand with lowly works and be mocked before the world, but it does not see how such works have been done in faith, in God's word and good pleasure. So she goes on, and measures the works according to her own discretion, when all Scripture says that all works have their weight from God's good pleasure, and nothing depends on the quantity and greatness of the works. So this work must also be delicious and preached, no matter how much reason and hypocritical saints consider it foolishness. On the other hand, they must also see that God does not ask anything about their holiness, does not write a word about it, and deals with such foolish works against them.

028 Yet it was not great joy to Isaac that he had to be in the foreign land, and was all the days in danger with the woman of his life, and of her honor. Therefore God did not want him to be in danger for long; as even the king says here, "You might have brought a great sin upon us." That is why God sent it so that it would be revealed, so that no harm would come to him or to Rebekah. There you can see the care and diligence that God takes for those who trust in Him. He had to dare the woman and put her in the entrenchment and give her home to God to keep her where she would be taken from him. [This is a great example of faith, and at the same time a great comfort, that God preserves her and keeps her pure. Moses did not write this so often for nothing, as we have also heard it twice from Abraham. Isaac was also undoubtedly tempted, for it is very difficult to put everything in God's hands, so that he might think, "You are sending me into the land, and putting me in all kinds of danger with my body and my wife; but it is useful for him to strengthen his faith. For this is the way God always goes, so that he may prove how strong faith is, and always stand against shame, death and all misfortune.

029 Now here is the question, Whether Isaac lied, saying, She is my sister? I let that go. If it is a sin, then let it be a sin; we do not have the dear sisters in mind.

Saints to be excused for never having sinned. We want to praise God's grace in them highly, but we do not want to exalt their nature so highly. But it would be easy to excuse it, it was not a lie, because she was his sister according to the spirit.

(30) But it is no wonder if a Christian man stumbles. If we were in such a situation, we would not be able to say "yes" at times. Nevertheless, it remains God's grace that sustains and protects him, even if he falls. Now this is the grace that God sends through Abimelech the king to give him rest and peace even among the people, to sit him down and feed him in the land. Let this be the first challenge, described in this chapter. Follow on:

**V. 12-16 And Isaac sowed in the land, and found an hundredfold in the same year: for the LORD blessed him. And he became a great man, and went and increased until he was almost great, that he had much substance of cattle, both small and great, and a great household. And the Philistines envied him, and stopped up all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, and filled them with earth: and Abimelech said unto him, Depart from us; for thou art become too mighty for us.**

God tossed the patriarch back and forth like a ball, even caught him between the spurs, and made him so weak in his whole life that one could ever see how fine examples of faith are presented here. This is how happiness is shown here, how it is for the pious. And behold, how finely Moses describes it, as the Scripture should write: "Isaac has nothing that he has acquired, that all good, even temporal, must come from God's blessing; for there have always been many of them who have also worked, and yet have acquired nothing. Now God has given him a time of rest, but misfortune soon comes again.

So goes our life. We cannot have peace of mind, therefore it must be mixed that now the sun shines, now wind and rain come. So Isaac must now again suffer persecution and envy, [they] become fo enemy to him, that they do not grant him of the water, and block up all his wells. The land

has a special plague of water, that it is not to be found everywhere well. That is why they have kept the wells delicious and valuable, which is why there has been a lot of trouble; for it is a mountainous, hot and dry country, and does not have many streams and water flows.

**Then lak departed, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there, and digged the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines stopped up after the death of Abraham.**

Then Moses describes four pilgrimages of the holy father one after the other. The first one to the king, as it is told. The other to Gerar. After that he was driven away until the fourth time, so that he always had to be a poor pilgrim. [It would not have been possible for him to exist without a high level of faith, to always leave with his wife, child and servants, and to go astray, and to have no certain place, house, stable, field or meadow, but to drag everything with him with great cost and effort, and to buy and rent everything in a foreign country. Faith had to strengthen, comfort and sustain him, otherwise he would soon have become unhappy; so that it may be seen how the dear fathers suffered more than we do.

(34) He took comfort in the fact that God had promised him, "I will be with you. There is no one with him but God; but he pretends that he is not with him either. Thus we have the greatest piece of the legend of this patriarch in this chapter, a precious and noble thing, so pleasing to God, that 1) he was sure, for he had God's word. Before the world it was a miserable, wretched life; but God looked upon it in mercy. So it must happen that the world makes the cross before it and shrinks from it; it wants to know where it should sit and stay; if it does not know, it does not lift anything. But this one hangs on the word alone. Wherever he goes, it is all against him; he must consider this beforehand. Behold, this is the simple legend, wherein is no glorious work, but cross, persecution, and poverty; but in great faith.

035 Now the first thing is, that he went to Gerar, and sat down there, and made there two wells to be his own, as they had been his father's; and he made another well, and called it Esek, that is, Hohnbrunn; and they let it go, though it be hard. For the shepherds of Gerar said: He is ours, we are masters, so you are a guest; take by force and rob, would have had enough with him, but drive him away with all that he has. He will suffer and give way; he will not rebuke or avenge him; he will do no more than call the well Esek.

036 And when he is come away, he buildeth one; but he must let him go, and depart. Therefore he calls him Sitna, that is, resistance, from which the word Satan comes [Job 1, 6. 7.], so that Christ and the Scriptures [Matth. 4, 10.] call the devil, that is, an adversary. As also Paul calls the pope zuck Thessalonians [2. Ep. 2, 4.] *ἀνταγόμενος*, adversarius, who only resists and vainly opposes, does not celebrate, and otherwise does nothing, but what is contrary to Christ. Christ does not give the devil this name in vain; he knows well how he does not rest, attacking us on all sides. So he also calls Peter in Matthew [Cap. 16, 23]: "Get thee behind me, Satan." So here Isaac calls the well, because they always sat down against him, and would not allow nor grant that he should dig up his father's well.

037 And he departed again, till he should have peace, and digged a well, which he called Rehoboth, that is, room and breadth; as if he should say, Praise God that we have room once. Which word sufficiently indicates how he was pressed before, that he was neither seen nor heard. But he did not stay long in that place, and went back to Bersaba, where he had lived with his father for a long time. What Moses now writes about how he unites with the king and makes a covenant is a consolation that God will not abandon the faithful if they only hold fast; He creates enough misfortune for them, but does not leave them without consolation. Let this be said of history. Now we should also deal with the mystery and secret interpretation.

38. we have heard that Isaac Christ's

1) Wittenberg and Erlangen: that.

figure, so he will remain in the chapter for a while. Now Christ's kingdom stands thus, that it is a kingdom of life, and p strong life, that it lives in the midst of death; and grace so strong, that it prevails in sin, and reigns in the devil's jaws. For it is a spiritual kingdom, therefore it does not appear, but the very contradiction appears. When one looks at Christians as holy martyrs, one sees nothing but vain death; as the 44th Psalm, v. 23, says: "We are slain daily for thy sake, and are esteemed as sheep for the slaughter." Where Christianity is, there must be blood, or [they] are not true Christians. They are not sheep for the pasture, but sheep for the slaughter, always one after the other. Thus the appearance of the Christian life is nothing but weakness, death and sin; nor does he rule it in life, spiritually, which no one sees, but faith alone grasps.

39 Isaac now bears this image, as he was Christ's figure before with his sacrifice, condemned and given over to death, and yet remained alive. So he is also here Christ's figure in his kingdom, as he drives here in the foreign, unknown country. If you look at his life, it is in danger of death every hour, and of his wife: he is still preserved, only as a sign that a Christian life should also go this way, and stand in all shame and danger. The Christians must use the title and be in danger, that it is heresy and called a whore; the others want to have right faith and be God's own.

40 But what is it that a theurge comes into the land first? This is it: If the gospel be rightly begun, there must first arise a hunger and sorrow in the conscience. The gospel comes to no one who has fullness and good days, but only to the troubled consciences, who are in greater hunger, and who have a soul that is alive and glad to hear such comforting preaching.

(41) That now afterward there standeth of the well of the pit, and that Isaac goeth blissfully for a while, is all the course of Christianity;

For a while it has rest, that it increases, and improves; as, in the apostles' time, it soon arose, and grew; but soon arises strife, contention, and heresy.

(42) But the well which they stopped up is nothing but the sacrilege which they do by the doctrine of men, against the holy scriptures, which for a time Christianity kept pure; but soon the devil came, and brought in the sand of men, that they could no more enjoy it, they put it out after their own head. That is to say, they put earth into the well, and stuffed it with it, so that it would ever show those who corrupt the Scriptures with an earthly mind, and guide them according to their carnal delusion; like the heretics Arius and Pelagius and others, and afterwards the pope, who boasts that he alone is the master of the Scriptures, and has power to interpret them; who has done nothing else in all spiritual law, and has introduced through all high schools but vile earth and dung, and has so corrupted and polluted the Scriptures that it is not possible to understand anything from the Scriptures from their books, but only prevents and studies back from them.

(43) So we shall go on, as we are going on, through some of the spirits of the wicked, and shall continue until the last day. We have also dug the well and opened it up; others are always coming to fill it up again with earth. Let us be bold in this: If we want to drink and strengthen ourselves from the Scriptures, they will refuse us. That is why it must have the name: Mockery and Resistance, that is, that we are mocked about it, and must suffer resistance; if not, then we do not have the Scriptures right, until God gives us room to remain in the right understanding of the Scriptures, and overcome heresy.

44 Thus we have the history with the secret interpretation, in which we see how everything must be done to preach the gospel and the kingdom of Christ alone. [But it must suffer opposition and be persecuted. Now follows another legend of the patriarch Jacob.

# The twenty-seventh chapter.

Cap. 26:34, 35 When Esau was forty years old, he took wives, Judith the daughter of Beri the Hittite and Basmath the daughter of Elon the Hittite, both of whom disobeyed Isaac and Rebekah.

Cap. 27:1-35 And it came to pass, when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, that he called Esau his elder son, and said unto him, My son. And he answered him, Here am I. And he said, Behold, I am grown old, and know not when I shall die. Now therefore take thy stuff, quiver and bow, and go into the field, and sow me a venison, and make me a meal such as I like, and bring it in to me to eat, that my soul may bless thee before I die. And Rebekah heard such words as Isaac spake unto his son. And Esau went out into the field to hunt game, and to bring it home. Then said Rebekah unto Jacob her son, Behold, I have heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me a venison, and make me a meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD, before I die. Now therefore, my son, hear my voice, which I command thee. Go to the herd and get me two good flocks, and I will make your father a meal of them, as he likes it. And thou shalt carry them in unto thy father, that he may eat, and bless thee before his death. And Jacob said unto Rebekah his mother, Behold, my brother Esau is rough, and I am smooth: so it may be that my father will touch me, and be thought of before him, as if I had deceived him, 1) and brought upon me a curse, and not a blessing. Then said his mother unto him, The curse be upon me, my son, only obey my voice, go and fetch me. So he went and fetched it, and brought it to his mother. Then his mother made a meal, as his father liked. And she took Esau her elder son's goodly garments, which she had with her in the house.

And she put them on Jacob her younger son. And she put the skins of the goats about his hands, and about his smooth neck, and gave the meat and the bread, as she had made it, into Jacob her son's hand. And he brought it in unto his father, and said, My father. And he answered, Here am I. Who art thou, my son? Jacob said: I am Esau, thy firstborn son; I have done as thou hast said unto me. Arise, sit down, and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. Isaac said to his son, "My son, how did you find so soon? He answered, "The LORD your God gave it to me. Then said Isaac unto Jacob, Come near, my son, that I may test thee, whether thou be my son Esau, or not. So Jacob came to Isaac his father, and when he had touched him, he said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are Esau's hands. And he knew him not, because his hands were rough, as Esau's, his brother's hands: and he blessed him. And said unto him, Art thou my son Esau? And he answered, Yea, I am. Then said he, Bring me hither, my son, to eat of thy venison, that my soul may bless thee. So he brought it to him, and he did eat; and he brought him wine also, and he drank. And Isaac his father said unto him, Come hither, and kiss me, my son. And he came near and kissed him. Then he smelled the smell of his garments, and blessed him, saying, Behold, the smell of my son is as the smell of the field which the LORD hath blessed. God give thee of the thane of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, and corn and wine the abundance. Nations must serve thee, and people must fall at thy feet. Be a lord over your brothers, and your mother's children must fall at your feet. Cursed be he who curses you; blessed be he who blesses you. Now when Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from Isaac his father, Esau his brother came from his hunting, and made a meal also, and carried it in unto his father, and said unto him, Arise, my son.

1) To this the Jenaer has the marginal gloss: "betrigen wolt", which also our Bible offers.

Father, and eat of thy son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. Then Isaac his father answered him, Who art thou? He said: I am Esau, thy firstborn son. And Isaac was sore amazed at the measure, and said, Who? Where then is the hunter that brought me, and I did eat of all before thou camest, and blessed him? He will also remain blessed. When Esau heard this saying of his father, he cried aloud, and was exceeding sorrowful, and said unto his father, Bless me also, my father. And he said, Thy brother is come with guile, and hath taken away thy blessing. And he said, His name is called Jacob, because he hath twice trampled me under foot. 1) My first birth hath he taken away, and, behold, now he taketh away my blessing also: and he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? And Isaac answered and said unto him, I have made him lord over thee, and all his brethren have I made servants unto him; with corn and wine have I provided him: what shall I do now unto thee, my son? And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me also, my father. And he lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thou shalt have a fat habitation upon the earth, and from the dew of heaven from above. Thou shalt feed upon thy sword, and shalt serve thy brother. And it shall come to pass, that thou shalt put off his yoke, and shalt tear it from off thy neck. And Esau was grieved with Jacob for the blessing that his father had blessed him with, and said in his heart, The time will soon come for my father to suffer, for I will slay my brother Jacob. Then Rebekah heard the word of her elder son, and sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau drieth against thee, to slay thee. Now therefore, my son, hear my voice, arise, and flee unto Laban my brother in Haran, and tarry with him a while, until the fury of thine anger be turned away.

Until his anger against you turns away from you and forgets what you have done to him, I will send for you and take you away from there. Why should I be deprived of you both for one day? And Rebekah said unto Isaac, It grieveth me to live before the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, which are like the daughters of this land, what shall my life be?

The most important thing in this chapter is the blessing that Isaac gave to his son Jacob. With this comes the third patriarch, from whom Christ was to come, of whom we will hear much as to how God led him. Above [Cap. 25, 31. ff.] we heard how the two brothers fought with each other 2) for the first birth; and Esau took the red vegetable, and gave for it his right which he had, so that he also lost the right first birth before the people, as God had taken it from him before, when he said to Rebekah, "The greater shall serve the lesser. Therefore Moses describes how it came about that the blessing of Esau fell on Jacob.

(2) Now nothing is described in the chapter according to history, but how God is true and wonderful, that he keeps what he speaks [Ps. 33:4], and that this keeping is so strange and wonderful 3) that it far surpasses all reason. He said that the smallest should be lord and the greatest should serve. This had to come true, but it was delayed for a good while. For Esau was now already a married man of forty years, and soon begat children until Jacob was almost seventy years old, as we shall hear, before he took a wife, and had to let his brother be right and rule, and is a Cinderella; yet he always kept his word. Meanwhile Esau continues, is the dear son, has the right even in his possession, and although he had sold it above [Cap. 25, 33.], he thought thus: "Sell here, sell there, yet I remain lord of the house, and I keep the blessing. Therefore he takes two wives, and sits down, and keeps house.

3 Thus the Scriptures show us by God's miraculous work that the promise will last for so long.

2) kaufschlagen - - to make a deal.

3) Jenaer: wonderful.

1) Marginal gloss: Eke b, means a sole of the foot, from which comes Jacob or Jacob, a tramp, or one who treads under foot, and means all believers who, through the gospel, tread under the world and the flesh, and the devil with sin and death.

Before he receives the blessing that is due to him, he lets Esau grow up next to him and take over the reign, who had lost the blessing. He shows by Esau's great defiance that he is so sure of the matter, and takes two wives, against their father's and mother's will, who have both disobeyed them, two proud men, as they are wont to do when they get the keys. [So they said, We are the daughters of the land, and Esau shall be glad that we are come into his house and family: for he is a stranger, and a sojourner in the land.

004 Now Isaac and Rebekah were grieved at this. But what shall they do? They suffer it. Isaac lets it go, and nevertheless remains on the delusion, Esau should be the right son, to whom the blessing is due. What do you think, that Jacob also had to suffer the time, because the parents had to suffer it, and kept it, that it had an appearance, as if it should go everything contrary to what God has spoken. Such an image must Jacob bear, that one may learn to recognize God in his works. So he had to hear and feel: You should be the greatest, but you must be the smallest; father and mother must not be right, and the wives must suffer defiance and will of courage; should Jacob then be right? How often did he think: Is this to be the blessing? My parents must let the women rule, what should I do about it? Is it true what God says?

5 But this is how it is in all things that God does. He also did it to his own son. When he wanted to make him the highest king of heaven and earth, he went to him and had him hanged on the cross and thus executed as never before. So he also played along with the holy martyrs. That is why he proclaims his title to be miraculous, as the 4th Psalm, v. 4, says: "Know that God leads his saints in miracles"; that is why he says, v. 5: "If you are angry, do not sin"; item, v. 6: "Offer right sacrifices. 6: "Offer up right sacrifices, and hope in the Lord," that is, hold your peace, and let it go; even if he acts so strangely, it must still be done; it is his way. This is how it will be with us when we die; then he will act as if he were our enemy,

and be nothing but devils around us. He who does not know and know his way is in a bad way. Reason cannot do it, but faith must think: God has spoken it, it is true, let him now act as he wills.

6th Now this is the beginning, that Jacob had to believe that he should become the greatest, and yet remain servant in the house, 1) and see that they drove their arrogance to defy father and mother. Then Esau thought: Now I have it in my hand; it is sure and certain. So God lets him sit up and be resplendent; but before he looks around, he overthrows him; when he is most secure, he lies down, and Jacob brings the blessing away. That is played according to God's wisdom. They are simple, foolish stories, but one could not paint God with any color as he is painted there. He lets Isaac be deceived and raises it through the woman; but so foolishly that Jacob himself despairs of it.

007 But who shall give her defiance, that she should so come, and say, The curse be upon me, my son? Then the thing must be arranged that Jacob becomes lord by the faith of the woman, not by the holy man Isaac, and gains such a great spirit that she may dare, even if Isaac curses. The devil should dare that such a holy man cursed me. I would rather that all the popes and the world condemned and cursed me. She knew that he was the man to whom God had promised so much, and had an eye on him, and talked to him; nor could she defy him like that. This would not be possible for a small spirit to do; there must have been a peculiar, great faith in the woman that defiantly relied on the word: "The small shall be master, the greater shall serve." Therefore she concludes: "If this is true, God will not let my son curse; and even if he cursed, the curse would not be right. Which is just as much as if I said, "I believe in Christ," and if he himself came and cursed me, I would not turn to it. For she doubted as little that the man was pious and had God's word as I had about Christ. That is why she has-

1) Erlanger: stay.

thought: If it is a curse, it must either be a sham, or God will turn it around. As I would have to do on my deathbed, if he spoke, he would not want mine, that he either did not mean it seriously, or God would not suffer it.

Therefore God is a wonderful Lord in His works. All reason must sink to the ground, and faith must ask for nothing but God's words. He turns and makes it as he wills, so it must remain true. These are excellent examples of how God deals with His dear saints. Now let this be said of the two pieces, how God is true; but so that he leads it out whimsically, that we may be confident whether he consumes, and [f]es go not forth, as we think. So Jacob must come to the blessing, even if the whole world should be against it, but gets it so strangely that [it] no one could measure. Rebekah is also led in such a strange way; she cannot take the blessing away from her father, does him no harm, lets him have his way, nor does God give a spirit that she finds it and steals away the blessing without his knowledge and will, so that it nevertheless remains on Jacob, so that it can actually be seen that it is God's work.

Now we shall also treat this chapter spiritually. There are many good sayings and pieces in it. [We will take before us that which also belongs to history, how two nations were to come from the two children, namely Israel and Edomaei, of which much is written in the prophets. There in the chapter is described and indicated almost the course, which had there the two peoples; as now would be between Germans and whales. [They fought against each other in a strange way; Edom resisted hostilely for a long time, but finally let himself be trampled down. Esau became a great ruler in time, and took the land of Edom in time. And because he so ruled, and grew in his land, Jacob went into Egypt, and remained a poor stranger, that his people afterwards had to bear great sorrow, and go more than three hundred years, before they came to bring Esau under them, since Jacob, Moses, Aaron 2c. were all dead, until David and Solomon, who first brought it under them. There you see -abermal, how God carries out his promise.

that it seems as if he has rejected his own and soon lifts up those he rejects.

(10) This must mean that the text first writes how Isaac sees darkly, that is, God closes his eyes and rules as if he did not know Jacob, that he lets the same people go so long, and while he lifts up Esau. For this is his mind: Esau is my son, to him I will give the blessing. That is why Isaac must be God's figure, who acts as if he did not see; that is, when God rules with his saints, he acts as if he did not want to know about the pious, but has the intention of blessing Esau and giving him everything; nor does Jacob finally get it. Therefore, even if God is not blind or does not see in the dark, his works are like this; but all this is for our comfort. Let him only see in the dark, and act as if he does not see us, and he will still be right.

011 So it came to pass at last, that by the people afterwards Edom was cast down, though they did it very unwillingly; they were at enmity one to another, especially when they saw that God blessed Israel. Then they began to cry out, as the text says here, as Esau howls and laments so miserably. But God says to this: I cannot do to him, "He has the blessing there, and will keep it." But he says, you shall also have a regiment, and feed on your sword, and a time will come when you will tear his yoke from your neck, that is, you will not be subject to him forever. Read the history of this in the second and fourth book of Kings [2 Sam. 8, 14. 2 Kings 8, 20.], how Edom fell away and no longer wanted to be subject to the Jewish people, and became its own kingdom.

(12) Thus we shall see in the Bible all the histories of how God is true, and yet presents Himself as untruthful, that one may be wise, and know Him rightly, how He performs His acts above all sense and reason. Oh how much it would be necessary to understand the words rightly! What great spirits will still preach about the Gospel, but know nothing about how God's truth works! He is so clever, that he makes you so astray in the fulfillment, that you cannot know where you stand. Therefore you may well ask with fear and trembling, and not defy him. Ge-



He is certain, but he also wants to be feared, so that you will not be proud, but will ask to be able to stand firm. There are those who think they have caught God, but he is too wise and does not want to suffer arrogance; one should take comfort in his promise alone and let him do as he pleases. Summa: No one will learn it unless there is an experience. When we are in mortal distress or when we are driving, then we learn it well, otherwise it remains only with the words. When it comes to a meeting, it is forgotten, because then it is seen much differently. That is still spoken after the history. Now we should also point to Christ; if we do not have him, then we have not hit it right.

13 The right blessing, of which we have heard above [Cap. 22, 18], meets the gospel, when we have so often said what the blessing is, promised to Abraham in his seed. For this blessing between the two brothers, that Jacob should become a great nation and rich, is also a blessing; but this is the true chief blessing, that we are blessed through Christ, against the curse that was upon Adam, to rid ourselves of it, so that thereby grace and life are proclaimed and brought.

(14) Now here the two brethren must tell us how it is that the blessing is so strange and strangely pleased, 1) that no man believeth it. But I leave Isaac the father, and the two brothers two peoples; these, who walk in a beautiful, seeming life; the others, the Cinderellas, who walk in faith. So Esau is the man who rules, like the Jews who preached the law, God's people, 2) who walked in a respectable life, and thought they were sitting in God's lap, and yet were nothing more than mere outward adornment and exquisite gift.

(15) Therefore the Scripture says that Rebekah had with her Esau's precious garments, which she put on Jacob. The Jews had the advantage of having the Scriptures of God, as Paul says in Romans 3:2. The noble ones,

They had them with them in the house, but they did not put them on, but Jacob put them on. This happened when Christ came. Before him went the synagogue, and the law in its course: but when he was come, there grew up another people, and they put on their garments. This was the Jacob, this is the real Christ, who is involved in the Scriptures.

16 So the right Rebekah, the Christianity, clothes her son with the garments, that is, with the sayings of the Scriptures, which speak of grace and Christ, not of works. From this the right blessing is given, and is taken away from him who deals with works; that is, just at the time when they were doing the law to the highest degree, Christ and the apostles go and win the Scriptures, take away the blessing from God, and yet he places himself in this way, as if he did not see it, so that it seems to us as if it were about to happen.

017 Whereby the scripture saith, as Isaac said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are Esau's hands." For because Esau was rough, the mother thought, "How do we make the son rough also, that [his] father may not know it? And "slaughtered two little goats, and put the skins about his hands," so that Isaac did not think otherwise that they were Esau's hands, and yet heard Jacob's voice. So God deprived him of his senses in that part, so that it had to happen.

(18) Now what is this? The voice means nothing else than the sermon; but the hands mean the life and work, so that one is deceived. One does not preach like another. Esau is the hunter, who drives the law, and wants to make people godly by force; Jacob, however, does not drive, but entices with grace. These are two different voices, so that one is heard before the 3) other, but they both do the same work. Jacob also keeps the law, and does that which Esau teaches, and yet teaches differently. According to the outward walk it is all the same; there it is said: If one is righteous, they all are. But the gospel does not ask how the works are.

111) Therefore it is not dangerous, 4) that the Christians keep everything that other people keep,

3) Erlanger: for the others.

4) Danger - fraud, deceit. (Dietz.)

1) fallen - where to come, fall.  
2) So the Jenaer. Erlanger: "as the Jews preached the law, the people of God." Wittenberger: "these are the Jews, the people of the law."

Without only that the voice must be different; there one must separate the law and the gospel. No law is to be driven into the conscience, 1) no gospel is to be preached to the hands. To the conscience one must preach that one must become sane and saved through faith alone in Christ, and whatever works one does, that one does not do them to help the conscience, but outwardly to the old Adam one must put on everything that the law demands, so that the law remains outside, the gospel inside; so it is right, and the voice of Jacob remains the voice, but the hands of Esau remain the hands. The law does nothing, but always forces and drives, and keeps the people by force inside; but this is the error of it, if one wants to preach it to the conscience, that is Esau's voice, which God does not hear. Paul speaks of this in 1 Corinthians 9:27, saying, "I tame my body and stupefy it, lest I preach to others and become reprobate myself"; that is, to do all the laws and yet say it does nothing for the heart and conscience.

020 Again, it would not be good to reverse it, and drive the law into the consciences, and leave out liberty. It must be Jacob's voice and Esau's hands, not Jacob's hands and Esau's voice. If it were Jacob's voice and Jacob's hands, it would not do: as they that say, If good works do not help, let us be good fellows, and do nothing. Behold, thus in the two brethren is pictured the difference between the two kinds of people. The former rely on their rights, think they are the dear child, and lose the blessing, and go to the devil; the latter take comfort in God's word alone, seize the blessing, and go to heaven.

21 Then the persecution arises, so that Esau becomes so hostile and angry with Jacob that he thinks of slaying him; this is also the way of the saints of works and Esauites, who cannot suffer that their deeds and works should count for nothing; they begin to rage, and become deadly enemies to the true Christians. Therefore it is

1) Thus the Jena. Wittenberg: "One should not preach the law to the conscience. Erlanger: "No law should be preached into the conscience, no gospel should be preached into the hands.

A great knowledge, if one is to know the gospel rightly, and to proceed rightly with it. Therefore St. Paul [2 Tim. 2, 15] wants the word of God to be cut rightly, namely, into the two pieces, as I said, that the conscience should be kept free and the body loaded with laws; and not again, both weighed down, or both left free. The soul shall live in the spirit, but the body shall die because of sin, says St. Paul Rom. 8, 13. This is the spiritual interpretation of this chapter.

(22) That any man should move how Jacob hath dealt so unfaithfully with his brother, when Isaac himself saith, Thy brother came with guile, and hath delivered the blessing unto thee; item, that Isaac also might well have revoked the blessing, and be foolish enough to be thus deceived, when he knew the voice of Jacob; it is almost incredible. First, I have said before that we are not of the mind to make the holy fathers pure, and can suffer that they also stumbled at times, and then most of all when they went in special works. As here: Jacob has the right blessing for himself, and God willed that he should have it; so Jacob and Rebekah were sure of the matter, that they did well. But whether they did wrong in dealing deceitfully with their father, and Jacob lied to him, saying, "I am your son Esau," I will let pass. If the main work is good, God can see through the fingers if one does a little too much.

23 Thus we read an example of the king David in the other book of Samuel [Cap. 16, 2. 3.], when he fled from 2) his son Absalom, and was in the wilderness, pious and humble, there comes to him a knave, whose name was Siba, 3) washed and betrayed his lord Mephibosheth, the son of king Saul, that David leads unheard, and promises to put him in all the goods of his lord. This was also too much for the holy man, that he let himself be persuaded by a poisonous tongue, and went with unrighteousness and violence.

2) Thus the Jena. Wittenberg and Erlangen: from.

3) In the Bible: Ziba.

(24) God allows this to happen, so that His excellent saints also remain with us here, and we see that they are also flesh and blood; otherwise it would follow that one would despair. Secondly, that the saints are not separated too far from us, as has been done. If they could have made that they had no sin, it should be a delicious thing. So that we have become desolate, and have had to despair.

(25) Therefore I would much rather, as much as I could, if it were not contrary to the Scriptures, defile the saints with sins. For it is a desecration of God's grace, and speaking too near to Christ, that they should be separated from us as far as heaven and earth. I should not esteem the nearest, least Christian less than St. Peter and all the saints in heaven. No one has more grace; they have more gifts and jewels; I am as dearly bought as they, so they are in the same flesh and blood in which I am. From this we can gain hope and comfort; otherwise we make idols of them and despise the grace of God.

(26) Yes, they say, one must honor the saints and hold us in low esteem, and stand against them with humility? Answer: In this, it is not humility that counts when it comes to God's grace, but arrogance. You should be humble about your own thing and nature, for you are nothing but a maggot's sack; but you cannot be proud enough of Christ's goodness, and must say: Even if I were ten times more wicked, I still have the blood that makes me pure and holy, and cost Christ as much to redeem me as St. Peter. They have been as low as we; so we are as high as they, so that no one has more than I, though they may have been stronger in faith; yet the food and main good is not greater. So learn to recognize what we have in God, for he alone lets us write such things for comfort, and we fools only make them a terror to ourselves. They, the holy fathers, may not, for they are long dead; but we may, that we may learn from it to know God; and for this very reason we must be sinners, that their life may be our consolation. If I am foolish, then God will prevail, but [I] stand like-

the one on. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Peter and many more have also been fooled. With this, we can resist sin and the devil.

(27) Here we also learn what is meant by blessing and cursing. For we have heard how the blessing is upon Jacob, that he shall have corn and wine in abundance, and be lord over his brethren, and have dominion over much land and people. You do not yet see spiritual goods, everything is still physical. Therefore to bless is actually to wish for something good, and to curse is to wish for something evil; as he then says: "God grant you" 2c. Now this is a wish that concerns only temporal good, wealth and glorious rule and great dominion, not only over the brethren but also over other people. But how long after that it has been lost! Yet he is sure that the blessing is true. Isaac felt it well that the Spirit spoke, that it must be true; therefore he also confirmed it, and did not revoke it. In such matters they did not act according to the will of man, as Peter says: "No prophecy has ever been produced by the will of man, but the holy men of God have spoken, impelled by the Holy Spirit"; otherwise they would not have spoken it, nor would God have had it described.

28 This has now been fulfilled for a long time, as the histories show; but nevertheless it is not forgotten that it would also encounter much resistance. For what comes from God cannot remain unchallenged; it must pass through the fire, as it is. If God called you to catch a mouse or to pick up a straw, which would be a foolish thing, and the world would know that he had called it, it would not let you do it in peace. As little as he calls a thing, so the devil attaches himself to it, does not want to suffer God's word and work, and causes all misfortune.

(29) So also here God promised to give the people the delicious land. Because God exists, the devil has rebelled against it, and has aroused so much persecution and cursing; as one reads in the books of the kings, that the Assyrians, Syrians, Edomites, Moabites, Egyptians, and other peoples more clung to it, so that there was no nation on earth to whom one could

1) "not" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Erlanger.

As David himself writes in the 83rd Psalm, vv. 3-9: "Behold, your enemies rage, and those who hate you lift up their heads. They plot cunningly against thy people, and counsel against thy hidden ones. They say, Come, and let us destroy them, that they be not a nation, that the name of Israel be no more remembered: for they have taken counsel in their heart, and have made a league with one another against thee, the tents of the Edomites, the Ishmaelites, the Moabites, and the Hagarites, the Gebalites, and the Ammonites, 1) and the Amalekites, and the Philistines, with them of Tyro. Assyria also joined them, and became an arm of the children of Lot."

(30) Then the prophet counted all the great multitude that rose up against them, but they had a protector who could handle them well; therefore they also smote them confidently, that he often with one man or angel smote away a whole host. That one sees in history through and through how the blessing is wonderfully fulfilled, that all the world had to deal with the people, and God often let them succumb, that the enemies thought to even destroy them; as in the mentioned 83rd Psalm, v. 5, it says: "They say: Come, let us destroy them, that they be no nation, that the name of Israel be no more remembered." Yes, says God to this, I have spoken a blessing over them, so that they will remain; as one reads in the fourth book of Moses [Cap. 23, 20.], how Balaam was supposed to curse the people of Israel; but since he opened his mouth, he could do nothing but bless.

(31) So everything that is God's people must be persecuted, defiled and blasphemed. Therefore Isaac also says: "Cursed be he who curses you", as if he wanted to say: Just prepare yourself, you will have to suffer that you will be persecuted as no people on earth. But thou shalt have the consolation, that he that curseth thee shall be cursed again, and it shall never be well 2) with him.

1) The bracketed words are missing in the editions, as we assume, by mistake.

2) "shall him" is missing in the Erlanger.

32. now this is the bodily blessing, but signifies the right spiritual blessing; therefore it is much another blessing than that spoken over Abraham [Cap. 12, 3.]: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." For this blessing God speaks through a man, and on perishable things; but that He speaks Himself, not of wine or grain, but badly of the person on whom the blessing is to pass; therefore it must be spiritual. From which it further follows: If it is to go over all the nations and be equal, Abraham must be equal to all the nations; not as it is said to Jacob, that he should be lord over his brethren and many other people. Now because all these things are equal in this blessing, it must be such a thing as they can all understand; which indeed may not be bodily. For the world cannot exist in such a way that all become equal; one must rule, the other be subject; and yet the blessing wants everyone to be equal, and to go over all.

(33) This is the gospel, a good desire that much good may come to us. For thus saith the gospel concerning every man, Thy sins be forgiven thee, Christ with all his goods and everlasting life be thine. In the high blessing one has no more nor less than the other, [they] are all brothers and equal heirs.

(34) I do not know much more to say about this chapter, except that Esau complains about his brother and says: "He is called Jacob, because he has trampled me twice. The little word Ekeb, I have said, means in German the sole of a foot; from this he is called, because he held the sole of his brother's foot in his hand when they were born [Gen. 25, 26]. But here Esau interprets it a little differently, so he wants to say: Yes, he is called sole of foot, because he has trampled me twice under his feet. We have already heard what trampling under foot means, namely, that Christians trample under foot sin, death, the devil and everything that is born of the flesh.

## The twenty-eighth chapter.

Then Isaac called Jacob his son, and blessed him, and commanded him, saying unto him, Take not thee a wife of the daughters of Canaan, but arise, and go into Mesopotamia unto Bethuel thy mother's father's house, and take thee a wife there of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of nations, and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee, that thou mayest possess the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham. So Isaac prepared Jacob to go into Mesopotamia to Laban, Bethuel's son, in 2) Syria, the brother of Rebekah, his mother and Esau's mother. Now when Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and was sent away into Mesopotamia to take a wife there, and that, blessing him, he commanded him, saying: Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan, and that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and went into Mesopotamia; seeing also that Isaac his father did not like to see the daughters of Canaan: he went unto Ishmael, and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael the son of Abraham, the sister of Nebajoth, to wife over the wives which he had before.

1 This will be the last of Isaac and Rebekah, without him dying yet, in the fifth and thirtieth chapter, v. 28. 29. First, we must deal with Esau. There you see that the Scripture praises Jacob as he obeyed his father and mother.

002 And Esau had two wives, which were whimsical and unruly, which displeased them both: so that the mother also lamented, saying [Cap. 27:46], "It grieveth me to live before the daughters of Heth." So now, when he sees that Jacob is now in favor, and has the blessing, he goes to his cousin, his mother's brother, to take a wife there; he also makes himself friendly, and also befriends his mother.

close to his cousin Ishmael, and takes his cousin's daughter. This is now permitted in the other member among sibling children, which the Scriptures have not forbidden. He did this to reconcile the parents and to please them. Then follows a fine text about the ladder that Jacob saw in a dream, and then about the vow he made.

(v.10-15) And Jacob departed from Beer-saba, and journeyed to Haran, and came to a place, where he tarried for the night: for the sun was down. And he took a stone of the place, and laid it for his head, and lay down in the same place to sleep. And he dreamed, and, behold, a ladder stood upon the earth, and the top thereof touched heaven. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending it, and the Lord was standing on it, saying: I am the LORD, Abraham's, thy father's, God, and Isaac's God: the land whereon thou liest I will give thee and thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt be spread abroad toward the even, and toward the morning, and toward the north, and toward the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all kindreds of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee, till I have done all that I have spoken unto thee.

First of all, one should always look at history according to the word of God, for no legend will be found since God has spoken so much to people. Therefore, it surpasses all legends. [It is also written so that one may see what true, flamboyant histories are; not those that are full of great miracles and exquisite works, but only those where much of God's word is within. Reason alone looks at strange, wonderful stories and deeds; we have thought much of them, but we have not been so wise as to ask whether God's word is also in them. What is it, that one has done all the highest and greatest works, and has no word of God?

1) ready - to dispatch, to send.

2) In the editions: of.

Therefore I think of these histories, which have strength, juice and marrow, always go in the word, lead no self-selected works, that all others do not hold a candle to them. Should not a heart rejoice above all things when God speaks thus: "I will be with you, and will keep you wherever you go" 2c.? These are heartfelt, living words, which indicate that what he has done is 1) pleasing to God, and that he has done righteous, worthy works. We should also strive to do these things, so that we do not do any work, because from God's word, in whatever state it may be, we are certain that God has commanded and wills it.

Now this is the main part of the legend, that God smites his word so abundantly over the whole life that the man must be holy from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet. Even if he stumbles at times, it should not harm him, nor should he be condemned for it, as little as the word can be condemned, which no one can praise enough.

006 Moses saith therefore, How Jacob departed from Beer-saba, which is in a corner near Egypt. [It is the farthest corner of the promised land, and 2) he journeyed to Haran between morning and midnight, and on the way he came to a place called Lus, which afterward became Bethel, where Solomon built his temple. For God especially honored that place, as we heard above [Cap. 22:9] that Isaac was sacrificed on that mountain. Jacob stayed there overnight and slept. For when he was come, the sun was set, saith Moses, so that it was almost a day's journey from his going forth. There he lay down, and saw a dream and a vision, as the text tells, and is clearly written on himself. But what it means, we will hear later, want to stay now with the history.

7 The word that the Lord speaks and blesses him makes it clear what Jacob's situation was. For God is not a useless washer, that he should turn his word to the wind.

and speak where it is not necessary. Therefore it is evident that Jacob was in great distress and anguish and had to leave secretly because his brother had threatened him with death, so that he was in danger of dying. For his brother was also a friend in the country through which he had to go. How soon it would have happened that they would have strangled him! Because he now stands in such a journey, and does not know how to protect himself, God is there, and tells him: because no one helps him, he wants to help and protect him. [For this very reason he sends him to go there without help and assistance, so that he may do it himself without means. As if he were to say, "Be of good cheer, and let your brother be on your side with friendship; I will build a ladder down, and be with you when you lie there and sleep, and take no care; I have more angels in heaven than men on earth. If they are with us, who will do [anything] to us?"

8 And here the saying will have flowed in the 91st Psalm, v. 11, 12: "He hath commanded his angels concerning thee, to keep thee in all thy ways, to bear thee up in their hands, that thou dash not thy foot against a stone. For the dear fathers learned much from history. Thus we also read [2 Kings 6:14-20] of the prophet Heliseus, how the Syrians surrounded a city where he was and wanted to take him. But when Helisee arose early with his child, and saw that the city was occupied, the child was afraid, and said, "Awe, how shall we do now?" [Helishaeus answered, "Fear not, for there are more of them that are with us than of them that are with them." Then the eyes of the lad were opened, and [he] saw that the mountain was full of fiery horses and chariots, about Helisaeus the prophet. Then he blinded the people, so that they let themselves be led away from the city into the midst of Samaria, the capital, and opened their eyes again; and they saw how they were in the midst of the city among the enemies.

(9) All these things are written for this reason, that we may know that God cannot leave His own, though all the world be against us.

1) Erlanger: has.

2) In the editions: has.

3) Wittenberger and Erlanger: such Fahr.

He is there and helps. Therefore, when we are in faith, so many angels are looking at us; and yet [he] is so foolish about it that it seems to us that we are lost and must die with disgrace, so the angels are standing and watching us, who could probably help us out in a moment. God also watches for a while.

(10) Why then does he not let us be helped so soon? So that his grace, work and word may be known all the more, and prove that he is able to help in death, which otherwise we would not know, if we did not experience it. He who is a Christian, then, has died well; think, then, that when the soul executes, it is full, full of angels around, who carry it into the bosom of God. But such a comforting thing happens to no one before he sees how he is abandoned by all creatures, and no one can help but God alone.

It is certainly true, if only we could believe it. So, since this poor child is in the greatest distress, and is not sure of his life, he must see such great comfort and help. God did not give him such comfort, since he was with his father and mother, and was not allowed to worry about anything; but had to come before them, and sing the tenth verse from the 27th Psalm: "My father and mother have forsaken me, but the Lord has taken me up"; so that he could say: I would rather sit in the bosom of God than my father and mother. Therefore he must come from them among the enemies; where they sit and rule, God protects him in the highest through his angels.

**V. 16-19 When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! There is nothing here but a house of God, and a gate to heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone which he had laid for his head, and set it up, and poured oil upon it, and called the place Bethel; for the name of the city before was Lus.**

Here we must preach once about churches. For our papists have drawn this text for themselves to their churches, because Jacob calls the place a house of God. But it was not yet one, but he set up a stone to the

He also made a vow that it would become a house of God and that he would tithe everything he received. First of all, see that God's house is not called a great building, as we have. For so David also says [Ps. 5:8], "I will enter into thy house upon thy great goodness, and will worship against thy holy temple"; and yet no temple was yet built, but [they] had only the tabernacle, or the tabernacle of Moses.

13 So Jacob says here, "Let the stone become a house of God. Why does he call it that? Not because it would be necessary to erect a large building for it, but only to put a sign and a mark that God dwells there; thus he wants to say: Here shall be God's dwelling place; therefore he calls it BethEl in Hebrew. Now God does not ask whether it is large or not, whether it is vaulted and consecrated; yes, he dwells there, and yet he does not build a house for it during his lifetime. What does it take for God to dwell there? Nothing more than that God is there with his word; where that is, he certainly dwells, and again, where the word is not, he does not dwell; one builds him a house, as large as one wants.

(14) Learn this and know how to answer those who boast of houses of worship and churches, and stretch out the saying. It is not called God's house for the sake of your service or endowment; for the sake of your work he will not dwell there. For your work shall be so free that it is not bound to any place, unless God has commanded you something special. But therefore it shall be called his house, when he cometh and ministereth unto us, and sendeth forth his word there.

15 Now this is clear from the text, when Jacob himself speaks, having heard God's word in the vision: "Here is nothing else but God's house, and a gate to heaven. If it is already there, why does he want to erect it there? Therefore it is there that God dwells with the angels and lets his word be heard. Take a likeness. This is called Master Hansen's house; is it because the servant works in it? No, but because he dwells in it and is the master, so that everything must go as he wills; not because the servant serves in it. So also here, where one comes, there

God rules and creates through his word, there is his house, so that you may say: Here is actually God's dwelling, a ladder and gate to heaven. For there heaven is open to us, therefore we have the word which gives us life and heaven.

16 Therefore, you can judge and conclude that our monasteries and collegiate churches are not God's houses, for everything there has been established in such a way that there is no God's word in it. For where God dwells, He is not silent, and where He speaks, He dwells. Therefore no house of God shall be called, except it be sure that he speaketh there. For before Jacob had a will, or ever thought of doing anything there, he hears God speak and preach, and for the word's sake he says, "Here dwelleth God." Therefore, our churches and monasteries must be like devil's houses, because they are built without God's word, out of human discretion, and are called God's houses only because of the work and service that we have established.

(17) Oh how much error the text has given to the Jews, just as it has given to us, that they have concluded: Here Jacob lay and saw God, [this] is a holy place, therefore we will build a church there, and establish worship; as king Jeroboam did [1 Kings 12:31]. But all the prophets cried out against it, saying, What do ye exalt? God does not speak there, and you set it up without and against His command. Then the false prophets opposed them, and condemned them, and did so much harm that they perished. Now what did they err? 1) Just this, that they did not look at the text rightly, and opened their mouths against the place, and thought that God must dwell there, because they served Him in it, and did not inquire after the word, whether He spoke there.

You must not think of magnificent buildings, roofs, vaults, altars, singing and sounding. Where God's word sounds, whether in the forest or in the water, or where it is, there is a BethEl, so that one may say: God dwells here. For, as we have heard, before a stone was ever laid in the place, Jacob called the open space a house of God. How did he know that? From the fact that

He has heard God speak in that place. Therefore, no house should be built for him, unless it is known beforehand that he dwells there. But then he dwells there, when he lets his word be preached, works in us, and is recognized through faith.

**V.20-22. And Jacob made a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and keep me in the way that I go, and give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, and bring me home to my father in peace, then the LORD shall be my God; 2) and this stone which I have set up shall be a house of God, and all that thou shalt give me I will tithe unto thee.**

3) 19. So far I have preached and written enough about how all our papist monastic vows are contrary to God's word and are damnable. Now, if the papists were to stand up and take this text against us, urging that there is an example of the holy father, who has made a vow to God, which is vowed by God, and has also kept it, and you have been a monk, have vowed so much, and keep nothing: what will you answer to that? If thou wilt say, I have heard it or read it, it is of no account, and is not Christian; thou shalt not stand. You must know how to strike the devil, to take the sword, and to defend yourself. Therefore, let us see what this text concludes or not, how it penetrates and does not penetrate.

(20) First, the vows that now go to the point of obscenity (4) commonly have three errors, all of which are contrary to this text. The first is that vows made in spiritual matters should not be made to any saint, but to God alone. Understand this well. Thus Jacob says here, "The Lord shall be my God, and this stone shall become a house of God"; not that he vows to Abraham, Isaac, Noah, or any saint.

2) Marginal gloss: To be my God. Not that he was not his God before, but he vows to establish a service of preaching and praying, giving tithes to preachers, as Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek.

3) Here the Wittenberg and Jena editions have the superscription: "Of the vows."

4) Walch and the Erlanger: "to go to times". "To go to times" means: to adhere, to take root. Cf. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. VIII, 49, 8109.



For God alone is to be worshipped and served. Now the vow is also such a service; therefore it should happen to no one but him. For this reason it has already been answered that nothing is valid that is vowed to the saints. Your vow does not rhyme with that of the patriarch Jacob; therefore you mislead the Scriptures if you want to make use of it. Thus, many vows that have been made in all the world fall away, not to God, but to the saints.

21 The other defect is that there is a vow here, which is given earlier by God, that he will keep it. For he noticeably adds, "If God will bring me home to the Father again and keep me on the way, giving food and drink and clothing, this place shall be a house of God, and as much as you will give me, I will give you the tithe." All these things he vows he will have beforehand, that he may do them, and no sooner. Therefore it does not extend further than the goods are there, and if he is able. If he gives him little, he shall take little; if he gives him much, he shall have much; if he gives him nothing, he shall have nothing. So that his vow is not based on the goods that he already has tenfold in stock.

22 Now hold our vows against it. If you vow to keep chastity, what have you vowed but a thing that is not at all in your power? "God created them male and female, and said, Grow and multiply" [Gen. 1:27, 28]. What then may you vow not to be a man or a woman, because God created you so; and not created you so in vain, but that you should be fruitful? If thou hast not the store to keep it, when thou oughtest to have it tenfold in ability. Therefore it is the devil and death to vow what God does not give us and we cannot keep. You want to vow to be pious, and you are born a knave. What would it be if a sick person vowed on the bed to be healthy and get up? It is called mocking God to give him what we do not have. If he gave it before hut,

and you vowed to do so, it would be an opinion.

For this you can vow much less eternal chastity. For if you are pious and chaste today, tomorrow you may be lying in the dirt. For everything is in God's hands through and through; therefore I cannot vow it any longer than he gives. But Jacob does it in temporal good, and will pledge nothing more than God wants to give him. Dear God, does this vow only apply so far in such good, which is more in our hands than spiritual good: what fools we are that we vow the high, great, strange goods without any means without 2) the Holy Spirit, who has all spiritual goods in his bosom? Therefore, you see how our monastic vows are all of the devil. So you can slap them on the mouth and show them how they lead the text wrongly, so that they learn to look at it rightly. So do thou now also. If you ever vow to remain a virgin, vow as long as God exists and no further. This is what we have taught, that all monastic vows should be free, so that each one may say: I have vowed this or that, but I owe it no more than I have to keep it. 3) Why? Because you were not created to be a virgin, but to be a man or a woman. But if it is given to thee, thou hast it; if it be taken from thee, thou canst no more vow it, nor keep it. Therefore this text does not conclude against us, but for us against them. These are the two infirmities of our vows.

(24) Now the third defect is the most serious, for those are still external, but this is internal, for here the person is lacking. Become Jacob first, and then vow also; as I have often said, one should not look at the works of the saints, but at the person and their faith. For it was through error that Bethel became not God's house, but the devil's house. For the devil also led these histories and examples strongly, and caused the prophets enough trouble that they laid down their false minds. How should it

2) "ohne" is missing in the editions, but the Jena one has the conjecture in the margin: ohne or wider.

3) namely as a gift from God.

the devil could have done finer than that he had such a pretense for himself, and so let preach: Here Jacob, the holy father, has lain, has heard God Himself preach, and has vowed that this should become a house of God; how could we now do better than to establish a delicious service, where one prays and sacrifices? 1) 2c.

25 I would not like the pope to have such a seeming reason for himself as these have had against the right prophets. I would not like the pope to have such a seeming reason for himself as these have had against the true prophets. For who could say against it? The text is clear that it says: "Here dwells God"; therefore they say: We want to follow our holy archfather Jacob, have God's word and example with us. Then the prophets said again: "Not so, you are going wrong. But if they opened their mouths, they would be put to death, and they would hear that they had spoken against the Scriptures.

26) What then was the fault that God rejected such work? Thus the prophets preached: "Beloved, you are far from being Jacob; it is not the opinion that one should imitate the mere works of the saints; 2) God has given and permitted the place to the person, and has been pleased with the person and the place, as he then needs many works, time and place through his saints, but therefore does not want anyone to go and imitate the same. -You are a married man or woman, and God needs you for that; if you were to leave that and follow another, God would not thank you for it. It is not a matter of looking at examples, but of faith and God's calling. Jacob was called to the place; therefore you must not follow him, unless you were also called, and God spoke to you. This is what the holy kings did. David had it in mind to build a house for God, but he was not allowed to do so because God had not commanded him [2 Sam. 7:5 ff]. But Solomon, his son, was called to do it and built the temple in Jerusalem [1 Chron. 18, 11. 12. 1 Kings 6, II.

27 Therefore, this is the summa of it: where

and as God calls you, follow; but if not, let it stand, even if you had the examples of all the saints before you. But it did not help. Our fools have had no word of God from the Scriptures for themselves, and yet have daily erected a church above the others, and according to their dream want to bind God 3) where he should dwell, namely, to the See of Rome. If they had been able to come up with such a text, as the Jews did, the whole world would not have been able to defend them.

(28) Thus the prophets fought with the people, saying: "In the place where I will make remembrance of my name, there will I come to thee, and bless thee. With this God has abolished all places and has not set a certain one, but wants to say: "Look at me, and do not mention a place to me; but where I will choose one, there come, there I will be and preach. With this, all the competition is met, that one does nothing for God's service, but he does and creates it beforehand. Now look at all the histories, and notice how we have been fools when it was said to us: There lies St. Peter, St. Jacob, the Holy Sepulchre, these or those saints; there God has been, and has sanctified the place; as soon as we have heard the cry, we have fallen down as blind and foolish people, and have founded churches with heaps. Yes, if we could get a finger or a skull from the sanctuary, we erected altars and chapels as soon as possible. Still they remain standing on it, and defy: Nevertheless, there lies St. Peter, St. Paul 2c., they are holy, therefore the place where they lie must also be holy.

29 But you answer thus: Is that enough for God to dwell there, of which He has never spoken nor commanded? If all the saints were lying there with each other, I would not kneel down before them, nor would I look at them, thinking that I wanted to serve God especially in that place. It is not a matter of where the saints lie, but of where God speaks: Who is bettered by the fact that so many saints in Rome are lying in the soup of hell, where there is no word of God but

3) In the issues: GÖtte.

4) create - command. Cf. Walch, St. Louiser.Ausg. vol. IX, 1054, § 12.

1) In the editions: sacrificed.

2) In the old editions: "nachome"; Jenaer (wrong): "nachkome".

is vain devil's doctrine and his kingdom? One still runs there, and when one has seen many saints, it should be enough. If you want to wait for blessings and obtain true grace, run to the place where God's word is, and only beware of other places where it is not, even if all the angels were there. The saints do nothing, but the living Word does it, which is better than all the saints' earth and churches where they lie.

(1) (30) Now therefore, make the vows that they will keep. First, Jacob is a man of faith; become you also, and vow according to this. Secondly, he vows to the right God, saying, "God will be with me and protect me. No one speaks such words except the Holy Spirit. For if you say, "I vow to God, who created the heavens and the earth, that I will build a church," it is a lie. For thou hast no spirit to call thee, and proceedeth of thine own will and devotion; thou hast no sign nor testimony thereof; thou shalt not touch anything against God all thy life, unless thou be sure that he calls thee. If not, then speak freely; that is what the devil has done.

31 Therefore, look at the text carefully. Before Jacob vows, God shows him that he dwells there, so that he has an outward admonition by the sign he sees, as well as an inward activity of the Spirit. If God also calls you with such signs and gives you such a spirit, do the same. So you see how the example is for us, and everything that has been taught about vows falls to the ground.

(32) I have said more about this, that our vows have the shameful filth about them, that is, to rely on them, and to make a way to heaven with them, and to be in a higher state than the common man. When they are asked why they enter the monastery, they answer: That we may become Christ's brides. Yes, they become the devil's brides. Christ does not woo with flesh and blood, but wants to have the soul. Thus we all have souls as well as they, and is therefore

1) The Wittenberg and Jena editions have here the superscription: "Berlegung der Gelübde".  
2) misplace - refute.

that we may become His bride in pure faith, in which we receive the word of God, which is the spiritual seed [Luc. 8, 11. 1 Petr. 1, 23.]. This is what ungodly, foolish preachers do, so that the people think they have a better, more blessed state than the common state of Christianity. This is the devil and death, that if there were nothing else in it but such unchristian opinion, it would still be horrible enough. Therefore their vows are not Jacob's vows, but the devil's. For they deny the faith, and would have their chastity esteemed better than the Holy Ghost, and esteem a poor Christian man, where Christ dwelleth with all his goods, less than their crowns or caps. They are not worthy to wash his feet here. That is enough of that. [Let us now pass over the text, and see how and whither Jacob's vow is.

33) First, he says, "The Lord shall be my God. There the faith is indicated, when he says "the HErr", which is the right name of GOtt. He had it before for his right GOt, in right faith, nor does he say, "The HErr," whom I already have, "shall be my GOt." [But this much is said: I will do the outward service to him, not that he should first be my Lord, but my God; that is, I have the Lord in my heart by faith, but now I will 3) also confess and preach outwardly before the world, that they may see that I also have a God. For a Christian must have God in his heart, so that he needs nothing more for himself. But he must also break out and confess that he has a God, with outward worship. Otherwise, what would be said here if he thought that the Lord should first become his God, as if he had not considered him to be his God before.

34) So this is the opinion that he now wants to take a special place, to which he has been called, and bring together there his servants and those who will be with him, to preach, pray, and what more is to be done to God. [It is so much in a nutshell.

3) Jenaer: "ich jñ" ^d. i. ihnj.  
4) "that" is missing in the Erlanger.

as if he were saying, "I want to do an outward service. But he would not do it, for when he was exhorted to do it. So his vow remains in pure faith; not that he would become pious or do a meritorious work, but that he would perform such service, only that other people would be improved by it and God would be praised. So you should also do and vow that he should be your God in one place, preaching and calling, not as a work to earn heaven, but to confess your God and faith before the world, and to serve other people.

35 Secondly, Jacob vowed, "All that you give me, I will tithe to you," that is, to keep a priest who preached and taught. For those who taught God's word were required from the beginning to tithe, which is not now in the New Testament, but has been left and set aside for love, that one may not make laws, but give as much as is necessary to feed and keep a preacher. Thus St. Paul teaches Gal. 6:6: "He that is taught by the word, let him impart all good things to him that teacheth him"; and 1 Cor. 9:14: "They also that preach the gospel ought to feed on the gospel." Now where there are Christians, they do not leave it; but since there were not Christians, and the people had to be governed by coercion and laws, a certain summa had to be determined as to how much to give them. Those before us had to do the same, because they could not provide for the preachers in this way. Love is too weak among the common crowd, it does not do it.

36 In the Old Testament [Numbers 18:24] it was commanded that the Levites should tithe, but in the end they had to feed themselves, for they would not give any more. Therefore they devised a false service, and everyone gave enough again, as it is and has been in our day. Because righteous preachers are not given enough to feed themselves, they must finally give up preaching and feed themselves with work; thus God will again let preachers appear who lead us to the devil as a plague and punishment.

Therefore, this is a noble work of the pious father, that he had in mind to preserve God's word. If you also vow in this way, and do it after him, I will praise it. But because the work is so good, no one follows it; but to monastic vows one gives more than is enough. That makes it the work of the devil. What God's word and example is, the world does not want to accept; it lets it go in one ear and out the other.

We have now seen clearly enough what the example contains, and how they have misused it, and how it teaches us that we are also obligated to give to the right service of God, namely, to preserve the word; but as far as God gives us that we are able, and not of the opinion of doing a good work in order to earn something, but for the benefit of other people, so that it is a vow of love, more than of faith. So you can also vow to give as much to your neighbor every year, as long as you are able, in honor of God, the one who teaches you God's word. This would also be a fine vow, freely made out of love. So that the three parts are together in a Christian vow: first, that it may be done to God alone; second, as long as we are able; third, for the benefit of our neighbor; and last, so far that faith may remain intact. What is written in the text, about the stone and the oil that Jacob poured on him, serves the spiritual interpretation of the story, which we also want to touch a little.

#### Spiritual Interpretation.

The stone that is poured with oil is Christ, our unique head and foundation stone, as the Scriptures also call him [1 Cor. 10:4, Eph. 2:20, 1 Pet. 2:6], to whom also the sleep of the patriarch pointed; for sleep is nothing else than faith. When the sun goes down, darkness falls and night falls, the body sleeps and neither sees nor feels, but the soul wakes up, so that the figure of Christian life is formed, which should thus stand that it neither sees nor feels anything of the world, but lives in faith: then it sees God and the angels on the ladder. Thus, that faith is nothing but a righteous dream, in which a man sees what no one else sees.

sees. That he now has the stone under his head points to Jesus Christ, on whom our consciences rest. When he wakes up, he sets it upright and pours oil on it; that is, when we are asleep in the faith, we wake up afterwards and break out in outward confession; so we set up the stone so that we preach about Christ who comforts us; and we pour oil on it, that is, such preaching is of pure grace and mercy, which flows and springs from Christ alone.

39 And this shows what kind of church or place of worship he wanted to build, namely, only to preach in it about Christ's grace, which was promised to him by God in his sleep and dream;

as he did before his fathers, Abraham and Isaac; therefore he vows the same. But no one will do this unless he has 1) seen the ladder before, that is, he who does not know Christ before will not preach well of him. For the ladder also signifies Christ, on whom the prophets and all the Scriptures ascend and descend, that is, all things agree with him, and all things walk on the ladder. Whoever now 2) knows Christ in this way, and sees how all Scripture goes to him, becomes a mighty preacher. This is the shortest part of this figure, that everything goes to the preaching ministry of Christ.

1) In the old editions: "because he has".  
2) Wittenberg and Erlangen: den.

# The twenty-ninth chapter.

**V.1-8. Then Jacob lifted up his feet, and went into the country that lieth toward the east. And he looked, and, behold, there was a well in the field, and, lo, three flocks of sheep lay by it. For the flocks had to drink from the well, and there was a large stone in front of the hole of the well. And they gathered all the flocks there, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again before the well in his place. And Jacob said unto them: Brothers, where did you get him? They answered: We are from Haran. And he said unto them: Do ye know me Laban the son of Nahor? They answered: We know him well. And he said, Is he also well? They answered: And, behold, his daughter Rachel cometh with the sheep. And he said, It is yet high day, and it is not yet time to bring in the cattle: water the sheep, and go and feed them. They answered: We will not water until all the flocks are gathered together, and we roll the stone from the well, and so water the sheep.**

1. Here Moses describes how the patriarch Jacob came to the land of Mesopotamia,

and there he got a wife and children. Now you see that God lets his dear saints describe legends in a strange way; that it is told how Jacob went and found nothing on the way but a well and three flocks of sheep, and how he talks to the shepherds. This could be seen as a useless, unnecessary thing to describe, when he could have found other things and larger pieces that would have been of some value. But this is what we have often heard, that it is all for this reason, that God may put out the eyes of reason and blind it, so that one does not see according to great, seeming nature and works, but, as all Scripture points out to us, according to the works that God does. If we could get there and let it go as God has done, it would be all right.

When Adam and Eve were in Paradise, there was no human work of their own devising, but everything went as God had planted it and nature had given it. These were also the very best works. But now that nature has fallen, we have fallen into our own works, and the world is foolish and foolish, wanting only to deal with other works, because [the]

God has planted, so that in all words and works God acts to bring it into pregnancy, to walk as He created it. Now this is a great knowledge, which even great saints lack. We all confess in faith: I believe in God the Father, Almighty Creator of heaven and earth. So, whoever believes it, knows a lot.

3 Therefore this also is described, that Jacob comes to a place to the shepherds, and speaks of things, which one looks at, as if they do not concern God at all. If he wanted to describe a holy man, should he not rather write thus: He came to a place and taught the people to do good works, made them go to church. Hearing mass and praying; and so forth of great spiritual works: so he entereth in, and knoweth nothing to say, but how he washeth with the shepherds of sheep to water them. We have heard it enough how God has air to deal with such foolish works. What do we get from the fact that he calls them to water the sheep, and then rolls the stone from the well? [It is worth mentioning that he writes such things and lets the world read them, as if there were nothing else to read. Now these are the proper natural works which God has planted in nature, and ordained that man should govern the cattle, handle them, and thereby seek his food, eating, drinking, and forage; which are described by the great saints. If God would have us do the same, we would see what fools I am.

4 So the whole chapter is a fool's work before the world, and a sermon that serves no purpose at all. Christ himself and Paul preach in this way, as can be seen in almost all the epistles. St. Paul, when he wants to teach about Christian works, knows nothing to say, because how a man should wait for his wife and children [Eph. 5, 25. Col. 3, 19. Eph. 6, 4.], the wife should fear the husband and hold him in honor, and bring up children [1 Tim. 2, 12.], the servant should be obedient to the Lord [Eph. 6, 5. f.], the children to their parents [Eph. 6, 1-3.], nor do we deal with other works. The great apostles knew nothing better to preach; but if they were to write now, they would have to study a while in the high schools, and give much money to become doctors. The

The people of the world, who are better acquainted with how to serve God, make great books of it and argue about which are the best works.

(5) But we may well thank God, if we could, that the Scripture comes to our door, and shows us rightly what is pleasing to God, what he himself may praise in his highest saints, what the apostles may praise and preach. [It is right for us to keep our mouths shut and say: We do not know any better; if there were something better, he would have let us write and preach it. [It is all to do that with this book God has wanted to ward off all the misery that has followed 1) (as can be seen in the following books), and to preserve what he has created and made; so that each one may wait for his thing, position and office. If thou shalt seek to be called something else, thou shalt fail. Both experience and the Scriptures give this; nor are we foolish and foolish, that we should throw such things to the winds, and fall upon other things. Let this be said of it; I know no more to make of it. Follow further in the text:

**V.9-30. While he was still talking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was tending the sheep. When Jacob saw Rachel his mother's brother Laban's daughter and his mother's brother Laban's sheep, he came and rolled the stone from the well's hole, and watered his mother's brother's sheep, and kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept, and told her that he was her father's brother and Rebekah's son. Then she ran and told her father. And when Laban heard of Jacob his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and hugged him, and meted him, and brought him into his house. Then he told him all this story. And Laban said unto him, Well, thou art my bone and my flesh; tarry with me a month. And afterward he said unto Jacob, Though thou be my brother, shouldest thou serve me for nought? Tell me, what shall be thy reward? Laban had two daughters, the eldest named Leah and the youngest Rachel. But Leah had a wicked face, and Rachel was fair of form and beautiful of countenance. The same Jacob loved and said: I will give thee seven**

1) In the editions: has.

**years to serve Rachel, your youngest daughter. Laban answered, "It is better for me to give her to you than to give her to someone else; stay with me. So Jacob served Rachel seven years, and it seemed to him as if they were days, for he loved her so much. Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for the time has come for me to join her. So Laban invited all the people of the place, and made a marriage. And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her in, and put her to sleep. And Laban gave Zilpah to Leah his daughter to be his handmaid. And in the morning, behold, it was Leah. And he said unto Laban, Why hast thou done this unto me? Have I not served thee for Rachel? Why then hast thou deceived me? Laban answered, "It is not done in our land to give out the youngest before the oldest. If thou endure this week, I will give thee this week also, for the service which thou shalt serve me another seven years. So Jacob did, and endured the week. Then he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife, and Laban gave Rachel his daughter Bilhah to be his handmaid. So he lay with Rachel, and loved Rachel better than Leah, and served him the other seven years.**

6th Then he describes how Jacob came to Laban, who called him his brother, when they were brother and sister, children of one another. But here we are to answer Mrs. Hulda, the mad fool, the reasoner. How the scholars were offended by the fact that the patriarch thus becomes a fool and takes two wives, yes, two sisters at once! And what is much more foolish is that he serves Rachel for seven years and loves her so much that he makes himself believe that it is only for one week, so that our clergymen have to say that it is pure foolishness. I would have to say it myself, if I were a monk, who is not taught to think what the world does, but only what the angels in heaven do; and shall read here how the fool courts the mead seven whole 1) years, and keeps it for seven days. Rhyme, so long with Metzen courting, and yet be holy. But here is the scripture; whoever can do better, let him do it, we will watch in the meantime.

1) Walch and the Erlangers: whole.

(7) What shall we make of this? Let us leave him in the mire and confess that he is a fool, that he has so far dared to live his life in this way, and now he comes and hangs himself on a maid; and when he is betrayed, he takes the other sister and serves her for seven more years. But that Jacob did not do this out of malice is evident from the fact that he was at least seventy years old, so that he should have lost the thrill. For Esau, his brother, took a wife when he was forty years old, but he waited thirty years. And though the text does not tell how old he was, yet if one should reckon it back from Joseph, one finds that it runs almost to seventy years, yes, even further, almost to eighty years.

8 Now imitate Jacob, and let them make a mockery of it, saying, He hath done nothing, but revelled and lain with women. But give us also such men, even of those who so highly praise virginity, who have kept chastity so long. As many as there are among the priesthood, if you were to forge them together, you would not find one who has kept chastity until the fortieth year: nor do they want to say much about virginity, and reproach all the world; they themselves are in the dirt up to their ears, and it should be nothing that this pious Jacob has persevered seventy years. That he should not also have had flesh and blood is not to be believed. For he loved Rachel as soon as he thought she should be his; nor did he abstain so long that I might set Jacob above all virgins. For to abstain so long must be a grace and spirit that is great. Therefore, it is not acceptable for a man to go overboard like this, thinking it is frivolity and not considering the seriousness he has had. If I were to set an example of chastity, I would set this very Jacob; set me one in the Old and New Testaments whose chastity is thus praised. Therefore God is wonderful with His own, making fools of the world, so that it does not know what it is like.

9 Again, in such great grace that he has lived so long purely, now is the other

Work, that God nevertheless lets the nature remain in him. Whether he was deceived in that he loved Rachel so much and served her for seven, yes, fourteen years, I let go. I also like that the saints are in the mud like us. But this is true, that besides the spirit and grace, God lets nature remain as He created it, in order to shut the mouths of the great saints, who lift the saints as high as if they had felt no natural movement. Indeed, if it were written of me, it would probably annoy me that one should read of me how I had courted with metzen; and Moses writes it of the holy man who lived so long without a 1) wife, and was now an old man.

Now, what shall we make of this? Even though it was an overlong 2) from him, it is still indicated to us that grace allows nature to remain; so that if you are a Christian, you must not even take off what is flesh and blood. God allows you to remain a man or a woman; how He now further ordains that the marital state should be to beget fruit, this does not cancel [the] grace, but confirms it, and makes it all blessed. Now if a man is given grace, as Jacob was, to remain so long without a wife, it is good for him; if not, he knows well where he belongs.

11 God gave Jacob special grace to live purely for seventy years; then, when he heard the saying that through his seed the world should be spread out and filled, and now sees that the time has come, he stands up to it. Therefore he vowed in such a spirit that he had certainly not been deceived, and had done so without God's word.

This is what I have often preached, to make consciences free. For we are now so taught by the grace of God that we know why woman is created. That is understood enough, one may say no more of it; only that the consciences are saved, are so caught with false doctrine that one has almost thought it would be a disgrace to take a woman or a man. It must ever happen that lust and love are put together.

I have had love. Without love it is vain misery and misery; otherwise there will be misfortune enough. Therefore the Holy Spirit will not be angry if a maiden loves a boy, and again, so that they may have a desire to live in wedlock. He gave it to Jacob, and not only that, but also let it be written; not for his sake, but for the sake of the great preachers who have strained it so tight, and to comfort us. These are the two things that God graces with chastity, and yet lets remain with nature as it was created.

(13) But how shall we excuse this, that he feedeth, and taketh two sisters? We cannot deny it. It is a sin with the priest, which must be atoned for with fire; so hard, if it happens in such a case, that a man sleeps with his wife's sister, he must never sleep with his wife. Here now see, this text applies more than a hundred thousand covenants; and because the scripture does not punish Jacob, you must let this be done to me without sin. The text also says, "When the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he made her fruitful, and Rachel barren." There he confirms the error, and wants it that he has the two sisters and keeps, and makes the scholars, who torment themselves so hostilely about it, fools. It is true that the example is not to be followed because God does something special with the man that he has not done with others; but that is why I say it, so that one may see God's work in this, and if such a case should arise, that one would know how to judge it. For I know well how consciences have been driven and acted under the law of the priest.

014 Now the first thing to be said here is, If it had not been customary in the land to do this, there is no doubt that Jacob would never have done it. For his heart was set on having Rachel for a wife, and not both sisters. That Laban deceived him and first put Leah with him in Rachel's place was not his fault; he did not know how to do what a pious man must do, he does not know how to do otherwise. If he had not wanted to be evangelical and stick to his rights, he would have said, "You have your

1) "a" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Erlanger.  
2) overlong - more than necessary, superfluous.



Daughter again; if thou wilt deceive me, deceive me to thy hurt. But he did not want to take revenge; although the father acted like a mischievous man, nevertheless he does not want to let her pay for it, and does her the friendship that he keeps her. Therefore it is a sign that it was also the custom of the country, and not so strange that no one but he alone should have done such a thing. God also confirms that he allows it to happen. Therefore, he did not do wrong nor was he criminal.

15 However, because it is no longer the custom of the land, and God does not command or give cause to do such things, it should not be done. He also abolished it afterwards, as Deut. 18:18 states: Thou shalt not take a woman with her sister to bare her shame, because she is yet alive. But it was among the Gentiles, and Mosi's law was not yet the time. Even if it had been forbidden, he did it without his will and knowledge, so that the commandment had no place here. For God did not want this maiden to become a disgrace. Thus the commandment does not extend further than when a man would take his wife's sister out of his own will, but he has kept her for the sole purpose of preserving her in honor. Those who are Christians know well what they should do, but if such a case arose, I would not know how to advise otherwise than as Jacob did, so that one might not be a prisoner of the priest and not use his wife. Let this be the sum of it, that Jacob is a strange man, full of spirit, and yet also flesh and blood like others.

016 But how is it that it follows, that Leah was hated, and Rachel was loved? Answer: He must not have been hostile to her at all, since he has six sons with her and nothing with Rachel; nevertheless, the text says: "He preferred Rachel to Leah. God allows flesh and blood to be involved. There were also two pious children, the wives, still flesh and blood remains in all three, as we will hear more. The reason for this is given in the text when it says: "Rachel was beautifully formed and beautiful in face; but Leah had

a stupid face." I do not know whether he is talking about stupid eyes, or about the whole face; as we say, lean, scrawny and pale of face, decayed and not full; which I like best. Rachel, however, is a pretty, smooth matzo, and has been perfect.

(17) Behold, is not this a strange saint? He should be so spiritual that he would not look at her more than if she were a woman; yet he has such a great difference, and soon looks at the most beautiful one; he has a desire for her, but not for the other. God still has him so deeply stuck in the flesh that his heart is more attached to this one than to the other. Leah was the first bride, she was to be borne, nor did she have to leave afterward; the household, including Jacob himself, held on to Rachel and let her be the wife of the house; no one gave much to Leah. She was also annoyed by this; she thought, "My father did not do too well with me, and could have advised me better. God lets such infirmities remain and write of the great holy children, that one must say and preach of them how they have been divided and envious.

(18) What then does God do to them? [He makes all three of them stumble, and always flesh and blood run with them. He still has such pure eyes, does not see which is the prettiest or not, and does not give a child to the pretty woman; but the poor maiden must soon have five or six of them. He is quite fond of women, sees nothing but that they are women, does not ask how they are shaped. He also does this: When he sees that someone wants to make a Cinderella, he goes to her and gives her fruit, and none to the others, and prefers the one who is the ugliest and most despised, who must be the right mother. For Christ came from Leah, from the tribe of Judah. No matter how pretty Rachel is, she is of no use; that which is to be Christ's must come down from the first and become humble. Leah must have suffered many a proud word, even from the servants in the house, and will have sat at the bottom that the other ruled. But God is so skillful that He looks down even on His saints, all of whom are His children, and He is more careful with those who are weakest than with those who are more proud. This is why the text speaks:

**31-35 And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he made her fruitful, and Rachel barren. And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and called his name Reuben, saying, The LORD hath looked upon my affliction, and my husband loveth me. And she conceived again, and bare a son, and said, The LORD hath heard that I am hated, and hath given me this also, and called his name Simeon. And again she conceived, and bare a son, and said, Now shall my husband return unto me, because I have born him three sons: therefore she called his name Levi. The fourth time she conceived, and bare a son, and said, Now will I give thanks unto the LORD: therefore she called his name Judah, and ceased from childbearing.**

019 The first son she called Reuben, that is, a son of sight, or son of vision; as if to say, I wretched maid, because God looks upon me as a poor, forsaken child, I will call the son thereof, that God hath looked upon me. And behold, how flesh and blood rule. For this is quite a carnal thought, since 1) she says: "Now my Lord will love me", because I am the first mother, bring the first son. She thinks she also wants to be a wife, but she is not. She calls the other son Simeon and says, "The Lord has heard that I am hostile or hated. Now this is fine, that she can say: God has also given me the son. These are words of great faith, as if she were saying, "Though I am a Cinderella, yet He looks down and hears my need.

020 And when she had the third son, she called his name Levi, which is. A companion, or a keeper. As if to say, Jacob is with Rachel, and dwells with her, but now he will be

hold to me also. She would have liked to tear him away from Rachel, so that she would be the beloved. This will also have annoyed her, that she should not also have children. After that she had another son, whose name was Judah, a thankful one, because she said, "Now I will give thanks to the Lord," or confess, and say what he has done.

21 Now behold how the Scripture acts. What is it to me how many children the fathers bore, and what names they gave them? Must we hear and see all this, as the whole book speaks of childbearing and childbearing? Or, what should I hear about how the women were also arrogant, and each one wanted to be the best? It is all that I have said: God likes nothing but his own work. So you see what He thinks of childbearing, that He allows so much to be written about it, so that both His work and His word are revealed to us; which the world does not see, indeed, considers to be nothing but shame and laughter, and is ashamed to write about it. But God is pleased to let Himself down like this and make something delicious out of the dirt, and what the world considers delicious is left lying in the dirt.

(22) Let it now be foolishness to beget children, and let us remain fools with the holy fathers, and wait for God's work, for which He created us, to abide in it, and to consider it His work, and to regard it as great, whether it is shameful and unworthy of consideration before the world. [It is enough for us that it pleases him; we will not do better than he has done. So now we have four sons of the holy patriarch, let us hear about the others as well. We will save the spiritual interpretation until we get deep into it and have this history.

3) Walch and the Erlangers: es.

1) Erlanger: Fleisches Gedanken, that.

# The thirtieth chapter.

(vv. 1-13) And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob nothing, she envied her sister, and said unto Jacob, Bring me forth children also, or else I die. And Jacob was very wroth with Rachel, and said, Am I then in God's stead, which withholdest the fruit of thy womb? And she said, Behold, Bilhah my maid, and lie with her, that she may bear upon my womb, and that I may be built up by her: and she gave him Bilhah her maid to wife. And Jacob lay with her. So Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. And Rachel said, God hath judged my cause, and hearkened unto my voice, and given me a son: therefore she called his name Dau. 1) Then Bilhah Rachel's handmaid conceived, and bare Jacob the second son. And Rachel said, God hath wrought it with me and with my sister, and I am overbearing: and she called his name Naphtali. 2) When Leah saw that she had ceased from childbearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her to Jacob to wife. So Zilpah Leah's maid bore Jacob a son. And Leah said, Prepared, and called his name Gad. And Zilpah Leah's handmaid bare Jacob another son. Then said Leah, Blessed be I; for my daughters shall call me blessed: and she called his name Asher.

In the previous chapter we heard enough about how poor Leah had to be the Cinderella, but Rachel the right woman, and how God showed in this how He exalts what we hold in low esteem, so much so that He holds the judgment firmly, even among the saints. For Jacob was a pious man, full of the spirit; nor was Leah anything special with him, but Rachel was the right wife, of whom he thought much. In such a carnal sense, God still lets him go; but also lets him confidently lack, and judges much differently than Jacob.

2 Therefore, even if we are holy, we must take care that God does not make us all holy.

Ways that we lift up that we lift up, and despise that we despise. He will not lift it up for us, because he did not lift it up for his mother, nor for all the apostles, who also often had good thoughts, and thought it was right, and should go out that way; but he does it differently. He still does this, so that the right may remain, that he may break our spirit. This is why he took Leam and made her fertile, but not the other, even though Jacob thought she should be the right mother, until she humbled herself.

(3) Here again we see a long and strange chapter, which, if reason considers it most profoundly, is nevertheless a fool's work, and sheer annoyance, that one should deal with your book, and think so much of it, which nevertheless speaks nothing but of goats and sheep and of the begetting of children; how could he present it more foolishly than that? especially if it is supposed to be written by holy people, as these are supposed to be.

4 But I cannot go against it, that is where it lies; whoever can do it better, let him do it, we will watch. If St. Jerome were to write about this, he would say that one should not stay with the bad history, but only seek the spiritual understanding in it; we will leave that alone. So I said that one should read and hear that in all God's works one should not look at anything more than His 'will, eyes, ears, and all the senses, and not ask any further. If it is God's work and will, worship it and carry it on your hands. He would have known how to describe other things if it had pleased him.

005 And yet what shall we say, that Jacob taketh four wives by heaps, two sisters, and two maids? Is it not a Hurian adventurer that two are not enough for him, but that he must have two more? I said in the previous chapter [§ 8] that his chastity is well proven by the fact that he lived seventy years and had no wives.

3) Erlanger: bite.

1) Marginal gloss: Dan means judge.  
2) Marginal gloss: Naphtali means confused, turned around, reversed, when one does the antithesis, Ps. 18:27: "With the perverse thou dost consort."

But now, when he is an old fool, and of course not much more fit to beget fruit, he takes four wives. The first answer is this: Because the Scripture does not reprove it, but describes it so diligently, and shows how God blessed him, and gives twelve patriarchs from the four wives, it behooves us to shut up, and [to] say: It pleases me well, because it pleased him.

But I think that if many holy people (as Jerome, Augustine, Hilarius, and probably also St. Peter) had seen such works in their times 1) from such a man, it would have been too high for them not to have been appalled by it, unless God's Spirit had specially inspired them and said it was right. For it is a high work, above all reason, that it might have been annoying even to the dear saints. It is now brought into the world, so that no one may say it is wrong. But if it were placed before our eyes, I and all the others would be fools about it.

Thus God makes fools of the world (and also at times of the highly knowledgeable spiritual people) with such works that one does not know what he has in mind. That is why his rule is strange, as St. Paul says out of the spirit. When he had looked at it from side to side for a long time, he let it fall, and he started to say [Rom. 11, 33]: "O what a depth of riches, both of wisdom and knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments, and inscrutable His ways! Summa, it is even directed that he would like to be God, and we would think that what he did was right. But we do not do this, but take laws before us and conclude: He who does not do this is wrong. But how if he says, "How then, if you do not rightly understand the law, and I would do it differently from what you want or understand?

This is the first reason that Moses describes such a thing, so that he could not describe it more ugly. He did it, therefore it is right. How then, if we also did it, would it not also be right? Or

1) So Walch and the Erlanger, "have" is missing in the Jenaer. In the original and in the Wittenberg: gesche. hen would have.

2) "the" is missing in the Jena.

Is it written for us as an example that we should do the same? No, for I have said often enough that we should not look at the works but at the person of Jacob. If you are also a Jew, 3) do it also. God does not want us to take works into our hands; that is why He is so foolish with the holy works to resist us, so that we do not fall into them. Look ahead to the faith, spirit and word given to Him. If then you are such a person, do in God's name what comes before you.

009 For see how he doeth. Yet he does not seek it, and there is no malice; but Rachel saith unto him, Give me children also, or I must die. The good Metze would have liked to have children, especially because she saw that her sister was so fertile, and it would have been a great shame and heartache to her that she should remain without children. She understood from the sermon she had often heard from Jacob how through his seed all people should be blessed; she knew and believed this; therefore she would rather have desired to die than to remain without fruit. [She] must therefore have thought: I am the right woman; what mischievousness does God do to me that I am not worthy to be the mother? How a Christian heart would be troubled this very day, if it were so, that it would be frightened and think, "Alas! I see that God has not spoken the word about me, and that it is none of my business; he holds himself to my sister, and despises me. So the word will have humiliated her in the ashes, and it will have hurt her so much that she will have to say, "If I do not have children, I will die of sorrow. Then her joy is purely taken away.

10 The text speaks about it, which is even harder, how she envied her sister and was angry with her. There is still strong flesh and blood underneath, as in all Christians. She was afraid that God would not ask for her; she also worried (as women do) that she would not remain her beloved for long. Such foolish, carnal theidings God still leaves in them, that one sees how they have all been frail,

3) Jekel - Jacob.

like all of us. Again, Jacob also becomes moody, even, as the text says, very angry with them, and says: "Do you think that I am in God's place, and should give you children, when he does not give you any? Here you can see that he often preached to them, and how they recognized God and his word. But I will say this much:

(11) You know well what God is, that there is no man's strength to bear children, but God's hand and power. What can I do if he will not give you one? This is a small comfort that he gives her, but it upsets him, as a holy man, that she comes here so unreasonably out of impatience, and speaks as if she has forgotten God, that it is Jacob's fault that she has no children.

012 And what did she do, when she saw that she was not fruitful? There is my maidservant," she says, "lie with her, that she may bear upon my womb, and that I may be edified by her. This was the custom among the Gentiles at that time, that servants and maids were their own people, so that they bought the masters for money for their own property, like horses and cows. So also Moses wrote in the law, when servants and maidservants, which were given together, begat children, that they were all the lord's own. As is still the custom in the lands of the Turk. Therefore Rachel says here: The maidservant is mine, let her bear to me in my womb. Because she gives the maidservant to her husband and gives her children, everything she gives birth to is her own according to the law; but she does not want to give her a strange husband or a husband of her own, but to have children by her Jacob; let her remain a maidservant, and she remains a wife. It is a strange right, not of the pope, but of God. But is she also right to give away her husband? Without her will Jacob would not have done it; because he now supplies and keeps the maid, it must be right; otherwise he would not have granted it. These are serious matters, not done out of any malice.

013 Now the same maidservant begetteth unto the woman two sons; the first she calleth Dan, that is, a judge. [She does not let the maid give him a name or take care of the child, but wants to be a mother herself, so that she may be built up by the maid and have a house,

so that one could say, "This is Rachel's child. Therefore she calls him Dan and says, "God has judged my cause. As if she were to say, "I have been in disgrace, but now I am blessed that I may also be called a mother; though by another wife, yet by her who is mine. So exactly she seeks it, that she may also be fruitful. For in the Old Testament it was the greatest shame where a woman was not fertile; it was as if God was not gracious to her, that he did not make her a partaker of the blessing. She also calls the other son of the maid herself, and calls him Naphtali, which means reversed or changed. [So she wants to say: Praise be to God! My sister has stopped, she stands still, and I continue and stand with great honor, now I want to remain the supreme woman; but this is once again a human and feminine thought.

014 Again, Leah also hath a woman's temptation, and will give nothing before to her sister; and because she hath ceased to bear, she taketh her maid also, and giveth her to Jacob. And she begat a son, and called his name Gad, and said, Full of vigor: as if she should say, It is yet full of vigor and freshness. For Gad is called valiant, or valiant for battle; from it comes Gedud, a warrior-servant. Then another, whose name is Asser, blessed; for "now the women will call me blessed," she says, "that I have so many children by Jacob.

(15) This is the story of the two maidservants who had to bear children to the two wives, and yet remained maidservants, even though they were Jacob's wives. I have said before 12) how it is right that the great holy man nevertheless keeps the wives so hard, and according to strict law, does not let them enjoy that they are his wives, that he would release them and make them free, which would ever be fair and kind to look upon. Oh how God has kept the people under restraint, so that they would not become too insolent and wanton. It would be good if such constraint were now, too, for we all want to be noblemen; therefore the servants also drive the arrogance and courageous will, so that no one can perish with them; there will never be a proper regiment. It is certainly unkind to see people being made one's own, like cattle. But it is also

It is an abomination to hang thieves on gallows; but one must force and tame people, yet one has enough to do that one may have peace. For it is impossible that those who are not God's children, and who are unbelievers, should do anything good, especially if they are given room and will. For this reason, there is now no more rule, discipline, or honor, and everything runs from one country to another, causing all kinds of trouble.

(16) Therefore the holy people have held that it is not good to give such people room and rein; otherwise they would become too proud and unruly. Even if Jacob had wanted to set them free, it would not have been right, because it was the custom of the land; therefore he did not want to establish a new right. It is necessary to keep order among the people, so that not everyone does as he pleases; as is the case now, that lords and wives must yield to the servants more than to their children, and often leave more right than they themselves have. Therefore, it has been a well-ordered, delicious regiment. It is not good that one should be the prisoner of another, but it is necessary to maintain an outward, worldly regiment. So the fathers would have let it go; but because the servants could not be governed in any other way and kept under constraint, they kept them according to the customs of the country and let them stay that way. There is also no doubt in my mind that these two maids were pious and holy women. [It is a great honor that they have helped to carry the twelve patriarchs. [It] now follows further in the history.

**Reuben went out at the time of the wheat harvest and found Allrun in the field and brought her home to his mother Leah. And Rachel said unto Leah, Give me a portion of thy son's allunto. And she said, Hast thou not enough that thou hast taken my husband from me, and wilt thou also take my son's runt? And Rachel said, Well, let him sleep with thee this night for thy son's land. And it came to pass, when Jacob was come out of the field at even, that Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou shalt lie with me; for I have bought thee for my son's land. And he slept with her that night. And God heard**

**And Leah conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son, and said, God hath rewarded me for giving my handmaid unto my husband, and called his name Issachar. And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son, and said, God hath well counseled me; now shall my husband dwell with me again, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun. Then she gave birth to a daughter and named her Dinah. And God remembered Rachel, and hearkened unto her, and made her fruitful. And she conceived, and bare a son, and said, God hath taken away my reproach from me, and called his name Joseph, and said, God will add another son unto me.**

(47) Here again there is an outrage that the two holy sisters, Rachel and Leah, envy and hate each other for the sake of Jacob's husband, so that it may be seen how they were also frail and human, for the comfort of us who are sinners. But besides this it is shown how the conjugal love is the greatest and highest love on earth, that it leaves, despises, yes, also hates and envies sister, brother, father and mother for the sake of the conjugal husband. Now Leah complains that Rachel takes her husband; she does not want to forgive her right, but also wants to be a wife; yes, she would like to be alone and the most noble, because she says: "You take my husband from me", just as if she were the right wife. But it did not help, she had to be a concubine, and let Jacob live with Rachel daily and most of all. But Rachel made her a friend, and let Jacob lie with Leah at night. Such bickering, envying, complaining and reconciling will have happened often, that Jacob has had enough to deal with them. But it is indicated here once to interpret how the housekeeping was 1) done, as with all other godly children; as also Peter [1 Ep. 3, 7] confesses that a woman is weak, and St. Paul [1 Cor. 7, 10] teaches the married to reconcile themselves. For they know that without infirmity, anger, impatience, and the like, there is no marital life, much more at the time when many women have had a husband.

1) In the editions: have.

(18) Some people think that the allrun, which in Hebrew are called dudaim, were violas. But they may not be the blue or yellow violas, for here the text says that Reuben had them healthy in the wheat harvest, as also Solomon says in his Song of Songs [Cap. 7, 13.]: "Dudaim, they give their smell." From this it seems that there are wafted fine flowers, which smell well around the time of harvest, as with us the carnations, 4) lilies and roses. But what kind of flowers they are, we do not know for sure. But that all interpreters have made Allrun out of it, which I have followed, because otherwise no certain flower was to be named, I consider nothing. What should smell Allrun, and so well please the women? I take carnations, 2) or white lilies for it. It seems, because no one has known for sure what Dudaim means, that a Jew has mocked ours, and said, it is called Allrun; as St. Hilarius in the word Hosanna, and many others are also deceived and mocked.

What is the need to write such a story about how women fight over flowers? No other need, but that God, as often said, does not ask much about our works, but the works of his dear saints please him, however small and trivial they always are before reason. For here you see, besides the small works, how full of faith Leah is, that God hears her prayer, and makes her pregnant; and she praises and thanks and recognizes God's grace, as if God were playing with these flowers with His children; and yet thereby accomplishes such great things that two arch-fathers and the daughter Dinah come away with great praise and honor to God. What this story and these flowers mean, however, I will now leave until another time; it is also easy to think out of the previous interpretations, whoever feels like it.

**(vv. 26-43) Now when Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said unto Laban, Let me go, I pray thee, unto my place and to my land. Give me my wives and my children, because I have served thee, that I may go: for thou knowest the service that I have done thee.**

**have. Laban said to him, "Can I not find mercy in your sight? I feel that God has blessed me for your sake. Voice the reward which I shall give thee. And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and what cattle thou hast among me. Thou hadst little before I came hither, but now it is spread abroad, and the LORD hath blessed thee for my sake: and now, when shall I also provide for my house? And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing at all: but if thou wilt do unto me as I say, I will feed again, and feed thy flock. I will pass through all thy flock this day, and thou shalt separate from thence all the spotted and spotted sheep, and all the black sheep among the lambs. That which is colored and spotted among the goats shall be my reward. So my righteousness will testify to me today or tomorrow, when it comes to my reward before you; so that what is not spotted and colored among the goats, and what is black among the lambs, that is a theft from me. Then said Laban, Behold, it is as thou hast said, and he separated out by day the goats that were speckled and of many colors, and all the goats that were speckled and of many colors, and that were white, and all that were black among the lambs, and put them in the hand of his children, and made room three days' journey between him and Jacob. So Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flock. Jacob took sticks of green willow, hazel and chestnut, and peeled white strips from them, and put the sticks he had peeled in the watering troughs in front of the flocks,**

3) Marginal gloss: goats. You must not be mistaken here that Moses calls the small cattle now goats, now lambs, now rams, as this language kind is. For he means that Jacob kept all the white, single-headed cattle, and Laban gave all the colored and black ones. Now whatever was colored from the single-colored cattle was to be his reward. Laban was glad of this and had nature to himself that not much colored cattle would naturally come from the single-colored ones. But Jacob helped nature with art, so that the single-colored ones bore a lot of colored ones. By this story it is meant that through the gospel the souls are led away from the law and works saints, where they are colorful, bright and spotted, that is, adorned with various gifts of the spirit; Rom. 12, 6. 1 Cor. 12, 4. that under the law and works only the unrighteous remain. For Laban means white or glittering, and means the glittering heap in the beautiful works, also divine law,

1) "than with us the carnations" is missing in the Wittenberger.  
. 2) Jenaer: "Neichen"; Wittenberger: "neglichen"; Erlanger: "Neilichen".

**who had to come to drink, that they should receive when they came to drink. So the flocks received over the staves, and brought mottled, spotted, and colored. Then Jacob separated the lambs that were not spotted and all that were black, and put them in clusters among Laban's flock, and made him his own flock, which he did not put with Laban's flock. And it came to pass, when the course of the spring yeast was, that he put the staves in the trenches before the eyes of the yeast, that they received above the staves. But in the lateling course he did not put them in. So the latelings of Laban, but the earlylings of Jacob. Therefore the man became exceedingly rich, that he had much flock, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.**

(20) Moses describes how Jacob dealt with his brother-in-law and deceived him about the sheep. Here, however, we must once again answer those who consider it according to the flesh, as if Jacob had acted treacherously with his master. But the text is somewhat obscure in its language, so let us give our opinion in our own German as to how it happened. First, Jacob served Rachel seven years, as we have heard. And when they were ended, Laban betrayed him, and gave him Leah. After that he served seven more years for Rachel, and he gave her to him for his wages. And when the fourteen years were expired, and he had earned no reward, save abundance, and food, and covering, and yet his lord's goods were greatly improved, as he himself confessed, they became one for the reward: and Jacob said, Let us tame 1) God and nature, what shall be mine and thine. Thou hast a flock of sheep, and thou shalt bring out the multicolored ones, and give me the plain ones. This is what Moses writes in a roundabout way; he calls the multicolored sheep half white and black spotted or speckled, which have white or black marks and spots, but otherwise one color. We call all of this colorful. According to this, our business shall proceed: The white, single-colored sheep, and what they bring for single-colored, shall also be yours; but what is born colored, shall be my reward.

021 So he made two armies, and took

1) to let tame - to let switch and rule.

to himself the plain ones, and what was colored, he did to the children. And gives it thus: Now I have the single-colored sheep alone; what now comes of these multicolored 2) shall be mine. Laban was happy to hear this and thought Jacob had done well, wanting to deceive himself; for it was not according to the common, natural course that much color should come from single-colored livestock. But Jacob used a trick and had Laban take all the colored ones and put them under his children's hands, three days' journey from there; but he stayed with the single-colored ones, but took sticks or rods and peeled them half with stripes. When the sheep were breeding and running, he put the sticks in front of them, and when they started to use the colored sticks, they also received colored and speckled sheep. With this art he brought about that from the monochrome ones so many colored and few monochrome ones came.

022 And it came to pass, when six months were expired, that Laban saw that Jacob's flock was great, and his less: "Well," said he, "it is not so, let us change; I will take the colored ones this time, and thou shalt keep the plain ones. Jacob was satisfied, and let [it] remain according to nature, put no colored sticks before them. After the year Laban saw that Jacob had the most sheep, so he changed it again with the reward, so that Jacob would keep the colored ones again. The change happened ten times in succession. For Laban was stingy and always wanted to have the most sheep, but Jacob needed the art so that he always had more than Laban. This is the opinion of the whole text, clearly stated.

023 Now the question is, Whether Jacob hath done right, that he hath dealt so craftily? so bring most of the sheep of it, that he knoweth not; for otherwise he would not have permitted him. [It is also to be thought that Jacob had pious servants, so that they did not betray him. For there is no doubt that Jacob ruled his house in such a way that he preached God's commandment and word, and suffered nothing wrong in the house. Now what shall we say to this, since the text is so clear in how it seeks its advantage, and to Laban



breaks off? If ours did, it would count for nothing; or, if it should count now, we would confidently steal. So the histories in the Old Testament are almost all so that reason would have to conclude that it was not done right. Why then does he write it down as if it were right and well done, blessing and praising him for it?

24) Answer: That he did the play out of the Holy Spirit's inspiration and activity is clear and irrefutable from the following text, where God confirms it, and tells him to take the wives, servants and cattle and go away. Wherever God's word goes, one should not ask whether it is right, but go confidently; what he says is right. Therefore, because it is confirmed here by God and driven, one should hear no other cause than that it is rightly done, [he] also had right to the good [in] many ways. He had served seven years for the daughter; but he deceived him, and kept him yet seven years, that he should get no more than both daughters; giving him nothing, that he might feed himself. Was it not a sin and a shame that he gave him the matzos so dearly, and gives him nothing in addition, as is due to the daughters, for what they deserve, as the strangers and maids, as they complain in the following chapter [v. 15]?

025 Now this was two great wrongs: That Jacob should serve him so long in vain, and that he should have laid both his daughters upon him, and should have given him nothing. If it had been right, he should have been forced to provide for his daughters and give them what was due. Jacob was pious, did not want to quarrel, but suffered with patience for fourteen years. Do as he did, and we will let you take and steal. This is also a reason that he owed him for the time he served with his wives and children. This is how he accounts for it. If it had been right, he would have had to give him a certain number of sheep every year, which would have carried a large pile all the time and would have increased every year. But what does he do? Although he has such a right before God, he still does not do it; but waits until God gives him cause to do it, and gives it to him himself.

26. they also had, the daughters, together with their

Children well right to bring such to themselves, because any had now served beside him seven years; as they say afterwards [Cap. 31, 15.], "He hath kept us as strangers, for he hath sold us, and eaten up our wages." They were legitimate, had children and servants; therefore it was time to think of their house also, because yet he would give them nothing. Thus Moses shows how the pious Jacob had to suffer so much injustice, and always lived in the cross, and yet kept silent, consoled himself that God had promised him that he would not leave him. Doesn't that mean that he had to serve so long with sour work, and in addition suffer overload and injustice? How could we suffer so badly! But he learned from it what a wonderful God it would be.

27 Laban continued to deal treacherously with him, mistaking his wages ten times over and refusing to give him what God had given him, since he had become rich through him; he did it so long and so much that God would no longer suffer it. So one must look at the work of the saints, so that one does not take offense at it. It would not yet be a great sin if a man were to serve so long and with such difficulty, and were to receive no reward, if he were to bring something of the Lord's good to himself in such a way and with such an opinion. It is due to him and is his in the sight of God. If he is able to bring it to himself in a proper way, then he has taken what is his. This is what the children of Israel did when they came out of Egypt, as it is written in the other book of Moses [Cap. 11, 2, 12, 35]. When they had been weakened by long and hard labor, and had built two cities and made them strong, and the Egyptians had dealt with them most ruthlessly, God commanded them to go away with all that they had, and to take and carry off from the Egyptians all manner of silver and gold utensils. Summa: Earned reward is not the lord's but the servant's; if he can take it away that the lord does not know, he will always take it. To those who are Christians, 4) we must not prescribe many rules, nor must we master their works; but the others are none of our business. This is the end of this chapter; now we will continue with the history.

# The thirty-first chapter. \*)

**V.1-10. And the words of the children of Laban came before him, saying: Jacob has brought all our father's goods to himself, and from our father's goods he has brought such riches. And Jacob looked upon the face of Laban, and, behold, it was not against him as before. And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto thy fathers' land, and to thy friendship; and I will be with thee. So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah into the field by his flock, and said unto them: I see your father's face, that it is not against me as before. But the God of my father has been with me. And ye know that I have served your father out of all my strength. And he has deceived me, and now he has changed my wages ten times. But God has not allowed him to harm me. When he said, "The colored ones shall be your reward," the whole herd wore colored ones. But when he said, "The mottled ones shall be your reward," then the whole host bore the mottled ones. So God took your father's goods from him and gave them to me. For when the time of the run came, I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the goats leaped upon the mottled, spotted, and multicolored sheep.**

(1) Thus we have heard how Jacob served for twenty years, which was a long service for such a man, who had a wife and children, and received no wages of his own without what God gave him in the end. The two children also suffered much, even though they were his own daughters. Rachel, even though she was Jacob's favorite, had to be a Cinderella compared to her sons' wives. For seven years they had to be maidservants and had no right in the house. What many a wicked trick and trick they have had to suffer, and keep silent! For the other wives were heathens, proud butchers, and lived according to the law.

Flesh and blood, so that they all lived a hard, miserable life with Jacob.

(2) But he did not escape, nor did he hurry away, but waited until God told him that He had called him to go into the country and promised to bring him home in peace. He waited for this every day, but it took a long time.

(3) Whoever reads this chapter must pay attention to the fact that the word of God that follows was spoken earlier. The text begins as if he had called the two wives to him before God spoke to him; but it happened a good while before, at the time when the affair with Laban began, in the fourteenth or fifteenth year; as he then [vv. 11. 12.] when he says: "The angel of God came to me in a dream, and said, Lift up thine eyes, and behold, the goats leap upon the speckled and spotted and colored sheep" 2c. The dear saints, what they have done, they have done in the word of God; what they have not done, they have not done. Therefore, when the word comes here and tells him to go away, he follows it and sets out, always following the word, but full of suffering and cross.

004 The words of the children of Laban came before him, saith Moses, saying, Jacob hath taken all our father's substance unto himself. What an envious, stingy people they were; he has taken everything to himself, they think; they are sorry that Jacob should have a penny of his own. He had to hear that, and if he had not had God's word, he would have thought they would take his wives and all his goods. But he does not look at the property, but speaks afterwards [v. 31.] to Laban: "I feared that you would snatch your daughters from me."

5 They go on to say, "And of our Father's

\*) In Buchwald's "Andreas Poach's Handwritten Collection" 2c. we meet p. XXXIII the note that from the postscripts of Stephan Rottm z Witzkau Hervorgehe, "that Luther stood on Sunday Judica <13. March) 1524 at chapter 31".

Good he has brought about such wealth." What fine thoughts are these! Jacob had made Laban rich, as he himself confesses that God had blessed him for his sake; nor may they say: If his father's goods were not, he would not have a penny. So he still has to suffer the humiliation of all the injustice and violence they had done to him. What he now says further, when he speaks to the women, is easily explained.

**V. 11-16. And the angel of God said unto me in a dream, Jacob. And I answered, Here am I. And he said, Lift up thine eyes, and, behold, the goats leap upon the speckled, spotted, and multicolored sheep: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the stone and made a vow to me there. Now arise, and go forth out of this land, and return unto the land of thy friendship. And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, We have neither part nor inheritance in our father's house: for he hath kept us as strangers, because he sold us, and consumed our wages. Therefore God hath delivered unto our Father his riches unto us, and unto our children. Do therefore all things whatsoever God hath said unto thee.**

(6) These things are told one after another, so that we may know that the good father Jacob did right, and had God's command; for "God took the goods of Laban (he says) and gave them to me. And here you see that God does indeed try His dear saints, leaving Jacob in anguish and distress for twenty years; but at last He comes and comforts him.

007 Therefore we also shall learn to hold fast the word with patience, and not forsake it, though it endure an hundred years. For that he consumeth, he doeth by grace for our good, that faith may be strong and great, and that he may the more abundantly give that which he hath promised. For this is his way, that he comes slowly; but he comes well; as he also punishes slowly, but punishes grievously, giving time and space enough to be known and to amend. Therefore the elect must wait and be patient for the sake of the wicked, so that he may stand with his glory, that he is long-suffering and does not punish soon. So endures

The patience of the pious, and the shrewdness of the wicked for a long time, but God comes in due time and repays both sides abundantly.

(8) Then he said, "I have seen all that Laban does to you. In one word God condemns all that Jacob has done, and condemns all that Laban has done. Now let anyone say that Jacob deceived Laban. For it is ever so much as to say, Thou hast done him right, and he thee wrong. The two sisters, Rachel and Leah, hear this and also complain, "We no longer have any part or inheritance in our father's house. Should the daughters speak of their father in this way? But they have tried so much that they were allowed to say freely, "He has kept us as strangers"; [we] also have no part in the good anywhere; he tears it all away from us and gives it to others. Which will often have hurt them, and they 1) will sometimes have grumbled and been impatient. But Jacob admonished and comforted them, so that they let it go.

9. for this, they say, he has not kept us as children, but has sold us, that is, taken us for handmaids to be bought and sold, keeping them like cattle, that all they wear and work is not theirs but the Lord's, giving them nothing but food and clothing. "Therefore (they say) GOD has taken it from our Father" 2c. The word also indicates that they were pious children who recognized GOD and His work. This is how far this history goes. Now follows another piece, how they fared on the journey.

**(v.17-35) So Jacob arose, and loaded his children and his wives upon camels, and carried away all his cattle, and all his substance, which he had purchased in Mesopotamia, to come unto Isaac his father unto the land of Canaan (Laban having gone to shear his flock); and Rachel stole her father's images. So Jacob stole Laban's heart in Syria, 2)**

1) "they" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) Marginal gloss: steel the heart. Stealing the heart is Hebrew for doing something behind another's knowledge, but it means that the faithful grasp the right core of God's word, which the works saints never realize.

so that he did not tell him that he was fleeing. So he fled, and all that were his arose, and passed over the waters, and went toward mount Gilead. On the third day Laban was told that Jacob was fleeing. And he took his brethren, and pursued after him seven days' journey, and caught him in mount Gilead. And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not unto Jacob otherwise than good. And Laban came near to Jacob. Jacob had pitched his tents on the mountain. And Laban and his brethren pitched their tents in mount Gilead. And Laban said unto Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen my heart, and hast taken away my daughters, when they were fallen by the sword? Why hast thou hid this, that thou hast cried, and hast stolen away from me, and hast not told me, that I might have led thee with joy, with singing, with timbrels, and with harps? And didst not let me kiss my children and my daughters. Thou hast done well. And I had so much power, praise God, that I could do you evil; but your father God said to me yesterday, Beware that you speak no other words to Jacob than good. And because thou wouldest go, and hast so nearly desired thy father's Hans, why hast thou stolen my gods from me? Jacob answered and said unto Laban, I feared lest thou shouldest take thy daughters from me. But with whom thou shalt find thy gods, let him die here before our brethren. Seek thine with me, and take it. But he did not know that she had stolen Rachel. So Laban went into Jacob's tent, and Leah's tent, and the two maidservants, and found nothing. And he went out of Leah's tent into Rachel's tent. Then Rachel took the images and put them under the litter of the camels, and sat on them. And Laban searched the whole tabernacle, and found nothing. Then she said to her father, "My lord, do not be angry with me, for I cannot stand up to you, for I am after the manner of women. So he searched, and found the images nothing, 1) as almost he searched.

(10) To steal the heart is a Hebrew way of speaking, when one does a thing behind one's back, so that another knows nothing about it. But there is guilt in Jacob's stealing away secretly with his wife and child, and in Rachel's cheating and stealing his father's silver idols. But is it ever asked whether it was done right? The father did not give her anything as he owed, so she thought: I am also a child in the house; [she] had to bring some of it, could not come to the other. But whether it was done, I do not know. It is said that she did it so that she made less idolatry in her father's house, but I do not know. It may well have been a female mistake, but there is no power in it; even if she had stolen more, it would not have done any harm. If she has done wrong, we do not want to excuse her.

11 Now this is to be seen, that Laban hurried after them; in which however a piece of Jacob's 2) faith is indicated. For it must have been bold courage and defiant faith for him to set out with so many, wife, child, servants and all the cattle, to go so far through the land, especially because he does it behind Laban's back. [He must have thought: He will make up his mind and follow us, so that he will take everything that is here and catch it, and he will go with us in the most horrible way. But nothing but God's word contains and protects him, even though everything can be seen differently. That was a bold, strong faith, which will become weak afterwards. So now he commands God so strongly that he leads his wife, child and servants across the foreign land, because he knew for certain that Laban would hurry after him. Because he trusts in God, he does not let him go, since Laban is angry with him and wants to attack him and cool his temper with him. For if he had not meant it that way, God should not have warned him in his sleep and commanded that he harm him; so he comes himself and accomplishes so much that Laban must leave him in peace.

(12) Thus, behold, how God makes His saints stand alone in wonder; but when it comes to the

1) The following words, which are in the Bible and in the Jena, are missing in the Erlanger.

2) Erlanger: his.

When the need comes, he is there so soon. Before, he left Jacob twenty years and acted as if he did not ask anything about him; now he comes unexpectedly and helps. When we think that he has forgotten us, he comes so soon that we could not wish it better. Therefore he said unto Jacob, I have seen all that Laban hath done unto thee. How is it that you have seen, and yet have kept silent? Yes, now I come and will protect you. So also Christ in Matthew [Cap. 10, 30.], "All the hairs of your head are numbered." In spite of him who bends a hair of our head, he still poses as if he wanted to tear us away. Now this is the art of knowing God's work.

(vv. 36-55) And Jacob was wroth, and quarreled with Laban, and answered and said unto him, What have I wronged, or sinned, that thou art so hot against me? Thou hast touched all my household goods: what hast thou found of thy household goods? Lay it before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge between us. Twenty years have I been with thee; thy sheep and thy goats have not been barren. I have never eaten the rams of thy flock. What the animals tore, I did not bring you, I had to pay it, you demanded it from my hand, it would be stolen from me by day or by night. By day I pined away with heat, and by night with frost, and my sleep departed from my eyes. So I served twenty years in thy house, fourteen for thy daughters, and six for thy host; and thou hast changed my wages ten times. If the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac had not been on my side, you would have let me go empty-handed. But God looked at my misery and work, and punished me yesterday. Laban answered and said unto Jacob, The daughters are my daughters, and the children are my children, and the herds are my herds, and all that thou seest is mine. What can I do to my daughters today, or to their children whom they have borne? So come now, and let us make a covenant," I

1) Marginal gloss: fear. Jacob calls the God of Isaac "fear", because Isaac was God-fearing and God's servant.

And thou that art a witness between me and thee. Then Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a mark, and said unto his brethren: Read stones to them. And they took the stones, and made a heap," and ate upon the same heap. And Laban called his name Jegar Sahadutha, and Jacob called his name Gilead. 2) And Laban said, Let the heap be a witness this day between me and thee (therefore it is called Gilead), and let it be a waiting place. For he said, The LORD look between me and thee, when we come from one another, where thou hast offended my daughters, or taken other wives. There is no man here with us: but, behold, God is a witness between me and thee. And Laban said further unto Jacob, Behold, this is the heap, and this is the mark, which I have set up between me and thee; the same heap be witness, and the mark also be witness, where I pass over unto thee, or thou passest over unto me this heap and mark to hurt. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, and the God of their fathers, be judge between us. And Jacob swore unto him by the fear of Isaac his father. And Jacob offered a sacrifice in the mount, and invited his brethren to eat the bread. When they had eaten, they stayed on the mountain overnight. And Laban rose up early in the morning, and kissed his children and his daughters, and blessed them, and departed, and returned unto his place.

Cap. 32:1, 2. And Jacob went his way. And the angels of God met him, and when he saw them, he said, They are the armies of God: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

13 Then Jacob recounts his life, which he led for twenty years, in which we see once again what the life of the dear saints is: nothing but misery and heartache, as he says, that he had no rest day and night, was famished from heat and frost. This is his legend; there is still nothing of great, holy being, since we say of. [They are the vain works of a poor, afflicted shepherd, who has had to oppress and oppress, and suffer much from his lord and servants, and otherwise all kinds of accidental things. For though he had certain

2) Marginal gloss: Gilead means a cluster of witnesses, and means the Scriptures, since many testimonies of God are often inside.

God had promised to protect him and be with him, yet he let him go like another man, so that even the wolves devoured his sheep, and he suffered all kinds of hardships. 1) Although it all seems to be man's doing, as God leads His saints, so that it is not seen. That has been his shortcoming, that he has not had many happy days in his lifetime.

14 So he tells his misfortune, and comes to the promise of his God, and calls him a God Abraham, and the fear Isaac; this is spoken in Hebrew language way, which fear of God is actually called worship. We have interpreted it too sharply and pointedly when Scripture speaks of the fear of God, that we have always made a great distinction de timore filiali et servili; but in the simplest way it is nothing, but to serve God with the heart inwardly, and with a hearty nature, which is to hold him in honor, and to shrink from him, to do and leave nothing, without which one knows that [it] pleases him. Therefore he must have the name here, that he is called Isaac Fear, that is, Isaac held before his eyes, and shunned him, did and left what pleased him; though he did not always do so. For they must also be allowed to remain human beings, but in such a way that they have served God in part by pure faith. So the fear in Scripture must be understood, that it does not indicate fear or terror that lasts for a moment, but that it is the whole life and being that goes before God in honor and fear; for no one will serve God except he who fears Him. This is the most understandable thing to be seen in this chapter, after which there is nothing more special, except how they make a covenant and give the last 2) to one another.

(15) Now we must also seek the spiritual or secret interpretation of history, if we can find it otherwise. So I said before: Whoever wants to interpret the Scriptures spiritually, or in a hidden sense, should first of all make sure that he does it in such a way that it rhymes with faith, or, as St. Paul teaches [Rom. 12:7], that it rhymes with faith.

1) Walch and the Erlangeners: suffer.

2) Last Letze, Valette, Farewell.

If it is not, it is no good. What then does it mean to be similar to the faith? This is what it means when people are not led away from faith and are taught nothing else but that faith remains. For it is with faith, just as Paul (1 Cor. 3:10-13) says: "I laid the foundation as a wise master builder. But let every man see how he builds upon it. No one can lay any other foundation except the one that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if any man build thereon gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest."

16 All this is said of the office of preaching, that he who wants to go through the Scriptures and interpret them well should do so in such a way that he teaches nothing else, except that which is the doctrine of faith, which alone is based on Christ. Now if someone approaches and preaches a human dream, as any of St. Barbara, as she has acquired from God, who fasts and celebrates her, who shall not die without the sacrament, (that) is also preached and built on faith, as on Christ, because one cries her out as a martyr of Christ, and wants to teach the Christians with it, how one should live; but there see how it rhymes with faith.

(17) Now how does it rhyme? So that my fasting should be my consolation; so faith wants to know no consolation but the one Christ. Now such a doctrine may also be preached by holy men, for St. Paul does not deny that they leave the foundation; indeed, he says of those who have the foundation, whether they build hay or stubble upon it; as St. Bernard, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, and many others, who still stood on the fool's work that monasticism was something, and went around with it (though they otherwise preached rightly about Christ). That was straw and stubble built on faith. But God could finely burn it away with fire, as happened to St. Bernard. When the fire came upon him, that is, the temptation and death, he said, "Alas, I have lived shamefully, and spent my life sinfully; but I know one consolation, that God will destroy a broken and bruised heart."

3) Wittenberg and Jena: similar.

will not despise [Ps. 51:19]. Item: You have won the kingdom of heaven by two rights: firstly, you are entitled to it because you are the Son of God; secondly, you have also earned it through your suffering and death, since you did not need it, and you gave it to me. This man had long been living a hard and severe life and working; but now, when the hour came, everything withered away and fell free, as that which was lost; but he remained on the ground, and was saved, but by the fire; so that it must come to pass, that is, he must be terrified before death, so that all that fell to the ground and became powder, but he alone remained on the ground.

18 Thus St. Augustine also led a fine life, rule and law, of which the monks still boast; but at the end of his life he felt that nothing helped, and had to sing the seven penitential psalms; then he forgot his life, as if he had never done nothing good. We do not see this as the good works of the saints in temptation, just as 1) the straw and stubble is consumed by fire, so that they finally crawled to the cross and had to remain on the bare ground. What should St. Barbara or other saints help us in times of death? What would help me if it were true that this virgin had obtained that I would not die without the sacrament? Just as much as the monsterness in which it is kept.

(19) I have said this in order to see how all preaching should be similar to faith, as it rhymes; that it is always the way of teaching that it drives faith. Thus, from the beginning of this book we have found nothing but that everything is directed to faith and word; even though other things and new histories are always presented, it still always follows them, so that faith remains the main part through and through. Thus both histories and figures are nothing but gold and silver, built on the same foundation, that always one thing is taught, although person, history, 2) time and manner are different and different. So we must now also deal with the history of Jacob, and first of all the two main characters

- 1) The words: "The saints ... gleichwie" and immediately following: "durch das Feuer" are missing in the Erlanger.  
2) Erlanger: "obs wohl persönlich geschicht".

look at what it all refers to, namely Jacob and Laban.

20. Jacob (as is heard) is called a transgressor because Christ (which figure and image is Jacob) runs such a regiment that he tramples underfoot everything that is not God's word, all the world's wisdom, prudence, godliness, authority and power.

21 In contrast, Junker Laban is called bright or white in German, glistening, as the light looks, or shines in a pool. Thus, the name itself indicates what he is and means, namely a beautiful glittering hypocrite, like the armor shines when the sun shines on it.

22 Therefore he interprets the perverse kingdom as having been the Jews, who had the law of Moses, and high priests, who were to teach and govern the people according to that which Moses wrote; which, because it could give no more than to control and ward off outward sins alone, and they fell upon it with works, had to become vain gleamers of it. Even though there are so many spiritual people who force themselves and lead an outwardly beautiful, honorable life that shines brightly and shines before the eyes, they are still desperate boys inwardly in their hearts, for the heart can never become pious by works and commandments. Thus Laban is an image of the shining people, has the name and figure of the people of the law, especially of the Jewish people.

23 You can see this in the man's behavior, where you will find two things. The first is that he has gods, which his daughter steals from him. The other, that he so dishonors his son-in-law and his daughters. For all glittering and hypocritical saints must be like this, and do so. First, they want to serve the right God in the most diligent way, and only have the appearance that they are God's servants. For the good Jacob has no idols, his worship is not in any outward gesture or manner; [he] is nothing but a shepherd tending sheep. But this man has his own chapel and special idols, and yet he worships the right God, as he says in the text itself: "The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, and the God of

- 3) The words: "glistening" and (immediately following) "of the law" are missing in the Erlanger.

of their fathers be judge between us." This is how all idolatry among the Jewish people should be interpreted. For the people were not so foolish as to think that the images, wood and stones, were the right God; especially the Jews, who did much idolatry; but that is what they meant, to serve the right, natural God with them. But this is the error of it, that they had no command to do it, but did it out of their own, false delusion; they dare to do such a service to God, that it should please Him; and because it pleases them, and everyone considers it delicious, they stand on it, and think that they have earned something, and are almost happy about it.

024 And he saith thus: I will not worship which I have not commanded; I will not have thy work, nor be unbaptized of thee, nor sell unto thee. If thou shalt have my grace, and spirit, and goods, thou shalt have them freely, and have nothing else to trust in. Nor are they so foolish as to buy, not only for themselves, but also for other people, as our ministers have done; which is not serving God, but is most shamefully blasphemed and profaned. This is Laban's rot, who want to serve God alone, but have only the appearance of it, that everything must go under the name of the right God.

(25) Therefore, you must be accustomed to such a way of writing, which interprets all idolatry as meaning that the images are nothing but an outward way of serving God. And even though we do not have such images and idols now, it is still the same. For I am also idolatrous when I go to a monastery and prescribe such rules for myself, binding myself to my own way of living and serving God, which God has not commanded nor ever spoken about. I do not serve God, but the rule that I have invented, and yet I admit it to God. The world is full of such idolatry, so full that each man portrays God according to his own fancies and desires, and wants to honor Him with self-invented service.

026 So Laban remains an idolater, and maketh his own idols. [It is also to be thought that he will not have drawn his daughters well. If Jacob had not come, then

they would have remained in idolatry, but he pulled them out and taught them to know God. For that Rachel understood that it was fool's work, proves that she put the idols under the litter, and sat upon them. [It is also a great thing that she can thus despise the glittering worship of God. For we see how sour it still becomes us to trample underfoot the pope's clergy. This is spoken of the first part, which the man practices against God in the glittering nature, for the sake of the fictitious worship. Thus he acts first against the faith.

Secondly, such saints cannot refrain from acting against love. For as they blaspheme God through false worship, so they also offend their neighbor. So you have two examples against each other: Jacob goes in pure faith, Christian love, and carries the cross; Laban goes in a fine glittering nature, without faith and love, and does not want to carry a cross, so that he also breaks off his own children and withholds theirs. 1) With this, the Scripture has just shown what kind of people they are, the false saints. He has so completely forgotten love that he not only deceives Jacob ten times for his wages, but also takes from his daughters what they have and makes them serve him with their sweat and labor. This is why the false saints do nothing but seek their own belly and enjoyment, and oppress the true saints.

Let us see an example of this. Give me a monastery, yes. A monk, where one lives Christian and brotherly toward one another, or one means the other faithfully. One sees before one's eyes how one has given so much to the devil up to now; yes, that we could only give much to the mad people, we have snatched and scraped everything to ourselves, not helping our neighbor with a penny; after that we have made so many wills, if we should die, only to fill our bellies. So did the priests, who had to be full and have enough so that they never lacked anything, ate poor people's sweat and blood, and served no one in vain.

1) In the old editions: "fürhelt".

2) Erlanger: "these" instead of: the wrong ones.



29 And notice especially that Laban not only takes everything to himself and gives nothing to the daughters, but also forces them to serve him and makes maids out of them, as he bought them for money. This is the tyranny of the laws of men, as the Jews also did when they brought the Gentiles under them, and urged them to keep their laws as were convenient for them. When that was, of which Christ [Matt. 23:16] says: "Woe unto you, blinded leaders, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is guilty." Item, v. 18: "Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the sacrifice that is above, he is guilty." The sacrifice, they say, is a great, delicious service, much better than the altar; for for the sake of the sacrifice it was made. So also the gold is much more delicious than the temple, for it adorns the temple. They did this for their own benefit, and made the people think: Now I would much rather give gold and sacrifice than to the altar or temple.

30 So also to our lines: How we have had to suffer and be tortured, because nothing was preached but what served them to give here and there. This they have thus laid down and ordered with laws, so that whoever did otherwise would be in God's disgrace. So we were their prisoners and had to do what they forced us to do. But the Holy Spirit has preserved some, and the others have had to suffer. None but Laban enjoyed this; he became rich with our loss.

031 But when Rachel and Leah saw it, they said: Go ahead, and take us with you, for we are no more here than captive maids. This is what we are preaching now, that we should run away and escape from the teaching, so that they have forced us and made us useful to them. The prophets have also lamented from time to time how the false prophets have sucked the people dry and corrupted their bodies, goods and souls, and how they have become fat wests.

32. behold, this is what God has indicated in this Laban, that it rhymes, as I [§ 27] have said.

I have said, on faith, how both faith and unbelief act, especially how unbelief always wants to have its fill, serve no one, and suffer nothing; but faith acts according to God's words, serves everyone through love, and goes through suffering and the cross.

33 Further. The two daughters and maids must also be interpreted as the Jewish people, so that they are, as we have heard above [Cap. 17, § 11. Cap. 25, § 26] of Sarah and Rebecca, a figure, and also members of the Christian church. For Jacob must bear a figure of the king who rules without laws, therefore he is also a poor king on earth in his kingdom, although he has all things in his hand, but leads his people into poverty, weakness, death and all misery. Power and riches hinder his kingdom; therefore he saves it in that life, practices and drives us here with sorrow and misfortune, as he lets Jacob serve twenty years and suffer much adversity.

034 So then the four wives, the people, are taken from among the Jews. For I would gladly make of the four but one; for Christ shall have but one bride, as we profess in the faith: I believe one common Christian church. And Paul [Eph. 4, 5. 6.] says that all is One Faith, One Baptism, One Lord, and One God, and the one faith is virginity and purity, and the treasure with one another of this Bride, has also no other food, seed, milk 2c., than the same one Word of God, that it may nourish all Christians. Therefore, we must include the four together in one.

35 First, Rachel is the most beloved and the most beautiful; she was promised to him, and for her sake alone he served: but Leah is not the most beloved, yet she is the first. We want to interpret this as best we can; I don't know if we can be so precise; it is enough if we keep the reason. Rachel means in German a sheep; Leah means tired, sorrowful, miserable, which was pale, lean, scrawny and pointed in the face, but Rachel fat and complete. This is what Christianity is supposed to be, according to two natures, inward and outward. Therefore we are called old men and new men, but not that man is two things; as much as we have faith, we are two things.

new, as much as we do not believe, we are old. Therefore, I cannot interpret the old man as if he were flesh and blood alone, because he, like the new man, is the whole man. Outwardly I am different if I am Leah, inwardly I am different if I am Rachel. But both are one person, because I feel both, faith and unbelief, in the bottom of my heart, and it breaks out in the whole person. Therefore it is only so much spoken: As much as you believe, you are a new man through and through; and again.

36 Therefore let Rachel be the inward being through faith, who had the promise of God, is the promised bride, wherein Christ reigns; as Paul says Eph. 3:17, that he dwells in our hearts through faith. He loves this bride, and is kind to her, and serves for her sake, that is, lays down his life for her; as Paul says Eph. 5:25, 26: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for her, that he might sanctify her" 2c. But he does not love Leah in this way; that is, Christianity according to the outward appearance, as one looks at it, is weary, sorrowful and miserable, lies in poverty and misery. There goes the lamentation, as it leads: "I am hated," and must bear the cross, and be Cinderella. For although he loves us through and through, it does not seem so. Inwardly we have peace, pleasure and joy, we are in his arms, and he is kind to us, but outwardly he acts as if he did not know us, and causes us much unhappiness and heartache.

(37) Nevertheless Leah must have the first children with him, and bring forth fruit; that is, though it seemeth that he is not kind to her, yet he forsaketh her not, but comforteth her; lest we think that he hath forgotten ours; giving that the more works and good fruits may be obtained. For the suffering life, which is thus tempted and driven, brings forth many more good works than the inward life, and can do much, advise, and be of use to others; which an inexperienced man cannot do. Therefore Leah must be the most abundant and fruitful, because of her misery; as the text says, "God saw that she was hated, and made her fruitful."

(38) Rachel also brings forth fruit at times, but not so much, and it becomes sour and heavy to her, [it] goes slowly, [she] must finally leave life over it. [It is all spoken for this reason: because God sees that we are so stupid as to lead the unkind and laborious life, he comforts us thus: You shall do much good and be fruitful, you must be Leah; therefore suffer yourself, and be confident; if I always comforted you and played with you, you would become lazy and remain unfruitful. Therefore he tempts her, and makes her sore, lest she seek vain pleasure and joy in him. So he has done many works for the weak, suffering Leah, in the outward nature of the cross; but for the other, as Rachel, in the inward nature, little. 1) For the inward being must not break out much, but both must go as it is ordered, inwardly in conscience toward God, outwardly before the world, so that others may also come here, and Christianity may be increased. She probably thinks she wants to remain the first and have the best days with him, but she must be lacking.

(39) All this is based on experience, and rhymes well with faith. For we are all so minded that we would gladly have peace and joy in our conscience, and reach for Rachel; but God turns it around, that we must first remain with Leah, as Jacob first sleeps with Leah, when he had only served Rachel. [But it is done secretly, so that he knows nothing about it; for God also needs bad boys for this; as Laban puts Leah to him with cunning and deceit. Now when we have this, he also gives Rachel to us; that is, when we are thus tempted, thereafter comes comfort and rest of conscience, which then remains constant and firm. So we must have both in succession; otherwise, if Jacob had had Rachel alone, he would not have looked at Leah. So the two wives become one Christianity, which is right, both inwardly and outwardly.

(40) What then shall we make of the two maidservants? We have heard how the father gave each daughter a maid, both of whom they gave to their husband. Now this indicates

1) Erlanger: "of the weak, suffering beings, of the others little".

The outward man, of which Paul says (Rom. 8, 14. Gal. 5, 18.): The flesh must be subject and obedient to the spirit; the body must serve and walk under compulsion. For though life is spiritual in faith, yet it is not directed except through the members. Now the maids also bring forth children, that is, every man has works, both of which come from comfort and from sorrow of heart (for fruit or children we must always point to works). To Leah and her maidservant he gives many children, that is, the limbs of the body must also do many works; but Rachel and her maidservant do not have many of them, that is, when we suffer much outwardly and are tempted, we do more works than when we rest and stand inwardly in faith. So all four wives become one church, as it is formed outwardly and inwardly.

41 This is the summary: Christ, the King, reigns in such a way that he allows us to be afflicted and again comforts us. From this comes good works, makes us bear much misfortune and sorrow, that he may try us and make us strong. But he is not such a fool as to be deceived, and to know nothing of it, as Jacob is deceived in the text; but it is nothing more than that he so sets himself, and is not known by us otherwise.

42 This is the interpretation of Jacob and his wives. Then follows the description of how he brought the sheep to himself by the art of putting the sticks into the watering troughs, so that the sheep received over them, and got the colored or plain ones as he wanted them; so that Laban got the latelings, but Jacob got the springs and best sheep. Therein is signified the ministry of preaching, what this accomplishes in the world. We have heard how Laban is a gleaner, who also boasts of God's word, pretending that it is true that he preaches God's commandment; but he does not preach the right faith and gospel, but leads the people to works and self-chosen worship. So the two kinds of preachers quarrel with each other in the world of works and of faith; no resistance, no fire, no force will help; one must let it go, as these and all other figures show. For, if one could bring it about that only

If there were one kind of preaching (as is often attempted), then various sects would arise from it, as we have seen under the pope. They may have preached the same sermon, leading us all from faith to works, but so many sects have broken out, among which every one has wanted to be the best, and has preferred its own thing, that it has been broken up.

(43) Therefore the best way is to let it go, and preach against one another, false and right preaching, as Paul says [1 Cor. 11:19], "There must be sects or divisions, that they which are righteous may be known and made manifest." So it goes here also: Jacob creates so much that he puts colored sticks in front of his sheep in the watering trough, from it he gets colored sheep; but because Laban sees that the colored ones are so much, he wants to have the colored ones, and thus changes ten times for his wages. This much is said: When the Spirit preaches, the flesh always wants to imitate and imitate, and yet does not meet it. When the gospel preaches colorful things, the flesh also wants to make it colorful; and again. So the devil always wants to be God's monkey, and yet never meets it.

44 We see this through and through in the world. The apostles preached only faith in Christ and love for one's neighbor. This is the right preaching, and the staffs of which souls are colored, that is, adorned and decorated by various ways and works that go on in Christendom. For the Christian church has through and through only one word, faith, love and hope, and one good; yet it remains variegated in outward walk, that they have various offices and gifts from God; one has grace to preach, the other to govern 2c. [Rom. 12, 6. f. 1 Cor. 12, 5. f.] For we cannot all be alike in outward appearance, though we are all alike and one in faith. According to this God distributes His gifts, otherwise or so, according to this we are multicolored and speckled, and yet remain all sheep in unity. So then, to water sheep in the troughs above the staves is to present such sayings, whereof one faith is apprehended, but diverse gifts and works.

45 Now the other group wants to follow this, and when they see that many gifts have been given, they will be given to them.

If there are no Christians in the outward walk, he also wants to do it that way, and sets up various classes and sects; one becomes a priest, the other a monk, and so on. But it does not turn out that way, nothing comes of it but separation from the unity of faith; for their thing is not God's word and gift, but man's handiwork, made from their own heads. Now Jacob lifts up the colored sticks, that is, when people are led to works and sects, they throw away the sticks and preach the contradiction that works without faith are not valid.

46 Thus our saints have interpreted to us the 45th Psalm, v. 10: *Astitit regina a dextris tuis in vestimento deaurato, circumamicta varietate*, the queen stands at your right hand, in precious gold, clothed with multicolored work. They interpreted this as follows: The Christian church has a golden skirt, that is, faith, or love, as they wish; but the colorful skirt should be that in one diocese so many masses are said, in the other so many lections are read at mass; these have the choir caps above, the others below; in the convent or order it is held otherwise, in the other so. If one pulls such antics in the church, what they desire, that is called Buntwerk here. This is Laban's multicolored work. It is not valid that you create it according to your dream, but it must come from God, as Jacob had it from the Holy Spirit. Now this is the right coat of gold, when we all have one faith; next to it is the coat of many colors, that in one faith we may have many graces, that all works and gifts may be in faith and love. [It is not that [it] be of a variegated color; but that [it] be variegated in the sight of God, that is, that [it] thus please God. That is the best thing about it.

(47) Therefore Laban's confusion here, and Jacob's deception ten times, is that the false teachers always want to master it and make it better, colored or plain. Since it is supposed to be variegated, it is the devil's variegated work, because they should have a simple faith. If then we reject such things, and preach of simple faith, they also want to have it plain, and do no work. But this is not true. For so we say:

Faith is of such a kind that it does multicolored work. So we must always change, and preach differently, resist on all sides; yet they never want to go up right, only deceive the world and themselves with their preaching.

(48) This is why Laban keeps the latelings, that is, the last sheep that come in the fall, but Jacob keeps the springlings. The latelings are the weakest sheep; these are the people who are raised by the teachings of men in these and those works; they are poor, wretched souls. But those who walk by faith are the right, strong consciences, where Christ is preached so that the people increase and Christianity is multiplied.

(49) So all this is to be interpreted of the ministry of preaching, so that the staves are nothing else than the sayings of the holy scriptures, especially those that comfort, as of the holy gospel. For it is not in vain that the sheep, when they came together to drink in the heat, began to receive it. For so we have it in the Scriptures, that to nourishment belong two things, eating and drinking. Both must be together; where one is without the other, life cannot be sustained. As we see an example of what happened to Mary, the virgin, who conceived that her son should be a king, that was the food; but if it had remained vain, it would have been harmful to her; therefore he must also give her to drink, which happened when he was hanging on the cross, then she acquired a different taste.

(50) Drinking is no different than when we are in great pain of heart and he comforts us. As when he tells us that we shall be free from sin, and death shall not hurt us; that is food, which is good for us. But we must also have something to drink; this happens when he comes and wants to choke me, then I need comfort, that I hold fast to the word, and make the food useful to me; this is the drink in addition, so that one cools and refreshes oneself.

(51) Behold, this is what the text signifies, in that the sheep run together in the heat, and drink over it. For there the word first gives a right taste; as it is said: A good morsel is followed by a good drink, then body and soul come together.

men. Therefore the cross must also be there, and make such food tasty and sweet for us. This also means to drink Christ's flesh and blood, as it is written in John [Cap. 6, 54, 56]. So understand it through and through in the Scriptures and figures, in which much is said about eating and drinking. Thus we have the figure of Laban, that is, of hypocritical saints, and the sheep, and of the whole kingdom of Christ.

52 Lastly, Laban hastened after Jacob and seized him on Mount Gilead, seeking his idols, which his daughter had stolen from him, but she had sat on them, pretending to be sick and unable to get up. This is that the holy Christian church confesses that she is a poor sinner, but nevertheless steals the false doctrine on which the hypocrites rely, and so hides it, that she may put aside the offense that the false teachers come for it. For this is seen: when one preaches God's word, that deceitfulness perishes, that no one knows how; and yet the Christians seem weak and sick, confessing also that they are poor sinners; but through the weakness that one sees, and we feel, nevertheless, because we cling to the word, the false doctrine perishes with its confidence.

(53) Therefore, false doctrine is not to be greatly advised, for it is only to be despised, and nothing is to be held to it; though we are weak in the faith, yet that must perish if we do not hold to it. Thus it happened in the first Christianity, in the time of the holy martyrs, that the Christians increased daily more and more, and the devil's service fell away and went to the ground, just as it still happens today with those who have no true faith. For how many there are who do not believe the gospel, and yet think nothing of the papacy, so that it is despised by all the world.

54 Then he speaks of the mountain on which they made a covenant. The same is to be noted here, because the prophets have spoken much of it, especially Jeremiah, who refers to it in chapter 22, v. 6: Gilead, tu mihi caput Libani. [It was a small mountain when he sacrificed there, but afterward it became a great land, so that everything was called Gilead from the mountain, and from the story that the two became one with each other; and he gives it the name because he told his brothers to read stones and make a heap to be a witness to the covenant, and a sign that no part should pass over it, and an arbiter that no one should harm the other. For the word Gilead is called a heap of witnesses, made of two little words: Gal, that is, a heap, and Ed, a witness. The heap of witnesses means the holy scripture.

(55) Hitherto, all matters that arise concerning the faith, between right and wrong doctrine, have been referred to a council, or to the pope at Rome, or to the high schools, which are to be arbiters. But they are not Gilead, they have deceived and deceived us, but the holy scriptures, wherein sayings lie one upon another with heaps, as there are stones; therein shall we get the judgment, who teacheth right or wrong. For although the Holy Spirit himself teaches everyone in the heart that he knows what is right, yet the Scriptures must be used to prove that it is so as we believe in the heart. So then it judges and separates what is rightly and wrongly believed. Therefore one must not seek further testimony, neither from fathers nor from concilia, but should remain only with the clear and plain Scriptures. These are the three chapters, as Jacob went with his cousin Laban for twenty years, with their interpretation.

## The Thirty-Second Chapter.

And Jacob sent messengers before him unto Esau his brother, unto the land of Seir in the field of Edom, and commanded them, saying, Thus say ye unto Esau my lord, Thy servant Jacob saith unto thee, I have been with Laban without, and have been hitherto among the strangers, and have oxen, and asses, and sheep, and menservants, and maidservants, and have sent to declare unto thee my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight. The messengers came again to Jacob, saying: We came to thy brother Esau, and he also cometh to meet thee with four hundred men. And Jacob was sore afraid, and was troubled: and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks, and the herds, and the camels, into two armies, and said, If Esau come upon the one army, and smite it, the remnant shall escape. And Jacob said, O God of Abraham my father, O God of Isaac my father, O Lord, thou hast said unto me: Return to thy land, and to thy friendship, and I will do thee good; I am too lowly of all the mercies and of all the faithfulness which thou hast done to thy servant. For I had no more than this staff when I passed over this Jordan, and now I have become two armies. Deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I am afraid of him, lest he come, and smite my mothers with my children. Thou hast said, I will do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered before the multitude. And he tarried there that night, and took of the things that were present gifts unto his brother Esau, two hundred he goats, twenty rams, two hundred sheep, twenty rams, and thirty suckling camels with their fillings, forty kine, and ten bullocks, and twenty asses with ten fillings. And he put them under the hand of his servants, one herd at a time, and said unto them: Go before me, and leave space between one herd and another. And he commanded the first, saying, When Esau my brother shall meet thee, and shall ask thee, To whom belongeth thou? and whither wilt thou go? and know it, that

Thou shalt say, It belongeth unto Jacob thy servant, which sendeth gifts unto Esau his lord, and goeth after. So he commanded the second and the third, and all that went after the herds, saying, As I have said unto you, so say unto Esau, when ye come upon him. And say ye also, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he thought: I will propitiate him with the gift that passeth before me, after that I will see him; peradventure he will accept me." So the gift went before him. But he stayed the same night in the camp. And he rose up in the night, and took his two wives, and his two maids, and his eleven children, and went to the fords of Jabok, and took them, and led them over the water, that they might pass over that which he had: and he abode alone on this side.

1 Until now Jacob was still a pilgrim, as his fathers had been; he had neither a house nor a dwelling of his own when he sat down; he lived under heaven with all his servants, at God's mercy. But Esau, his brother, had long since sat down and taken his own land, had already become a mighty lord with his children, so that Jacob had to fear and humble himself before him as a wretched stranger, even though God's promise was that Jacob should be lord and Esau serve him. Now this is also a strange chapter, in which we again have a miraculous work of God, but to be seen as if it were only the work of a child, so that Jacob would walk around. At the end of the previous chapter, Moses wrote how he went on his way from Laban, and among the ways he met the angels of God, and when he saw them, he gave the place a name in remembrance of it, and called it Mahanaim, that is, Camp or Army.

2 Then God had strengthened and refreshed him so that he should not be afraid of Laban. Was it not a bold deed and a firm faith that he was allowed to set out into a foreign land with his wife, child, large household and all good things, to escape from his brother-in-law, who was extremely bitter against him, and to go through the people, where he was unknown?

was? An army of the angels of God was with him over this, only so that he would be stronger and bolder; so that he stood in a high, insurmountable faith. But now it is the other way round for a Hui to become so weak; he who was not afraid of Laban at all, yes, was sure that the angels of God were standing by him, now almost despaired of his brother whom he does not see.

(3) This is what I said, how God rules so strangely in his saints, makes them so strong that they are not afraid of the devil or death. And again, when one thinks that they should be the strongest, he makes them so weak that they are almost terrified of a tree leaf; as Christ [Matth. 14, 29. 30.] did with Petro. When he stepped out of the ship to go to him on the water, he was bold and sure, fearing no one, but as soon as he saw a wind coming, he trembled and sank.

(4) There is a precious thing about faith, and great power. Yes, if it were in our power to overcome it, or, if we have it right away, to keep it. There is no doubt that faith does everything that the devil and death must give way to it; but where is the art of staying with it and keeping it? God has reserved it for Himself to give and take away faith when He wants, and to make it strong or weak as He pleases. Therefore, it must happen to Jacob as well as to us, for the sole purpose of learning to know what God has in mind. We must not raise Jacob too high. He is a great saint, but it can soon happen that he becomes weaker in faith than I am. So God can give me a high, strong faith at this hour, but again, before you look around, let me sink and give the faith to some great sinner.

(5) Why then does he let his saints go thus, and not always remain in strong faith? So that they do not become proud again, or think that they have it from themselves, and make themselves God. That is why he has to map and mix it in such a way that they know that he is God, recognize himself, and remain in humility; which he wants to have, not only from us, but from the highest saints, even from his own mother;

[They must all let themselves be brought low and say: I am nothing and can do nothing; so that we are all equal before God; although there is a difference according to the gifts, which are not ours, but also all his. This is one of the main parts of this chapter, how the faith of the holy patriarch almost disappears, and yet he seizes it again, as we shall hear.

006 The land of Seir, or Edom, where Esau dwelt, and which was named after him, is not far from the way. For Edom and Judah meet together. Because Jacob has to travel hard along this road, he sends messengers ahead of him to find out what his brother's attitude is toward him. For he is still afraid of him, because he had taken away his firstborn and his blessing, and therefore he had to leave his father and mother twenty years ago, so that he would not strangle him. For this Esau had now become mighty, and lord in the land, so that it let itself look at everything, as if the word was nothing, which God had said: "The greater shall serve the lesser", and must become before the reason a liar. For this, Jacob must call Esau a lord, and fall at his heels, and beg for mercy, with wife and child, as a sovereign; yes, he even holds him like an angel. How does this rhyme with the promise? Or, is that kept which is promised? It is all written to us. For we also are lords over the world through Christ, and yet must fall under its feet. So that it all goes contrary to what God does. We are to say that we are masters of all things, and let them rule and have the upper hand. But it is according to the spirit; but the body must let itself be thrown down, and be subject.

(7) But that Jacob says in the text, "That I may find grace in your sight," is spoken in Hebrew; German and Latin do not speak so; for we give grace only to princes; but it is as much said, "Let me find grace in your sight," as we say, "Be favorable and gracious to me; do not be angry with me; or be my friend, and I will be your friend also. Thus [Luc. 1, 28.] the angel Mariam greeted the Virgin: "Hail, thou that art gracious" or "Blessed art thou"; for what is grace to-

What could be more pleasant than that? As we say of a maid, Thou fine, kind maid. Which our lumpen preachers interpret to mean full of grace, as full as a bubble full of wind; just as if grace were a thing that God pours into the heart, as one pours wine into the candelabra, so that (it) overflows above. We can call it no better than holdselig, to whom an everyone is hold and favorable; from it our German name Huldreich is made. In Hebrew it is called John and Hannah.

8 Then follows how Esau marches against his brother with four hundred men, which he does not do in bad faith, as the following chapter shows. Jacob is still horrified and thinks it is murder and death, since there is peace. What a miserable, weak faith has become there! Esau is in the sense and thought: I am richer and mightier than my brother (as it is said that he ruled in the land and was a mighty prince), and have been angry with him now twenty years. I have grown so much that I am a lord; he is still a beggar, has neither house nor farm, roams the streets with his cattle so bare that they could be taken from him every hour. What shall I now avenge myself on him? I will give it to him and let it be. So he shows him with his splendor, so that one should see how powerful he is, that it is to be seen as a defiance. As if he should say: Yes, how finely you have taken my firstborn from me! You have robbed me of the blessing secretly from the father, so God has blessed me for it. So he forgets his anger and goes to meet his brother to receive him. But Jacob is so stupid and despondent that he cannot help but think that he will pour out his anger on him and his servants.

In such anguish and distress he knows no help nor refuge but in his dear God, and pours out all his heart before him. This is also the best part of this chapter. When faith becomes weak and begins to falter, there is no other counsel or refuge than to Him who makes it falter; just as St. Peter cried out on the water when he was about to sink: "O Lord, help me! Now this is a great art, to whom grace is given in trouble, that he may flee all human help and comfort, and take hold alone.

and keep the word and promise. Then the sheep was thirsty from the heat and also drank. Now we have heard [Cap. 28, 15.] how God had promised him that he would be with him and protect him wherever he went and bring him home again; but now he has let him sink so low and be stuck in fear that he knows no help to seek but from him.

(10) So he comes and presents his need to God, and does no more than to impress upon him his promise, and makes a strong, fiery prayer. For this is not called praying, standing in church, babbling and chattering; but fear teaches to pray rightly; as one says, Hunger is a good cook. The same drives him to fear that he will perish with his wife and child, for he did not care so much for him alone. He had a promise that had to come true. Yes, even if he were slain, Jacob's children would also be born from stones. But God leaves him in fear, so that he may show the power of his word in our weakness.

(11) He does not tear out his natural heart, but leaves the fear in him, more for his own than for himself; but he keeps the word and prays. It is not much words or much hours, as the work saints measure their prayers by length; but behold how mightily he asks. If you want to pray, do not come with a full belly, but first get a fear and distress that presses you to pray, or leave it, and put such distress before him, and take hold of him when you can hold him, that is, by his word, like Jacob, and say: "Lord, there is the misery and calamity that presses and presses me, I would gladly be rid of it. 7, 7. Luc. 11, 9:] Ask, and you will receive, these are your words, I come and ask, so you have prayed right, and are certainly heard, because God has promised it, and necessity compels.

12) It is only a pity that we do not feel our heartache and do not let it go to our hearts, otherwise we would have reason and need enough to pray every moment, especially if we were true children of God and saw that His holy, noble name, in which we were baptized and

1) "one" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Jena.



so that he may adorn us and bless us when we are blasphemed in an abominable and shameful way. Where are the Christians who lament and cry out? So also we have daily cause and high time to pray that his kingdom come to us, because we see that it goes so weakly in us, and is hindered by the devil and flesh and blood; and so henceforth in all other things. This will not go to anyone's heart, which is a sign that we are not in fear. Therefore I have said more: We do not find in the dear fathers such mad, foolish works as we do, but vain earnest, righteous works, though they seem small.

(13) So this prayer must be answered, for it has all the characteristics of a right prayer, that it goes in right faith to God's goodness and trust, and appeals to God's word and urges him on, and then presents his need with earnestness. [It has been so powerful that even if Esau were still his mortal enemy, and had set out with all his might to strike him with all his servants, he would still have had to become his best friend, or else go to ruin himself. What now follows in the text of the gift, as he has arranged it, is not much to speak of, without it indicating that Jacob had an even 1) good, that he sends fivefold gifts before, which alone would now be a poor man's good. [We want to deal with the last piece of the chapter.

**V. 24-28 A man wrestled with him until the dawn. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the joint of his thigh; and the joint of his thigh was dislocated from wrestling with him. And he said, Let me go, for the dawn is breaking. But he answered: I will not let thee go, for thou blessest me. And he said, What is thy name? And he answered, Jacob. And he said, Thou shalt no more be called Jacob, but Israel: 2) For thou hast fought with God and with men, and hast prevailed.**

1) even - respectable, significant.  
2) Marginal gloss: Israel. Israel comes from Sarah, which means to fight or overcome; hence also Sar means a prince or lord, fund Sarahl means a princess or woman, and Israel means a prince or warrior of God, that is, one who wrestles with God and "wins"; which is done through

(14) That the previous prayer was answered is evident from the struggle and fight he is engaged in here. But see how God acts when He hears someone, that this proverb is true: God often meets us who could greet Him. Jacob is stupid and despondent before his brother, so God comes and wants to strengthen him, and makes him even sicker. That would be a good comfort to me, when I work in the mud, and he puts me in it completely. God frightens him and makes him afraid, but he starts to call and pray, so he comes and wants to strangle him.

(15) But how the battle was fought, we shall not know in words. It will remain only with those who have experienced and tasted it, otherwise no one will understand it. But we cannot know what it was. So let us learn how he behaves when he hears, namely, as if he wanted to destroy us. This is what he did to the children of Israel [Ex 5:9]; when he wanted to bring them out of Egypt, he let Pharaoh attack and torment them more than ever before. When he brought them out to the Red Sea and they thought they had passed through, Pharaoh came up behind them so that they could not get out anywhere, so that death was in front of them all, and the Egyptians were sure they had them as surely as a thief on a rope or a chain.

16 So also with Christ: When he wanted to make him a king, he did it with great wonder and power; but when he should be best, he lets him die on the cross, as a desperate wicked man; but he manages it in such a way that he comes forth in the same moment, when all reason had despaired of him, and becomes king forever. Like the children of Israel, when they were in the midst of death, without all help and counsel, he tears the sea from one another, so that they pass through dry, that if the sea had not given room, a cloud would have had to descend and make room. So he also goes with us: if we call on him to be saved from death, he first leads us into it. This is what he does now 3)

the Glanbe" who holds so firmly to God's words until he overcomes God's wrath, and attains God's own to the gracious Father.

3) Jenaer: only.

so that he may disgrace reason, which does not believe, but wants to know how, where and when; so that faith may have room, and let God make it.

(17) So Jacob also hopes here that he will be saved from his brother; then he first comes into trouble that he fights with him, and wants to take his life and limb; he also did not know at first who the fighter was. Now think for yourself, if a stupid, frightened man is to fight with a spirit, how he feels; if he hears a little noise of a devil, he pales and bids 1) that the world becomes too narrow for him. How horrible would it be if one were to fight with the devil alone and defend himself? Then he imagines such thoughts, of which no man can say. Nature teaches us what fear and hardship is a death struggle.

(18) It was the same with him. He saw that the one who could strangle him with one finger and could not get rid of him lay against him and wrestled with him. So he also did not know whether it was a good or evil spirit, because otherwise it would not have been a fight, if he had known that it was God or a good angel, but more a comfort, and would not have become angry with him. But he does not think otherwise, because it is a spirit that thinks to strangle him. Before, he had cared for his wife and child so that they would not perish; now he must let it all go and forget it, and think where he will stay. It will not have meant life to him alone, but both body and soul, that he had to wrestle with him for temporal and eternal life. [He] stood there and pretended to him as if God did not want to be, and had to be of the devil. But it was a clear image that he accepted and fought with him, so that not only the body was tired and weary, but also the courage and soul lay in terror and trembling.

(19) What then is the power to protect and resist, and finally to win? It is ever2) a poor, powerless strength of our body against a spirit; however, if the courage remains and is not broken, the body also remains strong. As long as the heart does not

If a man despairs, he thrusts his power and strength into his body; but when his courage is gone, all is finished, so that the body cannot stand on its feet.

020 So the heart remained firm in him at the word of God, saying, Thou hast said, I will do thee good, and make thee a great seed. The word is the life, strength and power of the man, which he grasped in his heart and held so firmly that it had to remain true, and [thought]: He wants to strangle you on the spot, deals with me as if he were ordered by God; now let him do it, God has said that he wants to bring me back home to the land; this must happen, should Himinel and earth tear; come devil or angel, or he himself, and suggest it to me differently, I do not believe it.

(21) He had to take off his old skin and break it, and felt nothing in body and life, except that he had trusted in the truth, which could not be deceived. If we had also been tempted in temptation, how God's word strengtheneth and maketh strong, we could understand it; but because it is not tempted, it is cold, and savoureth not. But when it comes that one must let go hands and feet, and can only receive the word, then one sees what power it is, that no devil is so strong as to overthrow it, even if he bites it and wants to devour it; but [it] is to him a burning, fiery spear. It is a small word that has neither appearance nor prestige; yet when it is grasped by the mouth or speech in the heart and tried, it is perceived for what it can do.

(22) So Jacob stood and fought valiantly, saving and winning body and soul through the one strength, as the text says, that the man saw that he could not overcome him, namely, that he had such courage and mind, and was not despondent. So he came to the highest strength through and in weakness, when fidgeting drove him in the last need to hold on to the word alone. This is, as often said, God's art, that he makes something out of nothing, piety out of sin, life and blessedness out of death. Thus the good Jacob must use all his strength to

1) bidmen - quake.

2) "je" is missing in the Wittenberger.

3) support stönen.

The new power and strength that he who could not overcome men before, now wins over angels.

23 For it must be left alone that it was a true battle, that the angel attacked him with all his might, not scolding him; so he also fought with all his might, and overcame; not that he struck him down, but so that he stood so firm that the angel could not restrain him. For the power of God's word is over all the world, devil and angel.

(24) But the battle did not last long, for the text says that he arose in the night and brought over the women and children with all the army; it may have been an hour or half an hour before day. Now the night is terrible in itself; so God leaves him alone, that he can seek no comfort or help; [he] must stand and fight bare and naked. Such examples are not found much more in Scripture; [it] is high and strange, but therefore done and written, that one may learn how ineffable power the word of God has.

025 Thus saith the angel, when the battle was ended, Thou shalt no more be called Jacob, but Israel: for thou hast fought with God and with men, and hast prevailed." The name Israel comes from the word Sarah and El. For the Jews, when they want to make nomina propria, they commonly put the letter Jod, that is J, in front. As if they say Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Josaphat, Jezekias, Jehezkiel. But Sarah means in German to fight and to overcome, and El means God, so it becomes Israel, that is, a God-fighter, qui luctans cum Deo vincit, that it understands both in itself, fighting and winning. How is it possible that one can fight against God? Is he not omnipotent? First of all, the text indicates what kind of battle it was, that the infernal fire was aimed at him, and he also felt hell, and [it] can be seen as if the angel was God himself. The prophet Hosea also stated it [Cap. 12, 4.] almost in this way, and Christ is everywhere depicted in such figures that he let himself be seen as an angel. When in the 18th chapter, v. 20. above, about the angel who was with

Abraham spoke. Item in the other book [Cap. 3, 4.] follows, how the angel Mosi appeared in the bush, and says, how God spoke with him. But be it as it may, it was done in God's stead.

26. wrestling with God is nothing else than wrestling with the wrathful God, who sets himself against man as an enemy [Luc. 22, 44.]; he does not only want to be judge, but, what is even more horrible, he also wants to be the master of the rod and to kill life. When he is after life, he does not reach for the skin, but into it, so that the marrow pines away, and the legs become as friable as the flesh, as also happened to Christ in the garden of oil [Matth. 26, 37. 38.]. Therefore it must be made great. When he attacks a man, it is so hard and heavy that no one understands it except the one who tries it; because he himself wants to fight with the man, there is vain strife and the fear of hell; in addition, all creatures are death to him, because they all hold it with God. Thus he takes away man's heart, so that he sees nowhere that is on his side. How can he win in such fear?

(27) The sophists cannot say anything about it, because it does not sound to their ears as against the article, that he is omnipotent; therefore also the Latin text has shied away from saying: You have fought with God, and have been defeated. But it goes thus, as I have otherwise said: God has given the world two kinds of word, the law, which wraths and chokes, and the gospel, so that he comforts and makes alive. Now when the word falls, by which he promises us grace, never let it go, let the law turn it before or behind; though after it fall all unkindness, hell, and sin, let it not be taken away from you in any way, and only speak freely: After the gospel there is no wrath. For as soon as this has come to pass, God has made Himself rightly known; for He is by nature goodness, therefore you must adhere to it without ceasing. But if any other word falls upon it, think that it must either be false, or that God wants to tempt you. This is what God does, for he wants to make his own completely strong: [he sets himself against the kind, comforting word, and wants to see how firmly they cling to it; he sets himself up as if he never wanted to give them the word.

Doing good, man feels that God is doing it; this is also the most painful. If one thought that the devil or a man was doing it, there would not be so much distress, but if the conscience says that God is doing it, there is fear and distress.

(28) Now "overcoming God" does not mean overcoming his power, but overcoming that which he is and is felt in our conscience; as the Scripture says that God changes when we are changed. He is without change in Himself, nor does He change Himself so strangely to us; this makes our conscience change; as the 18th Psalm, v. 26, 27, says: "With the holy you are holy, and with those without change you are without change, and with the perverse you are perverse"; He always remains kind, nor is there anything else in my conscience but that He is angry. So he is nothing to the damned but vain wrath, punishes them only with their own conscience.

(29) Jacob would have done the same if he had let the word go, but because he does not want to conclude according to his feelings, but holds fast and lets himself be torn apart, he has won. So if I overcome him in me, I have overcome God by taking hold of the word of his goodness and keeping it, and by overthrowing that which would make him angry. Thus we overcome, not His majesty, but His work that He does for us. Therefore let us learn that these things are written to instruct us, whether we also meet with such things, that we may know how to keep God, that we also may become Israel.

**(v.29-32) And Jacob asked him, saying, Tell me, what is thy name? And he said, Why askest thou what is my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Pniel, 1) because I have seen God face to face, and my soul is recovered. And when he came over before Pniel, the sun went down upon him, and he limped on his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel do not eat a high vein on the joint of the hip until this day, because the high vein was touched on the joint of Jacob's hip.**

1) Marginal gloss: Pniel or Pnuel means God's face or knowledge; for through faith in the strife of the cross one learns to know and experience God rightly, so there is no more need, so the sun rises.

030 Now the battle is over, and when the angel comes from him, he calls the place Pniel, that is, the face of God. But what does God's face mean? The Scriptures have this word in great use now and then. The prophets use it and praise it mightily, and say that one must see God's face in this life; as David says in the 4th Psalm, v. 7: "Lift up over us the light of your face." Item, Psalm 67, 2. "God be gracious to us and bless us, and let His face shine upon us." So then, to see God's face is to recognize Him without all veneer, just as he who sees a man's face knows Him rightly. For when one sees a man's back, he cannot know whether he is an enemy or a friend. For he who is angry with me turns away his face from me; again, he who is favorable and pleasing to me lets me see him under [the] eyes. Therefore the face of God is called nothing else than the revelation and the clear knowledge of his nature, how he is minded, that is, his goodness. From this also comes knowledge of ourselves, so that we think nothing of all our nature.

(31) Therefore, all who believe see God's face without ceasing, that is, they recognize how God is goodness itself and looks upon them with eyes of mercy. Now Jacob thinks that since God has ceased and is no longer angry, it should be pure mercy; he now sees and recognizes him well, as it is true that he had said that he should be his beloved child; from this he becomes so full of joy and pleasure, so great before the affliction, that he says: This place must be called the face of God, because I have seen God rightly there, and my soul is healed, that now I fear no one; for afterward he feared Esau no more, though he humbled himself before him.

32 Lastly, the text says how the angel, when he fought with him, touched the joint of his hip, that it was dislocated above the wrestling, and he became limp in the hip; therefore the children of Israel do not eat a high vein on the joint of the hip. What high vein he means, I do not know; I think he means the vein that goes over the joint. In the struggle he brings this about that he becomes limp or lame in the hip, so that it is nevertheless a bodily

lich wrestling has been. Therefore, the hip vein is sanctified or banished that one has not eaten.

(33) In the figure God has indicated so long before that God's children are not to be counted or reckoned according to flesh and blood, but according to the spirit and rebirth. That is why the arch-father of all God's people had to become lame at the hip after he had seen God and had become a spiritual man; for the part of the body, namely the loins or hips, is used by Scripture to give birth to all men.

34. but to eat is nothing, but to preach and to teach, that so much is said: it must be preached and said to the Jewish people that no one is God's child because he was born or came from [the] patriarchs. The glory is even laid down, that each one for himself, without all glory, may rely solely on God.

grace, and thereby go before God; so that the Jews confess that they want to come to God, that they do not have it because they are of Abraham's seed, but because Abraham has it, that is, because they have the same faith. Thus everything that is preached about our works and free will falls away. God had foretold this before, because it was foreseen that the people of the fathers would take their fathers in high esteem and defy them, so that the birth would no longer be valid before Him, but would remain for a time until the promised Christ came, and then cease. So we have this noble chapter, in which you see the wonderful counsel that God uses with his saints, for our comfort and as an example that we may keep this in mind daily, whether he also plays with us so that we are prepared for it.

## The Thirty-Third Chapter.

1-20 Jacob lifted up his eyes, and saw Esau his brother coming with four hundred men. And he divided his children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two maidservants, and set the maidservants with their children in the front, and Leah with her children after, and Rachel with Joseph last. And he went before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came to his brother. And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him; and they said. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women with the children, and said, Who are these with thee? And he answered, They are the children which God hath given unto thy servant. And the handmaids came near with their children, and bowed themselves to him. And Leah came near with her children, and bowed herself to him. Then Joseph and Rachel came near, and bowed themselves to him. And he said, What wilt thou do with all this host that I have met? And he said, That I may find grace in the sight of my lord. And Esau said: I have enough, my brother; keep what thou hast. Jacob answered:

Oh not, if I have found grace in your sight, take my gift from my hand. For I see thy face as I see God's face, and let it please thee from me. Accept from me the blessing that I have bestowed on you, for God has bestowed it on me, and I have enough. So he urged him to accept it. And he said, Let us depart and travel; I will go with thee. And he said unto him, My lord, thou knowest that I have tender children with me, and sheep and oxen young. If they were to overdo it by one day, the whole herd would die for me. Let my lord go before his servant, and I will go forth maelishly, 1) after which the cattle and the children may go, until I come to my lord in Seir. And Esau said, I will leave with thee some of the people,

1) Marginal gloss: Mälig. Notice that the orthodox and the works saints cannot walk with each other; for the orthodox walk neatly, with a quiet spirit, but the works saints walk with presumption of their works in God's laws.

**that is with me. And he said, What is the use? let me find grace in the sight of my lord. So Esau went his way again that day to Seir. And Jacob went to Sukhoth, and built him a house, and made tents for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is Sukhoth. Then Jacob went toward Salem, to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, after he was come out of Mesopotamia; and he pitched before the city. And he bought a piece of land of the children of Hemor, the father of Shechem, for an hundred pence; and there he pitched his tents. He built an altar there and called on the name of the mighty God of Israel.**

(1) Now this is a bad history, which seems little, as the others commonly are; for which are high, as the next written before, are scarcely to be remembered. Now I have said enough, why Moses makes so many useless words, and describes the holy fathers with so little stories, so the world would not look at. Summa: It goes that we become fools with our cleverness and learn to recognize God, that he deals with such things, which are nothing before the world.

2) So here he also writes how the two brothers bump into each other. A bad story; but nevertheless it shows how God lets the worldly people ride high, but his own low and unnoticed. For what is God's must first be nothing and have no appearance. Esau comes along mightily with many armies; Jacob alone with wife and child, who should be the greatest according to the promise; but God always lets it go on like this until his time. He brought Esau forth and raised him up, so that he soared at two hundred years; while Jacob always had to remain weak and lowly; but when the time came, he raised him and his people far above Esau, so that they had to serve him. This is a figure and model of Christ, who lay three days in the grave, and made the world and the devils cry, "Won! as if it were over with him;" but in the same he burst forth, and became a Lord of the world and of all creatures. So also, his first Christianity, the martyrs, he left a year or two or three hundred to succumb and die.

But soon afterward God sets them over all the powers of the world, so that even kings and princes must fall at their feet.

3 When Jacob saw his brother Esau, the text says, he divided his children and made an order. For although he is no longer so afraid of his brother, he does not trust him very much, but because he was uncertain how God would deal with him, he placed himself in God's power and dared to do so with only what he has, for he knows that Esau is in God's hands and cannot harm him if he wants to. In addition, he is certain that he has a gracious God who wants to protect and save him; but how, and in what way, he does not know. Yet he does what he can, does not tempt GO'tt, and yet remains in the right faith. For if he had despaired, he would have run and gone aside; but he stands still, and dares to go up to the first, whether he would, by God's decree, be in the forefront, whether he would save the others; he lays down his life for his wife and children.

4 Is this not tempting God? No, because faith is right in that it commands God, [it] does not seek how to help it, thinking: Even if it beats us, God's word must still remain true; nevertheless, it worries about the brother's unfaithfulness, and needs the wisdom and reason that God has given. For nature teaches that what one holds dear, one should save first.

005 So he put Rachel and Joseph, the right child, in the rear, and Leah after them, and the maids in the front; but he put himself in the entrenchment. This is the right brotherly love, with which he does as much as reason teaches; not as those who tempt God, and want to go about it among the multitude without order, and think: If we are beaten, then we are beaten.

(6) But this is not true, for faith and temptation do not go together. Those who tempt God pretend to believe, but they go without God's word and command. As if one would step on a high tower and spire and fly down. As when a lazy ass would not work, and wait for God to feed him from heaven.

7 Therefore the two must be separated, so that you put faith in the things that are above you, but avoid temptation in those that are beneath you. God has given you the body, five senses and reason; item, wife and child; all of which is in your hand, you shall use as much as you can; but if you cannot, you may leave it and wait for what God gives you. For this reason we were created, to rule over the animals of the earth, the woman, the child and the house, and to seek food with labor from the earth and from other things; with this we are to deal. But what is above us we are always to let go, as Jacob does here. For that he made order was not above him, 1) but under him, namely, vain reasonable thing; but faith dealeth only with those things which are above reason. As it was not in his hand to save himself and his own from Esau, but only God's work; therefore he needs faith alone in this, and lets God rule. Therefore I say again: Temptation of God cannot happen in the things that are above me and concern faith; where I cannot help, I must believe. But where I can help myself, and have God's goods at hand, I shall not tempt him; for there I must not believe, because I have it before my eyes and in my hand.

(8) One reads an example in *vitis patrum* of two brothers who wandered for a time with each other over a field, and although they had no food, they decided not to take food from the pagan, evil people, but to wait until God gave them bread from heaven. And when they had long hungered, the one said, It is too long for us, and went and took that which was given him, and remained alive: but the other continued in his resolution, and died also of it. Now conclude: Where did this one go? God gave him that he might well counsel hunger, therefore he was not allowed to wait for another, and leave the bread; but if there had been no one to give him a piece of bread, it would have been right to wait for it from God.

9 So understand the difference between trying and believing. Faith should not come sooner than God's commandment and word, which applies when one is in trouble and cannot help oneself, except in death and other trials; but when God gives such good, one should thank Him and take it to oneself. So Jacob alone used his art to the best of his ability, as he knew, but in faith he did not know how it should go out, who would remain alive or dead; God only commands him to protect and save. So he goes through properly, neither to the left nor to the right, neither in unbelief nor temptation.

(10) Let these be simple and bad histories, which have no appearance of the fathers walking in such loose works; but when the heart is seen, and the faith according to which the work is directed, it is perceived that they are excellent examples. Therefore such histories are not to be regarded according to works, as the world does; otherwise they are cold and unworthy; but according to faith they are precious treasures.

11) The text continues: "And he went before them, and stooped down to the ground seven times, until he came to his brother. In this, I have said, he shows true brotherly love, that he lays down his life with good, firm faith, for wife and child. This does not mean seeking what is his, nor living and dying for his sake. This is how the work goes in strong faith and perfect love.

(12) How is it not great honor that he bows down seven times before his brother? How bad are the works in which he walks, nor do they show such great virtue. For is this not great humility, because he has the promise of God that his seed shall be blessed? that he might have boasted and said, Brother, you must fall at my feet. Did he also pretend or lie? No; for St. Paul also commanded Rom. 12:10, that one should precede another in reverence; though Esau does not do it again, yet he is moved by it.

(13) Therefore, though we have great good in Christ, and are lords even of the devil, yet it is God's will that we humble ourselves before those who are things in the world,

1) Jenaer: him.

2) Baarschaft --- the available money or goods.

The authority and dominion, if you were as holy as Jacob.

14 Neither was there ever a priest so holy as Jacob, nor does he not let his feet be kissed, but falls at the feet of the tyrant, gives him more honor than is due him, and does it from a right cause and a good heart; so think, as he himself says, "I have seen your face, as if I saw the face of God. How do you lie like this, Jacob? Shall you say thus to the unholy man? It is all directed to this, because Esau was a great lord, far above Jacob, therefore he looketh upon him, as his lord, and lieth not, but [it] is his earnestness; to us for an example. If a man is in the government, he is to be honored, not for his own sake, but because it is God's order [Rom. 13:1, 7]. Why does Jacob ask whether Esau abuses his authority? [He nevertheless leaves him the honor that the authority has, and speaks out arrogantly that he has seen his face as the face of God.

(15) For the authorities, be they what they may, are not of men, or they would not be safe for one hour; if God did not maintain it by force, Lord Omnes would strike them all dead. Therefore, because it is God's force and order, one must look at it as if one were looking at God. Where he throws them, there his honor shall follow. He deals with his goods as one who throws money into the rapuse: wherever it falls, there is GOD, one needs it willy-nilly, he will find it. You go ahead, humble yourself, and give her the honor.

(16) More are the fruits of faith in this chapter. Thus Solomon says in Proverbs [Cap. 16, 7.]: "If a man's ways please the Lord, he also makes his enemies content with him." This is God's nature and work, that He can make the highest enemies friends, when here Esau was actually Jacob's mortal enemy, also had in mind to harm him. There you see how God has this man's heart and thoughts in His hand, that they must go as He wills, and break his mind, that he himself does not know how to go, and falls around his neck. What a change and a change it is, that he is consumed in defiance with so many men, and when he comes, he begins to weep; is he not a man?

Is it not a strange bargain that such a mortal enemy should so soon be turned back?

(17) Therefore the Scripture teaches that we should walk in righteousness and humility, 1) not for our own sake, but for the sake of our enemies. For where such humility is, God gives grace that even the enemies may be broken and turned back. Hence the proverb comes: A good word finds a good place; but when pride and hardness are against hardness, nothing good comes of it. Although there are also many hard heads that cannot be softened by words or works. God wants Christians to humble themselves and be respectful, even toward their enemies, so that he will bless them and make such works strong and convert their hearts.

018 So both wife and child go out to meet him, and all bow down before him. He lets this happen, even though he is now a friend; but they even win his heart away with it, so that he leads the way and says, "Keep what you have, my brother, I have enough"; he begs to accompany him, and when Jacob apologizes, he wants to give him a portion of his people. This is written for us, if we would also do it once; but the devil is in pride, that no one wants to yield to the other. Therefore let us keep such examples as fruits of faith, as the holy father believes and is tempted, and humbles himself against the authorities.

019 And Moses wrote how Jacob came to Shuhoth, and built there a house, and tents for his cattle. The place is therefore described, that the Jews, when they came into the land afterward, might know where Jacob had dwelt. That is why this place must keep its name, and why it became a city afterward, because St. Jacob lived there and lay there.

020 Then he went to Salem, to the city of Shechem. Salem must not be Jerusalem, as some think; for Shechem is still a good journey away, where he also lived for a while as a pilgrim and stranger, but buys a piece of land and sets up his tents. Why he moved from Sukhoth, the text does not indicate, but [it] is

1) Erlanger: "humble".



from the foregoing. For we have heard above of Abraham and Isaac, how they always had to be strangers, and had no certain place, and moved from one place to another, which was almost difficult for them, constantly hovering with wife, child and all good things between heaven and earth, and nowhere being safe, that they sometimes also became impatient, always suffering violence and injustice among strangers. Which is always held up to us, so that one can see what the right life is, even if it seems to be a bad, foolish thing.

21. item that he sets up an altar here and calls on God's name, we have also heard how the dear fathers set up a place.

to come together, teach and preach how to trust God and call upon the promise of the seed, through which the world would be blessed. For such preaching and exhortation was necessary against weakness of faith and impatience. And the text adds: "He called on the name of the strong God Israel", to indicate what and how he preached, namely about the God who is strong and mighty, so that he could protect them and help them in suffering and the cross, even if it did not seem so. Thus you see the simple life of the fathers, and yet so full of examples of faith, love and patience in the smallest works.

## The Thirty-Fourth Chapter.

Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she bare unto Jacob, went forth to see the daughters of the land 1). And when she saw Shechem the son of Hemor the Hivite, who was lord of the land, he took her, and slept with her, and weakened her; and his heart was set on her, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto her, and said unto Hemor his father, Take me the damsel to wife. And Jacob heard that Dinah his daughter was defiled, and his sons were with the cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they came. Then Hemor, Shechem's father, went out to Jacob to speak to him; but Jacob's sons came out of the field, and when they heard it, the men were troubled, and were very wroth, because he had hasted to commit folly in Israel, and had put Jacob's daughter to sleep; for such a thing was not wont to be done. Then Hemor spoke to them, saying, "My son Shechem's heart desires your daughter; give her to him as a wife. Make friends with us, give us your daughters, and take you our daughters, and dwell with us; the land shall be yours.

Be open; dwell, and advertise, and work therein. And Shechem said unto her father and brethren: Let me find favor with you; what you say to me I will give; only ask of me confidently the morning gift and the present; I will give it as you ask; only give me the harlot to wife. Then Jacob's sons answered Shechem and Hemor his father, and spake deceitfully because Dinah their sister was defiled, and said unto them: We cannot do this, that we should give our sister to an uncircumcised man, for that would be a disgrace to us. But then we will obey you, if ye become like us, and all that is male among you be circumcised; and we will give our daughters unto you, and take your daughters unto us, and dwell with you, and be one people. But if ye will not obey us to circumcise you, we will take our daughter, and depart. The speech pleased Hemor and his son well. And the young man did not delay in doing so, for he had a desire for Jacob's daughter. And he was magnified above all in his father's house. Then Hemor and Shechem his son came to the city of Thor, and talked with the people of the city, saying: These people are peaceable with us, and will dwell in the land.

1) Marginal gloss: Daughters of the land. What one seeks apart from God's word in reason and human wisdom certainly corrupts the spirit and faith; therefore no addition of human doctrine and works should be made to God's word.

and become; so now the land is encompassed, we will take their daughters as wives and give them our daughters. But then will they be willing to dwell with us, and become one people with us, where we shall circumcise all that is male among us, even as they are circumcised. Their cattle and goods, and all that they have, shall be ours, if only we will them to dwell with us. And they obeyed Hemor, and Shechem his son, all that went in and out of the gates of his city, and circumcised every male that went in and out of his city. And on the third day, when it pained them, the two sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took every man his sword, and went thirstily into the city, and slew all the males, and slew Hemor also, and Shechem his son, with the edge of the sword. And they took Dinah their sister of the house of Shechem, and went away. Then the sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and "spoiled" the city because they had defiled their sister. And they took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and all that was in the city, and in the field. And all their goods, and all their children, and their wives, they took captive, and spoiled all that was in the houses. And Jacob said unto Simeon and Levi, Ye have made it to stink before the inhabitants of this land, the Cananites and the Perizzites; and I am a small company. Now when they come together against me, they will strike me, and I will be destroyed with my house. But they answered, Should they deal with our sister as with a harlot?

1 Then you see that the Scriptures write nothing good about the good and pious Jacob that he encountered, and his legend always holds up to us how he was thrown out of one misfortune and misery into another; when we saw how sour it had become for him with the wives and sheep when he served twenty years. Item, how he was afraid of Esau. Now, when he thinks that his misfortune is over, he is heartbroken that his daughter is violated and his sons also cause misfortune.

that he no longer has it good with anyone in the country. So his legend goes out to the last, that God always puts one cross over the other on his neck; as we will hear further.

So this is not the least of his sufferings, that he must suffer the disgrace and dishonor that befalls him with such courage, as if he had to let it go and could not take revenge, because the squire in the country does it, and thinks it does not matter much whether he takes his daughter from him and disgraces her. But that is still the greatest thing, that he must bear the shame with his children, that the whole country says of him, and everyone laughs at his accident, and must have the mockery to the detriment.

3 Here think how his faith is tempted, that he might have said, "Now where is the great promise that God will do me good and protect me? Does that mean benevolent, that he lets me pass over such a disgrace? The text does not speak of how he was afraid, but gives it to each one to think for himself how it hurt him in his heart, and yet he had to suffer in silence. Now this is written for our consolation and example of patience, when we have His word and promise; but He leaves us otherwise, that we may not fall into doubt, but know that God will not forsake us; as He kept His word, that it was finally fulfilled.

4 Now behold the story whence it cometh: "She went out (saith the text) to see the daughters or maidens of the land." It befits a virgin to run now and then; [it] is not a good sign if they cannot stay at home. Jacob would not have admitted it to her either, so [her.] to run. But it goes thus, if God does not guard, then no one guards, as the 127th Psalm, v. 1, says: "Where the LORD does not guard the city, the guards watch in vain." There is no doubt that he brought up his daughter in the best possible way, but it does not help. So it happens to many parents, when they have brought up their children well, that they still turn out badly. He does not want them to be allowed to run around and have their way, but to pull and teach them with all diligence.

God, if it does not work out, we have done our part. For it is not in our power, but in God's power, that children do well; where he is not in the ship, one never sails well.

5. Further, behold, the evil of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, falling upon the city of Shechem, and slaying all that is male, contrary to their father's will, so that they all sin, Simeon and Levi, Shechem, Hemor, and Dinah, and all the brethren; [They are all wickedness that they do; and the two sons also are perjured, that they keep not the peace, though they had vowed it, when the citizens were circumcised; so that the whole city must pay for the one wickedness.

But how is it that Jacob, at the end of the 48th chapter, v. 22, boasts that he took the land and the property justly, when it looks much different here? For his sons fall upon the city with violence and injustice, and take it all. But this is how God uses to make right out of wrong. The children do wrong against their father and their promise, but Jacob gets it right; so Shechem and Hemor are punished justly and rightly, even though they do wrong. Just as God commonly punishes boys by boys, sometimes also pious people by boys, and again; as the holy Job was punished by wicked boys from Arabia [Job 1, 15.], whereas the pious Abraham struck the four kings, as is heard above [Gen. 14, 15.]. Summa: Everything is in God's hand, it comes from where and how He wills, to whom He gives it, he has it. Now that the Shechemites are defeated and lose what is theirs is also right, although Jacob's sons fall into it unjustly; but God takes it because they are defeated, and gives it to Jacob so that he may keep it with good right.

(7) These are his works, when he gives or takes away a land and steals it wherever he wants; as he let the Hebrews steal their gold and silver utensils from the Egyptians, as it says in the other book of Moses [Cap. 12, 36]. This was wrong in the eyes of the people, but not in the eyes of God, for he wanted to punish them as they deserved. So it goes now in

The world is a place where one prince robs another, one country beats another, as one knave beats another.

(8) But we must consider that the twelve sons of the patriarch Jacob were also pious and holy, because the Scriptures often exalt and praise them. However, they often stumbled and committed many a gross misdeed, as we shall see more hereafter, which is much the case with the great patriarchs. Now it would be a knavery to act so wrongly and with disloyalty as they do here, and to fall with deceit upon the defenseless Shechemites, and to strike and take away everything, when they had no debt to the citizens. It was not proper for them to rebel against Hemor and Shechem, even though they were already using injustice and violence, because they were masters of the land, while Jacob and his family were living there as aliens. Thus, God allows His own to become great sinners before He makes them righteous. Thus St. Paul had to persecute the Christians in the worst way before he became the most noble apostle [Apost. 8, 3. 9, 1. 2. 1 Tim. 1, 13. 14].

(9) All this is written for us as an example, so that even if a man stumbles in gross works, he is not to be condemned for it. If works were to make one pious in the sight of God, then these patriarchs would have to be rejected; for there is almost nothing of them in the legend but such coarse pieces. Therefore, nothing must be valid before God but grace and mercy. Therefore it is much better to preach about the saints, because how they fasted, did these or those works. For these are the secret and marvelous works of God, that he would have sinners to be saints, that all our glory of godliness and good works might be brought low. For this is the sum of it: As long as he keeps us, so long are we pious; but when he removes his hand, and lets us go ourselves, we are desperate wretches. But let no man despair if we fall, but that we will not forsake the word; for his word and his grace are greater and more than all men's sins. This chapter is based on the history; we also want to see a little of the secret interpretation.

(10) That Dinah, Jacob's daughter, goes out among the strange women means the frivolous souls that do not remain at home in the word of God, but go out and mix with the doctrines of men, and fall upon that which pleases reason. If Dina had stayed at home with her father, she would have remained unchanged; thus, the conscience also remains pure, because it hangs on the word of God alone; but as soon as it seeks something more, and goes after the teachings of men, it will certainly be corrupted. For God wants us to be His bride alone, and to cling to Him; so it is not possible for the conscience to remain unchanged when the laws of men enter it. But I speak only of the doctrines and laws of men, which are beaten and driven into the conscience, and not of outward statutes, which alone are put into the hand.

(11) Now when she has gone out, Shechem, the ruler of the land, becomes aware of her and courts her; that is, as Habakkuk says [Cap. 1:16], *Cibus ejus electus*, the devil, the prince of the world, seeks only cute little bits; that is, that by teachers of men he brings to himself and deceives not his multitude, but only those who have heard God's word and are God's people. So now he puts them to sleep and weakens them; for the devil does not seek to corrupt the souls he has under him, but only those who are still pure, as he has done through the papacy.

012 But that Shechem and Hemor should make terms with Jacob and his sons, and make an alliance, that he may retain them, and

The reason for this is the deceitfulness and hypocrisy of the teachers of men, which they use to deceive people and win them over. As the papists do, pretending that they will keep the gospel, and preach all that is written therein; as the Shechemites allow themselves to be circumcised, and say: We will not teach anything that brings harm, but that which is for salvation. So they have the Scripture and the gospel that we have, but they mean it wrongly, only painting it with such a color that they bring us to themselves and lead us away from the righteous faith.

(13) Their brothers let this happen at first, but soon they come in by force, take the sister again, beat and destroy everything; that is, the right preachers are there, and winning souls and consciences, they bring them home to God again. But that they deceive the citizens of the city, and pretend to dwell with them and keep company with them, means that we are also immersed in the doctrines of men; but after that we have taken up the right sword, that is, God's word, so that we put down and destroy everything that is human, so that they corrupt the consciences, do not stop until we have completely subdued it and made it all. And that the two brothers alone go and strangle everything is because there are few who preach God's word, but the other false saints are the greatest number; yet God's word is so powerful that it does them harm and destroys their thing.

# The Thirty-Fifth Chapter.

V.1-8. And God said unto Jacob, Arise, and go to Bethel, and dwell there, and make there an altar unto God, which appeared unto thee, when thou fledst from thy brother Esau. Then said Jacob unto his Hanse, and to all that were with him: Put away from among you the strange gods that are among you, and cleanse yourselves, and change your garments, and let us arise, and go to Bethel, that I may build there an altar to God.

Make unto the God that heard me in the time of my affliction, and was with me in the way that I went. So they gave him all the foreign gods that were under their hands, and their earrings; and he buried them under an oak that stood by Shechem, and they went to her. And the fear of God came upon the cities that were round about them, that they pursued not after the sons of Jacob. So came Ja-

**He went to Kob in Lus, in the land of Canaan, which is called Bethel, and all the people that were with him. And he built there an altar, and called the name of the place Bethel, because there God was revealed unto him, when he fled from his brother. Then Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and was buried under Bethel, under the oak tree, and was called the Lamentation Oak.**

In this legend we hear nothing but lamentation and heartache, without sometimes being told how he builds an altar and prays. But, as I have said more, the main thing in it is that he has often heard God's word. Where this is, the works also apply, however small they are. So here he tells how God called him to build an altar for the sake of God's redeeming him, so that his children would not be slain. For they had made it so that the whole land was hostile to them, as he also complains in the previous chapter, v. 30: "You have made it so that I stink in the sight of the inhabitants of this land; now when they gather against me, they will strike me, and I will be destroyed with my house." Therefore he is no longer safe in the land, so that God must call him away.

(2) Thus God always throws His own into trouble and all kinds of dangers, but does not let them perish therein. He had the promise that his seed should become great and overtake the land; and here it is not far off that they would all be slain; and [it] would also have happened, if God had not caused a fear to come, as the text says, upon the cities that lay about, that they should not pursue after the sons of Jacob; so that he saves them in a moment and helps [them] from it. These are Jacob's fortresses to protect him, and the iron wall that God builds around him. For he helped very soon; it cost but a wink of the eye, and he slew the whole world. When he wants to strike, he lifts up the inside and strikes the heart first; when that is taken, there is no strength left.

003 Now at this word, that God would call him to go and build an altar, Jacob set out in joyful faith, and was not afraid to go through the midst of the enemies. For

It is shown that Jacob was once again in great fear, that he did not know where to go out, because he was in the midst of the enemies, and yet he was not allowed to stay in the place of Shechem, that God Himself must come and strengthen and comfort him through His word, so that he is no longer afraid.

4 Then he preached a sermon and said what God had commanded him, which is the proper office of a priest. And here you see that he preached not only to his household, but also to others who followed him because of the word; just as afterwards some Gentiles joined the Jews and learned God's word from them. For this is what the text says: "Then Jacob spoke to his household, and to all who were with him"; that is, that Jacob was at the same time the supreme pope or bishop, and almost alone received the word of God and led the spiritual regiment.

But what did he preach? That, as it says in the text: "Put away the foreign gods" 2c., we want to build an altar, praise and thank God, who has helped and redeemed us. To build an altar to God is not to find or seize God with our works, but [it] was only a place where one could come together to preach and praise God; just as God's house does not mean that we build a house for Him, but because, as said above [Cap. 28, § 12 f.], He dwells there before, and we come to Him there. How then does he dwell there? So that he speaks there. For where his word is preached, there he will surely be found; but where it is not, there is not his house, if they build churches one upon another.

6 So Jacob did not build an altar out of his own devotion, but out of God's command. So do you also. For it is not in our power to honor his name or to set up a service for him, but he must say it beforehand and say, here or there one should preach and serve me; as he says in Exodus 20:24, "In the place where I make remembrance of my name, there will I come to thee, and bless thee," that is, where I let my gospel of my grace and goodness be preached to glorify my name, not where you build or dedicate churches. For who are

Do you dare to bind God to a place? He wants to come first, out of pure grace and goodness, and set up holy places. Therefore the mere altar is much more precious than if we built churches of pure gold and brought all the saints there; for here is God's word, which is more valid than all the world.

(7) But what is it that Jacob is called to put away the strange gods, and to cleanse himself, and to put on other garments? What the foreign gods are, I have said enough above [Cap. 31, § 23 ff]. But Jacob, though he was holy and full of the Spirit, yet he could not bring himself to have no idols among his company, however few they were. This was nothing else than that some wanted to serve God with false worship, as we do with our own works. For he will have no worship but that which he himself hath commanded and ordained. Therefore he commanded them to leave off and put away all such false ways of serving God; for this would have been nothing, if they had put away idols from themselves, and the heart had nevertheless remained idolatrous.

(8) The other two pieces belong to the outward manner and deeds. But would you say, "Do you not see that we are commanded here to cleanse and wash externally, and to put on other garments? It is not valid to say that one must understand it spiritually and look at the interpretation, because no necessity forces it, but must let it remain outwardly and bodily. Answer: We also want to let it stand, but we say thus: Although salvation and faith or Christianity do not stand in such outward things, it cannot happen without them, just as Paul says in 1 Cor. 8:8: "Food does not promote us in the sight of God; if we eat, we are not better for it; if we do not eat, we are not less for it." We must eat and drink to sustain life, so that we can preach and serve our neighbor.

(9) So we may also say, No outward thing promotes or helps us before God; yet we must keep outward things and things that serve to keep people to the word of God; as, to keep a place, a place, a place, and a place.

Choosing to preach the Word of God and to perform the sacraments 2c. Therefore, all this should be left free. So this church is no better than any other house; but it is not fitting that one should eat, drink, or dance here, and the like; for there must be order and distinction among the people, where one does this or that, which neither promotes nor hinders in the sight of God.

010 Therefore it is as much for Jacob to say, Purify yourselves, and change your garments, as for me to say, If ye will hear preaching, leave your levity, your eating and drinking at home, and stand up bravely. He also says: "The main thing we do is to go and build an altar, preach and call on God; for this purpose it is good that you throw away idols and practice fine, honest deeds.

(11) After this he says how they have put away the idols, and remembers no more the other two things. [It is also to be known that the garments which the Scripture calls to be taken off were those which they adorned themselves with in honor of the idols, as the earrings which they give away here, and Jacob buries with the idols under a tree. For it has been a common way and ornament in the lands to wear earrings and bracelets, and to put on such ornaments in honor of their idols. What it meant, we will hear later. According to history, it was because they had no sign on them to indicate that they were attached to any idol, as now the priests, monks and nuns are attached to their clothes, caps and plates.

(12) So he comes with all that he has with him to the land of Canaan, to Bethel, not far from Jerusalem, where God had also appeared to him before, and builds an altar there, so that the place afterwards, as said above [Cap. 28, § 17], became a cause of the greatest idolatry among the Jews. For the false worship never ceased until Israel was taken away. This alone caused them to fall upon this example, saying, "God dwelt in that place in particular, because He had appeared there twice to Jacob, and had commanded him to build an altar. If the pope now has such strong examples and scripture

Who would stay before him? When he now comes there, Rebekka's nurse died; then mourning and lamentation arise. He is now delivered from the hands of the child, but now his own misfortune follows, as we shall see.

V. 9-29. And God appeared unto Jacob again after he was come out of Mesopotamia, and blessed him, and said unto him, Thou art called Jacob, but thou shalt no more be called Jacob, but Israel shalt thou be called; and so he is called Israel. And GOD said unto him, I am the Almighty GOD, be fruitful and multiply; nations and peoples' houses shall come from thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins. And the land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give it to your seed after you. So God departed from him from the place where He had spoken to him. And Jacob set up a stone mark in the place where he had spoken with him, and poured drink offerings 1) thereon, and sprinkled oil upon it. And Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken unto him Bethel. And they departed from Bethel, and there was a way of the fields from Ephrath, and Rachel bare the child, and the birth was grievous to her. And when she was sore in childbirth, the wailing mother said unto her, Fear not: for thou shalt have this son also. But when her soul went out, and she died, she called his name Benoni 2). But his father called him Benjamin 3). So Rachel died, and was buried by the way of Ephrath, which is now called Bethlehem: and Jacob set up a mark over her grave, which is Rachel's sepulchre unto this day. And Israel went out, and pitched a tent on the other side of the tower of Eber. And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in the land, that Reuben went and slept with Bilhah his father's concubine. And this came before Israel. Now Jacob had twelve sons. The sons of Leah were these: Reuben, the firstborn son of Jacob, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun. The sons of Rachel were: Joseph and Benjamin. The sons of Bilhah, Rachel

1) Marginal gloss: libation. This was wine, as will be seen sufficiently in the following books.  
2) Side note: Ben Oni is called the son of my pain.  
3) Marginal gloss: Ben Jamin is called the son of the right.

**Maid: Dan and Naphtali. The sons of Zilpah, Leah's maidservant: Gad and Esser. These are the sons of Jacob, which were born unto him in Mesopotamia. And Jacob came to Isaac his father to Mamre, to the capital which is called Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac were strangers. And Isaac was an hundred and fourscore years old, and was sick, and died, and was gathered unto his people old and full of life. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.**

(13) Now there is another sermon that God speaks to him, as he spoke to him before in the same place when he went out. But why does he say, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but you shall be called Israel"? Because he had just given him the name long before, when he fought with the angel. The name had not yet come out, but here it is shouted out and made clear that he and all his family were called Israel. But he was always called not only Israel, but also Jacob, as we see in the prophets. Now he made him a new rich promise, that from Jacob, who was so lowly and wretched before the world, mighty kings should yet come. It was fulfilled slowly afterwards, because his seed had to be the least servants in the land of Egypt for a long time.

014 And it came to pass, as he departed, that his heart was troubled, because Rachel died in childbirth, his dearest wife, for whom he had served so many years, that he could not bring her home, but died in the way. This has also been a hard cross for him. [He] saw great sorrow in her, as the text indicates, that she was very angry about the child, that it came from her alive; therefore she gives the child a name of sorrow before she dies, and calls him Ben Oni, a son of my sorrow. As if she should say: He shall bear the sign that I gave birth to him with sorrow and pain, that it cost me my life. The father also gives him a name and calls him Ben-Jamin, a son of the right hand, that is, his most beloved son, because he is now born in his old age and takes his mother's place.

4) Walch and the Erlangeners: will.

(15) But before he forgets this sorrow, another misfortune befalls him, that his first son Reuben sleeps with his stepmother. I think this is a piece of the holy man's son; how could he cause greater sin and shame, and do more harm to the father? St. Paul has put on great vice [1 Cor. 5, 1]: "Such fornication, as even the Gentiles know not of to say that one hath his father's wife," 1) but has tempered himself, that he might not say of the Jews. It did not work out well for this Reuben either, that he had to hear a hard word from his father at the end, and both, the priesthood and regiment, which was due to the first son, had to be deprived.

(16) God makes us see what pious children we are, if he does not keep us in his hand without ceasing, so that no evil or virtue is too much for us. But the pious Jacob has to eat it all up and suffer that his own children do him more harm than the strangers and his enemies. Think for yourself how it hurt him that neither his daughter nor his own wife remained unchanged. From this we shall see what a true Christian being is, that God always sends one cross over another to his own, so that they may be able and willing to suffer, so that the old Adam may well be subdued and grow weary of life.

(17) In the last place the twelve sons of Jacob are told again for Benjamin's sake, who was born last; after that he writes how Jacob came again to his father Isaac, that he still sees him before his death, and buries him himself with his! Brother. But of Rebekah he writes nothing more; [she] may have died before, for he had now been three and twenty years without, and nearly a hundred years old. Thus we have the Isaac there; is still a little left of Jacob's legend.

Now let us also go through the secret interpretation of this chapter. First, Jacob goes to Beth El, that is, God's house, or God's dwelling place; before they get there, he preaches to them how they should put away their idols, which he takes along with the earrings and bracelets and buries them.

under an oak tree. In this story is sweetly signified the preaching of the gospel, which happens nowhere but where God dwells. The same gospel always rejects the silver idols, that is, the doctrine of men, or such worship as God has not ordained, which is nothing but a pure idolatry, as we have heard. For he will not suffer any other service to be accepted before him than that which he himself teaches us and calls us, that our hearts may be sure that it pleases him. Those who do not have his word cannot do such service, but what they do, they do out of their own conceit and dream. These are actually images made with hands, that is, their own works and invented human doctrine, all of which the gospel condemns and does not want to suffer.

(19) Those then who hear and accept the gospel cast away such idols and their earrings; that is, when they hear that their works and worship are worthless, they themselves help to condemn idolatry. The earrings, which were commonly worn in the countries, mean nothing, but the sermons, which they had previously worn in their ears and boasted about, they now tear away and bury them under the earth, so that they can no longer do any good or harm.

020 When Jacob came to Beth El, he set up a stone mark where God had spoken to him, and poured drink offerings and oil on it. It was a goodly building, having neither roof, nor vault, nor house, but a bad stone, where Jacob had lain: neither was it more acceptable unto God than our most glorious temples and churches, because he had commanded Jacob. The stone now, as is also said above in chapter 28 [§ 38], means Christ, on whom we lie down, and safely rest and sleep on it. It is now erected at BethEl, that is, where one preaches God's word, there one erects the Lord Christ as the foundation stone. Therefore the raising up is nothing else than preaching the gospel, which alone points to Christ; therefore nothing else is to be preached. From this, where Christ is preached correctly, conclude that there is certainly a house of God.

1) Erlanger: has.



(21) What does the drink offering mean? In the following books of Moses, namely in the third, it is often said about drink offerings or pouring sacrifices, because the priests took breadcrumbs or cakes and poured wine on them, and usually also added oil [Ex 29:40, Deut 23:13, 18, 37]. How does this work in the Gospel? What the Scriptures say about sacrifices, we cannot interpret much, but to the preaching ministry in Christianity, and take the reason from St. Paul, Rom. 15, 15. f.: "I have written to you (says he) a little thirstily, to remind you, for the grace that is given me of God, that I should be a minister of Christ among the Gentiles, to offer the gospel of God, that the Gentiles might become a sacrifice acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit." Now when I teach that the old Adam is to be killed in Christ, and perish with all that comes from him, I pour wine on the stone, that is, I confess that our thing is of no account, but must all be killed according to the flesh; that as wine makes men drunk, so the gospel, if it be rightly understood and apprehended, makes men esteem not goods, honor, and life, and causes all things to be taken from them, and their thing to be condemned; whom then the world takes for fools.

(22) Now this is a preaching of the gospel, that all that we are is damnable, as Christ says in John [Cap. 16:8], "The Holy Spirit will punish the world for sin, righteousness, and judgment"; who then believe this, they are poured out with the pungent wine. After this follows the other, that they also pour oil on it. This is the other preaching of the mercy and grace of God, that we may be comforted. Where this happens, there is a real BethEl, where God truly dwells. This is the summa of the whole preaching ministry that leads the two pieces. For no man can have a good conscience that God dwelleth in his heart, except he first let the old Adam die, that he ask not after that which greatly esteemeth flesh and blood. Such watering, that is, this preaching shall now last forever, as long as we live and the world stands. Behold, this is set before us here in the fathers with lovely figures, and afterwards by the prophets, most of all

but in the New Testament driven by the apostles.

23) Further, when the gospel is raised up by Christ and the apostles, Rachel lies down and dies, that is, the synagogue, or Judaism. The child comes forth, but the mother must remain above it. From the son now a new nation is born, because the old nation has perished. This is also shown by the name she gives him, BenOni, Son of Sorrow, which means that we must be children of the cross and preach only about it. But the Father gives him another name, and calls him BenJamin, that is, the Son of the Right. For according to Adam we are children of sorrows, poor, miserable people, but according to the Spirit we are BenJamin, that is, children of eternal life, and of all the goods of God. Thus, the Spirit played with the fathers to indicate how it should go in the time of the Gospel.

024 Now because the gospel is going forth, and Judaism is perishing, Reuben goeth forth, and committeth adultery with his stepmother. He was the first son, who was to be lord of all, as the liberty 1) of the first birth was; he corrupted it, and slept with his mother; that is, the best of the Jewish people, the wisest and holiest, have corrupted the synagogue, and put it to shame with the doctrines of men, and defiled the Father's bed, which is the conscience wherein Christ resteth, and lieth with his bride, and will not suffer any other to reign therein. Now if it be preached that our faith should cleave unto Christ alone, the conscience is clean and undefiled: but he that would lead the conscience by works, and build it upon the doctrine of men, putteth himself out of the Father's bed, and corrupteth souls. Just as the hypocrites and scribes in Christ's day led the people on their works, and after that the papacy washed the world full of humanity, and after them others arose who lead us away from Christ and pure faith. So this interpretation is actually based on false teaching, which alone does harm to the conscience.

25 For this reason I have often admonished that life and death should be kept far apart.

. 1) Freedom --- privilege, privilegium.

Doctrine. The doctrine is that I believe in Christ, consider my work, suffering and death as nothing, and serve my neighbor, and above this I leave what I should. Life, however, is whether I walk this way or that and act accordingly. So there is not so much in the life as in the teaching, so that even if the life is not so pure, the teaching can still remain pure, and patience can be borne with the life. Our nobles do not teach such things, but those who are the best among them, and come to the highest, preach only of a strict life, and set before us great examples of the saints who have done great, wonderful works, have gone to their deaths with laughter, and lead the people so that they do not perceive the doctrine. For a man is not better to be deceived than by such a seeming life; where there are not valiant preachers, it is a great mercy who can separate life from doctrine.

(26) It is true that we should live in this way, but I live as I live, so the doctrine does not become false. Therefore we must look and judge not by life, but by doctrine. But the multitude always think more of life than of doctrine; [they] all say

So: Well, what is it, if one teaches the same long time from the faith, it must come higher. I cannot preach higher than this, except to kill the old Adam and become a new man. They say, "Yes, don't you? Answer: I ought to do it, yes, even if God gives it to me; but no one will bring it that high, there will still be a great lack of it.

Therefore let life remain on earth, and the teaching be lifted up to heaven. The teaching always remains like itself, that it wants to be completely pure and perfect; but the life can come higher. I also wanted my life to be higher, but nothing comes of it; life will not reach the teaching as long as we live here. So we see in all examples how far the holy people still lacked life; as, how Jacob was afraid; item, how weak his wives were and sometimes also stumbled, who nevertheless were the mothers of the patriarchs. See in the Gospel how the apostles sometimes stumbled and stumbled, so that one does not read many examples in the Scriptures, since there was not much weakness and error in life.

# The Thirty-Sixth Chapter.

V. 1-43. This is the family of Esau, who is called Edom. Esau took wives of the daughters of Canaan, Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite; and Ahalibamah the daughter of Ana, the nephew of Zibeon the Hivite; and Basmath the daughter of Ishmael, Nebajoth's sister. And Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau. But Basmath bore Reguel. And Ahalibamah bare Jeus, and Jaelam, and Korah. These are Esau's children, which were born unto him in the land of Canaan. And Esau took his wives, sons and daughters, and all the souls of his house, and his substance, and all his cattle, with all the goods which he had gotten in the land of Canaan, and went into a land of Jacob his brother. For their possessions were too 1) great that they might

They could not dwell together, and the land where they were strangers could not bear them from their goods. So Esau dwelt in mount Seir. And Esau is the Edom. This is the family of Esau, from whom the Edomites descended in Mount Seir, and this is the name of the children of Esau: Eliphaz the son of Adah, Esau's wife. Reguel the son of Basmath, Esau's wife. Now Eliphaz's sons were these: Theman, Omar, Zepho, Gaetham and Kenaz. And Timnah was a concubine of Eliphaz the son of Esau, which bare him Amalek. These are the children of Adah Esau's wife. But the children of Reguel are these: Nahath, Serah, Samma, Misa. These are the children of Basmath, Esau's wife. And the sons of Ahalibamah Esau's wife, the daughter of Ana, the nephew of Zibeon, are these,

1) Jenaer: so.

whom she bore to Esau: Jeus, Jaelam and Korah. These are the princes among the children of Esau: the children of Eliphaz, the first son of Esau, were these: Theman the prince, Omar the prince, Zepho the prince, Kenaz the prince, Korah the prince, Gaetham the prince, Amalek the prince. These are the princes of Eliphaz in the land of Edom, and are children of Adah. And these are the sons of Reguel the son of Esau: the prince Nahath, the prince Zerah, the prince Samma, the prince Mishah. These are the princes of Reguel in the land of the Edomites, and are the children of Basmath Esau's wife. These are the sons of Ahalibamah, Esau's wife: the prince Jeus, the prince Jaelam, the prince Korah. These are the princes of Ahalibamah, the daughter of Ana, Esau's wife. These are Esau's children and their princes. He is the Edom. But the children of Seir the Horite, who dwelt in the land, are these: Lothan, Shobal, Zibeon, Ana, Dison, Ezer and Disan. These are the princes of the Horites, children of Seir in the land of Edom. But the children of Lothan were these: Hori and Heman. And Lothan's sister's name was Thimnah. The children of Shobal were these: Alwan, Manahath, Ebal, Sepho and Onam. The children of Zibeon were: Aja and Ana. This is the Ana who invented mule horses in the desert as he tended his father Zibeon's donkeys. The children of Ana were: Dison and Ahalibama; this is the daughter Ana. The children of Dison were: Hemdan, Esban, Jethran and Charan. The children of Ezer were: Bilhan, Saaban and Man. The children of Disan were: Uz and Aran. These are

the princes of the Horites: The prince Lothan, the prince Sobal, the prince Zibeon, the prince Ana, the prince Dison, the prince Ezer, the prince Disan. These are the princes of the Horites who ruled in the land of Seir. Now these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before the children of Israel had kings: Bela was king in Edom, a son of Beor, and his city was called Dinhabah. And when Bela was dead, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bazrah reigned in his stead. And when Jobab was dead, Husham king of the Themanites reigned in his stead. And when Husham was dead, Hadad the son of Bedad reigned in his stead, who smote the Midianites in the field of Moab; and the name of his city was Avith. When Hadad died, Samla of Masrek reigned. And when Samla was dead, Saul reigned in Rehoboth by the water. And when Saul was dead, Baal Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. And when Baal Hanan the son of Achbor died, Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pagu; and the name of his wife was Mehetabeel, a daughter of Matred, and a daughter of Mesahab. So the princes of Esau are called by their families, their families and their names: The prince Thimna, the prince Alwa, the prince Jetheth, the prince Ahalibama, the prince Ela, the prince Pinon, the prince Kenas, the prince Theman, the prince Mibzar, the prince Magdiel, the prince Iram. These are the princes of Edom, as they were accustomed in their inheritance. And Esau is the father of the Edomites.

Every man may look at and study this chapter for himself, for there are many names in it; therefore we will go on.

# The Thirty-Seventh Chapter.

V.1-36: Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. And these are the generations of Jacob: Joseph was seventeen years old, when he became a shepherd of cattle with his brethren. And the lad was with Bilhah and Zilpah his father's wives, and brought before their father, where there was an evil cry against them. But Israel loved Joseph better than all his

Children, because he had begotten him in his old age. And made him a coat of many colors. 1) When his brothers saw that their father loved him better than all his brothers, they were hostile to him and could not speak a kind word to him.

1) Marginal gloss: Joseph's colorful skirt was woven of many colors of thread, and signifies the "many grace and gifts" of the one Spirit in Christ and His Christians.

Joseph once had a dream about this and told his brothers about it. Then they became still more hostile to him. For he said to them: Listen, my dear, to what I have dreamed. It seemed to me that we were tending sheaves in the field, and my sheaf was straightening up and standing, and your sheaves around were bending over against my sheaf. Then said his brethren unto him, Shall thou be our king, and reign over us? And they became even more hostile to him because of his dream and his speech. And he had another dream, which he told to his brethren, saying, Behold, I have dreamed another dream; The sun and the moon smote me, and eleven stars bowed down before me. And when this was told his father and his brethren, his father rebuked him, saying unto him, What dream is this that thou hast dreamed? Shall I, and thy mother, and thy brethren, come and fall to the earth before thee? And his brethren envied him, but his father kept these words. And when his brethren went to feed their father's cattle in Sichern, Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the cattle in Sichern? Come, I will send thee unto them. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Go, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and with the cattle, and tell me again how it is. So he sent him out of the valley of Hebron to go to Sichern. And when a man found him going astray in the field, he asked him, saying, Whom seekest thou? He answered: I am looking for my brothers, dear man; tell me where they are. And the man said, They are departed thence: for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. So Joseph followed his brothers, and found them at Dothan. And when they saw him afar off, before he came nigh unto them, they struck to kill him, saying one to another, Behold, the dreamer cometh; now therefore come, and let us slay him, and cast him into a pit, and say that an evil beast hath devoured him; and it shall be seen what his dreams are. And when Reuben heard it, he would have delivered him out of their hands, saying, Let us not smite a soul. And again Reuben said to them: Let us not shed blood, but let nns cast him into the pit, which is

in the wilderness and not lay a hand on him. But he would deliver him out of their hand, that he might bring him again unto his father. When Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his coat and the coat of many colors he was wearing, took it and threw it into a pit, but the pit was empty and there was no water in it. And they lifted up their eyes, and saw a company of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, and balm, and myrrh, and going down into Egypt. Then Judah said to his brothers: What profit is it to us to slay our brother, and to hide his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, so that our hands may not touch him, for he is our brother, our flesh and blood. And they obeyed him. And when the Midianites, the merchants, were passing by, they drew him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver, and they brought him into Egypt. When Reuben returned to the pit and found Joseph not there, he tore his clothes and returned to his brothers, saying, "The boy is not there; where shall I go? And they took Joseph's skirt, and slew a kid, and dipped the skirt in the blood, and sent the colored skirt, and brought it to their father, saying, This we have found; behold, whether it be thy son's skirt, or not? And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat: a beast of evil hath eaten it, and a beast of prey hath torn Joseph. And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and bare grief for his son a long time. And all his sons and daughters came up to comfort him, but he would not be comforted, and said: I will go down with sorrow into the pit to my son. And his father 1) wept over him. But the Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, Pharaoh's courtier.

(1) Here now follows a beautiful, amusing history of the fourth patriarch Joseph. Here, for the first time, you can see how finely the Holy Spirit writes about the badness of the holy patriarchs,

1) Marginal gloss: Father, this was Isaac.

2) Jenaer: "sihestu".

that he should keep silent in the face of reason, if he knew nothing better to write about them. Before, they murdered a whole city, after which Reuben slept with his father's wife; here, they did it all, and robbed the father of his favorite son, their own brother, for the sole reason that they saw that the father loved him better than all of them. For Benjamin was yet a child, so Joseph was of the right wife, Rachel, and was to be the right heir; moreover he was a pious child, as the text says, that he could not suffer the brothers to do wrong, but brought it before the father; so they cannot suffer the father to love him, and make him a coat of many colors, and are so hostile to him that they cannot speak a kind word to him.

(2) This is too much for the patriarch's children, that Christian and brotherly love is so completely extinguished. But God also gives them sin as a consolation to all who believe, so that we may see how He does not judge according to works, that no sin can condemn, if only one does not lose faith. Therefore, these are fine, sweet and comforting histories. The other is a vain, unkind, hostile thing, that our teachers have preached about saints as if they had never had flesh and blood.

This is now the last and greatest puff that the father had to suffer in his old age; for what follows, from the theurung, was not so great. Thus the Holy Spirit describes this holy father's legend from his youth. As soon as he left his father, he always had to suffer one misfortune after another. Esau, his brother, was the squire and the dear child, he had to be Cinderella, then serve for twenty years, and suffer much every day, then fight with the angel, and finally, when he thinks he is now at peace, the greatest heartache he sees in his children arises. He was still the only man in the whole world on whom God had a special eye and had made him the richest and greatest promises.

4 But there was nothing to see, because the contradiction, as if God had forgotten his even, and everything should go back. For he had

Now he took away his wife Rachel, whom he loved most of all; now he also took away his dearest child, Joseph, who was the first from the right wife. [He] had now no more comfort, because on the son, that he should be the one, on which the promise was, of which Christ should come; the comfort must now also go away, that he knows no more hope. Then his heart was troubled, thinking, "How can God leave me like this and take away all the comfort I have? Perhaps I have angered him that he wants to take the promise away from me again.

(5) Behold, these are the true golden legends, wherein God teacheth us how he cooketh and roasteth his saints, and playeth with them as though all that he promised them were a lie. He had vowed to give him a great seed, and to bless him; and takes away from him all that he holds dearest, and snatches from him the comfort and hope of the chase, so that he does not know whether he is angry with him or a friend: nor must he keep his word, and merely give home to God how he will fulfill his promise. We should also learn this, whether God would let us take what is dear to us, so that we could hope and comfort ourselves that he would not let us go, but would give us much more and better. How painful this was for him, I will let everyone think for himself, especially since the nature of such holy people is righteous and not so corrupt. Therefore the heart felt it well, and did not take to wind as some loose fathers do; therefore the text says, "And all his sons and daughters came up to comfort him, but he would not be comforted."

With this, God indicates that he does not reject nature altogether, but allows it to remain in the saints, so that he improves and justifies it. Sometimes he lets one become so drunk in the Holy Spirit that he does not pay attention to anything on earth; but otherwise he usually lets nature feel and be moved as he created it. For unless sin also reigns, no natural motion is evil; as we see in Christ, who felt and sensed all things after nature, as another man. So it is a natural inclination that the parents love the children, and grieve when they are unwell; as one

In unreasonable and wild animals they see that they also add their life to them. Again, it is also natural that the children love the parents and do everything good to them. Thus it was a natural father's heart that Jacob loved the child best, because he was of the right wife, and begotten at his age.

(7) Such a nature is not evil in itself, if it is not used evilly; that is, if God had not implanted such a nature in us, the children would be corrupted in their stance; again, if the nature did not keep loving the parents, no child would obey the parents.

(8) I say this so that it will not be thought that the saints were wood or stones, as we have been told. Mary, the mother of Christ, was also strong, but when she saw him hanging on the cross, a cutting sword went through her heart [Luc. 2, 35. Joh. 19, 25. f.]. So it is not possible that a martyr is not afraid of death, because Christ himself was afraid of it, and yet he did not do anything against God. God wants to train His own with good and evil, both when He gives and takes away, so that the heart will always be right toward Him.

(9) But there have been many foolish saints, especially among the ancients in the wilderness, who would break and restrain all natural inclination. As one reads of two brothers who would not allow their mother 1) to see them, and said: She should wait until they saw each other in eternal life. We do not read such things in these right saints' legends, to which those are not worthy to take off their shoes, and perhaps many, who are considered saints, have gone to the devil. God does not want us to despise and throw away creatures, but to use what he gives us, yet to put everything into his will. Thus a Christian does not respect any thing in spirit and conscience, but in body he accepts all kinds of things, so that there is no difference in outward appearance between Christians and other people. This is briefly said about history. Now we must also deal with the secret interpretation.

This history is rich and lovely with figures and interpretation until the end of this book. For in Joseph's person, God has spiritually portrayed Christ and his entire kingdom in the very finest way. So the summa of this figure is: As Joseph is with his brothers, so is Christ with his brothers, that is, with the Jews. First, the text says that Jacob loved Joseph more than his brothers, so he made him a coat of many colors, which was a long coat, woven with various threads, each of a special color, and says the reason why he loved him was that he had begotten him in his old age. For we have heard that he was above seventy years old before he took a wife; so Joseph was born about the ninetieth year of his age. Now this is Jesus Christ, the true dear child of God [Eph. 1:6] and firstborn Son [Col. 1:15], through whom all others come to the grace and favor of the Father, so that He will look upon no one except through this Son.

(11) The coat of many colors is the Christian church, which is the adornment and garment of Christ. It is called a coat of many colors because it is endowed with various gifts and virtues of the Holy Spirit. It is one garment, yet not of one thread or color; finely distinguished, yet woven together. This is what Paul explains to the Corinthians (1 Ep. 12:4 ff.) and Ephesians (Cap. 4:4 ff.), that one Christian has such grace, another another; some are prophets, some teachers, some can do miracles. The gifts, offices and powers are various, says St. Paul; but they are one Spirit, one faith, and one mind. For whatsoever one believeth and is minded of Christ, that believeth they all. This skirt reaches to his heels, that is, Christianity with its gifts endures through and through, to the end of the world.

12 But that he beget the Son in his old age signifies that Christ is sent and publicly preached at the end of the world. For the gospel is the Lord's Supper and the last sermon preached to the world, after which no more may be expected.

013 But that his brethren were enemies unto him, especially because of the dreams which were before-

1) Walch and the Erlangers: Mothers.

The reason for this is that Christ was in the people before he was born, because the prophets preached about him long before that he would come and become king and lord over all brothers [Matth. 22, 43. 44.]. Therefore the quarrel arose that the prophets were always persecuted until Christ came; but when Christ himself came, they were first deadly enemies to him, and sought to kill him.

(14) Now the two dreams, of the sheaves, and of the sokme, and of the moons, point to nothing else, but the scriptures and histories of the Old Testament, which everywhere point to Christ, that he should be the one before whom they should bow down, and all the patriarchs and prophets should bow the knee.

(15) The fact that Joseph brought the iniquity of his brothers before his father was also a reason why they were hostile to him. The Scriptures also show that the patriarchs nevertheless committed much iniquity, that they had not many good tidings. But here is a difference between the afterredeers and the pious. For the pious Joseph did not bear them out, nor did he make an evil report of them, but when he heard an evil report from others, he told his father secretly, and did not carry it out further. In the same way, if you know something evil about your neighbor, keep silent and do not rebuke it, but let it remain between you and him; but if it has already been rebuke, there is no other way but to report it to the authorities, who have the power to punish. So Christ also did through the prophets and his preaching. When the people practiced idolatry and believed in false prophets, he punished them and warned them to stop and wait for Christ.

016 Now that the father sends him to the brethren to Shechem, and finds them not; for they abode not there, but departed unto Dothan; is that the Jews were ordained to bear the statutes and commandments of God: but they departed from them, and made them their own statutes.

017 And when they saw Joseph afar off, they said one to another, Behold, here cometh the

That is, when they heard the Scripture that he was present, they could not bear it, and soon thought to oppress him and kill him; after which they seized him and stripped him of his skirt, made all the disciples and all the people fall from Christ, that he should stand alone and naked, and threw him into a pit, that is, they put him to death.

018 But when the Ishmaelites came, they dragged him out, and sold him: that is, when the Jews saw that the Gentiles were come unto Christ, they sent him away, and lost him with all his goods, for their pleasure and for their belly's sake. So he went into a far country, that is, among the Gentiles, to the end of the world, who had never been God's people before.

019 And the fact that Reuben cometh again, and seeketh him, but findeth him not, signifieth that the Jews, when they had rejected him, would have been glad to have him again: but they tarried too long.

When he was gone, they took his skirt and dipped it in goat's blood and sent it home to the father, and he did not mean anything else than that a wild animal had torn it, which means nothing else than the shame and suffering that happened to Christ, which we still have to suffer today. For his coat of many colors must still be taken off, and he must be rinsed in the blood of a goat, and he must be presented to the Father of the world as if a wild animal had torn him apart. For what we preach about Christ, together with his spirit, grace and all goods, so that the Father has adorned him and us, they strip us of, our brothers, who want to be our neighbors and the best in Christianity, and say it is nothing, and defile it in blood, that is, desecrate it and blaspheme it in the worst way; as he was defiled and reviled by the Jews, as if his thing were of the devil. We must consider this. For the Scripture hath declared it both before, and pictured it with figures. It is a noticeable point that his own brothers thus go along with him. This is also most grievous, that they who should govern, handle, and honor the gospel, must thus defile, profane, and execute it, 1) that it is of no value.

21. in addition they are still so presumptuous, and

1) to direct -- to cast aspersions.

They send the defiled skirt home to the father and tell him that a beast did it, and they do not want to have any guilt or word. So the Jews have murdered and sold Christ, forgiven and thrown away all his words, thrown away his grace, and still do not stop: they still want to be innocent, and have done nothing, pretend they know nothing about it, still pretend they are the dear children; do not want to hear that they have murdered God's Son, but say they have done it to one who was a murderer and a mischief-maker.

22. so God's word and truth must be reviled, after which they go and wipe their mouths, like the harlot, of which Solomon says in Proverbs [Cap. 30, 20]. These are two abominable sins, that they blaspheme and profane the word of God, and then say that they do it good; as Christ says in John [Cap. 16:2], "The time will come when he who kills you will think that he is doing God service."

023 Now this hath Jacob suffered, being deceived of his sons, that he thinketh it is as they say. [It] is said this much: God sets Himself against them, as if He did not know it, lets them 1= always go and remain hypocrites, the

1) In the old editions: "lässets", that is, lets them.

skirt and cover it, so that they think that he does not know what they have done. For as it is in our mind, so it is also before God; as I hold it, so I have it. Therefore the Jews do not go otherwise than they have no blame, laying it on the wild beast, that is, the heathen, or otherwise wicked people. In the meantime God is silent, but it hurts him and he suffers for a long time. This happens through his own who feel it, but at last the time comes for it to be revealed.

(24) Thus the figure is delicately painted, how it is with Christ and his Christians, that they must be defiled by those who are next to them, and afterward come before God as if they had done well; as now they make heresy of the gospel. Over the plague we must have the shame of it, as if it were deserved reward, and therefore crown it.

025 But that the two brothers did not like to see Joseph perish, especially Reuben, who would gladly have brought him back to his father, there are some sensible people who would gladly make amends and spare him; but it is of no avail. This is the chapter that teaches how Christians must suffer the cross, and the gospel must be reviled and persecuted.

# The thirty-eighth chapter.

V.1-30. About the same time Judah went down from his brothers and stayed with a man in Odollam whose name was Hira. And Judah saw there the daughter of a Cananite man, whose name was Shuah, and took her. And when he had made love to her, she conceived, and bare a son, and called his name Ger. And she conceived, and bare a son, and called his name Onan. And she continued, and bare a son, and called his name Shelah. And he 2) was at Cheshib when she bare him. And Judah gave unto Ger his first son a wife, whose name was Tamar. But he was

2) Jenaer: they.

evil in the sight of the LORD, therefore the LORD slew him. Then said Judah unto Onan, Lie with thy brother's wife, and take her in marriage, that thou mayest raise up seed unto thy brother. But Onan, knowing that if he lay with his brother's wife the seed should not be his, let it fall to the ground, and spoiled it, lest he should give seed to his brother. And it displeased the LORD that he did this, and he slew him also. Then Judah said to Tamar his wife, "Remain a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up, for he thought that he might die like his brothers. So Tamar went and stayed in her father's house.



Home. After many days had passed, the daughter of Shuah, Judah's wife, died. After Judah had mourned, he went up to shear his sheep at Timnath with Hira of Odollam, his shepherd. And it was told Tamar, Behold, thy brother in law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep. So she put off the widow's garments which she had on, and veiled herself, and covered herself, and sat down at the door of the way to Timnath: for she saw that Shelah was grown, and that she was not given to him to wife. And when Judah saw her, he thought that she was a harlot, because she had hid her face: and he came to her by the way, and said, Let me lie with thee, my beloved; for he knew not that she was his cord. And she answered, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest lie with me? He said: I will send thee a kid of the herd. And she said, Give me a pledge, till thou send it me. And he said, What pledge wilt thou that I give thee? And she answered, Thy seal, and thy signet, 1) And thy staff which thou hast in thy hands. And he gave it her, and lay with her, and she conceived by him. And she arose, and went, and put off her veil, and put on her widow's garments again. But Judah sent the goat by his shepherd from Odollam to fetch the pledge again from the woman, and he found her not. Then he asked the people of the same place, saying, Where is the harlot that sat by the way side? They answered: There was no harlot there. And he came again to Judah, and said: I have not found her; neither say the men of that place, There was no harlot there. And Judah said, She hath it unto her, lest peradventure we be put to shame: for I have sent the goat, and thou hast not found her. And it came to pass about three months, that Judah was told, saying, Tamar thy string hath whored; and, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, that she may be burned. And when she was brought forth, she sent to her brother-in-law, saying, I am with child by the man whose name this is. And said, Knowest thou the seal?

1) Fan --- tie, string (around hats, boots, clothes).

and the fan, and the staff is? Judah knew it, and said, She is more righteous than I: for I gave her not to Shelah my son: yet he slept with her no more. And when she was about to give birth, twins were conceived in her womb. And when she gave birth, one hand came out. The womb took it and tied a red thread around it, saying, "This will be the first to come out. And when he drew in his hand again, his brother came out; and she said, Why is a locker torn 2) for thy sake? And they called him Perez. 3) Then came out his brother, which had the red thread about his hand; and they called his name Serah.

I have said before that we must make a preface and embellishment of our own before every chapter, for we are so tender that we do not suffer to speak, nor to hear of human birth, and yet we have done wrong, which is horrible to say. It is true that this is an even 4) coarse chapter; yet it is written in the holy Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit wrote it, who ever has so pure a mouth and pen as we, that I do not know how to put it more highly than this. If anyone has a purer mouth and ears than he, let it stand; if he was not afraid nor ashamed to write it, neither shall we be ashamed to read and hear it.

2'. If God would have us keep discipline and shame where we should keep them, and avoid fornication where we should, we have turned it into a sham. Where we should have spoken of it out of necessity, we kept silent, but did much worse; and again. The Holy Spirit knows well what he has done, so he also speaks of his creature as it goes. Turning it back and forth, we are created to beget and bear fruit; for this he has given us members, veins, rivers, blood, and

2) compartment - hole, crack.  
3) Marginal gloss: Perez. Perez, a torn; Serah means exit. Here it is meant that the saints of works put themselves outwardly as if they wanted to come forth and be the first, and become the last, about which a great tearing arises among the people of God. But the red thread around the hand is that they work carnal holiness and persecute the right saints.  
4) even - significant, tremendous, very much. Cf. Col. 51V.

Flesh; we make of it what we will, so we must remain that it would be enough if he aligned his enemies and man and wife, and let nature go as it is planted. There pagans like this. [He makes nothing but husks and we are so chaste and modest, we do not want to hear whoremongers out of them, and they are to be God's anything about it; what one otherwise does, one jokes people and Christ's grandfathers, and the two, his sons, about and laughs at. This is the worldly wisdom that are desperate boys. One of them, when he should beget perverts all God's order. I am also not inclined to children for his brother, pours it out on the ground, of fornication and whoredom, but to the conjugal state; which it is not lawful to preach, and yet, alas, all too much therefore I have had to speak and write about it, to is done with maidens and boys; but he says it scantily, counsel and help the poor consciences, and to put down that he has the wife in bed, but before she should be the false chastity of the clergy. If we are to be conjugal, fruitful, rather he deprives her of seed, that she could not then fruit must follow; but if fruit is to follow, then flesh have children. It may be preached crudely, but we must and blood must have its natural place and course, or [it] also speak of the other crude things; for God created the becomes much worse. natural course as well as eating and drinking. Man and

Now this history Moses has described brightly and woman belong together in marriage, but whoever abuses roughly; therefore open your eyes and think that it is it will surely find his punishment.

written, for our teaching, by the Holy Spirit. For he should (5) All this, I say, is written for our admonition, that not have written it, if he did not know how it would be for we may take hold of such rude things, how pious nature man. We are not all the same, for one has these gifts is, when God removes His hand from His great, dear from God, the other those; but if God does not keep, onesaints, that they are even boys like us; so that God will is as pious as the other; if He keeps, we stand, and again. not suffer us to boast of our powers and fortunes, but That is why he has such histories written, so that we canpraise His unspeakable mercy. So that Judah leads a life see who we are. [We] may not boast better than thislike another heathen; nor will he be exalted in God's Judah; would God that we were all so pious. But must hekingdom, not by the mere grace and goodness of God, write this of the patriarch who was of the tribe of our Lordwho gives him sin, even though he deserves the Christ? Could the Scripture put none to shame but thecontradiction; that nothing counts before God but the Most High? Even if the others had all been fooled, heknowledge of His grace; whoever sees this sees God's should still have spared them. What is the Holy Spirit'skingdom; whether he does not fall, that it is God's mercy, pleasure that he does not prefer to write about goodnot his ability; but if he falls, he will not perish because of works? Our preachers of legends would be ashamed ifit. So the saints must be put to shame for our sake, so they were to preach of a saint who had not done vainthat their nature is of no value, but only His work and delectable works; but of this saint he writes none at all,grace. There is nothing inherent in us but wicked sin and so that when flesh and blood fall into it, it must become shame; not one thing alone, but all things. Flesh and a fool about it. blood are good for nothing but stealing, murdering, robbing, cursing and blaspheming. Therefore this is a highest patriarchs, together with his brothers; but Godgross, carnal example, but as comforting as one in lets them all sink, that they are stuck in the dirt, betrayScripture, even though flesh and blood turns up its nose and sell their blood and flesh, grieve the old, miserableat it and considers it shameful to hear.

father so hard. Moses is not ashamed to revile his 006 But what shall we say to Tamar, his cord? She knew that he was her brother-in-law, so how does she insist before God that she is doing this on purpose, and gives him

1) "so" is missing in the Jena.

Cause to sin, is not afraid of the friendship, that she had his sons? For it was forbidden that the cord and the brother-in-law should not touch each other; therefore he did not want to recognize her or have her as his wife after that. Summa, she also acted like a whore, although she put on an appearance and wanted to adorn it. Her first husband, Ger, was so mischievous that God did not let him live long. Then she took the other, who was also an arch-rogue, robbing her of the fruit. The third son [Sela] is now young, and the father was afraid that he would die too if he took her. But she knew that the son was also due to her. So far she was right and had a good conscience; but when she saw that he had given him another wife, she used deceit and made herself believe that he did not know her. That was deceit, and a. Harlotry.

(7) So they must be allowed to remain flesh and blood, and their works must be held in low esteem, even if they have done evil, (1) but God's grace must be seen in them. They are both in great sins. He does it in the opinion that she is a whore; but she, that he is her sister. That was even harder; still God gifted them with two sons, and Perez remains in the line of Christ. This must be read gloriously in the Gospel in all the world, and sing and say of fornication. Therefore, we also want to honestly confess that they have both been grossly deceived, even though God gave it to them; in addition, so that one sees how Christ came for the sake of sinners to help them, and is not at all ashamed that he has harlots and knaves in his family, and does not want to extinguish the rhyme; so we also have to let it stand.

(8) But this does not give room to those who say, "Now I will do what I desire. God can indeed see through the fingers of those who fall from the infirmity of flesh and blood, but He will not suffer willfulness and defiance.

(9) Further, we see that the law of Moses is very old, but it was changed again by Moses; when a brother died without an heir, the next brother or friend was guilty.

to take the wife, and to raise him: seed [Deut. 25, 5.] [It] has been an old custom, perhaps arisen from Adam. Thus one reads of the Ruth, which took the Boaz; because he was her after-husband 2) [Ruth 4, 10.].

But it was a strange, difficult law, and must have been pious people who could have passed it. Therefore we read that the kings and lords have had many wives, the more part because they died to them. [It was also difficult and hard for the wives, that they had to go to their closest friends, and often had to be Cinderellas.

There is nothing else special in this chapter, except the main part, that God allows such shameful histories to be written, and yet in them he presents such a noble, comforting doctrine of his grace and goodness, to prove his miracles even in sins. For he is the God who makes life out of death, pious people out of sinners, and wins the best out of that which is 3) lost.

012 Now if the years should be reckoned, Judah was yet a young man when he did commit adultery, that is, soon after Joseph was sold, who was but seventeen years old; [he] also might have been at variance with the brethren for the same iniquity, and have smitten himself from them among the strange Canaanites; will not have been much above eighteen years old when he took the wife. For he had three sons who are manly; so the wife must also have been eighteen or twenty years old when he slept with her. This can be taken off if one reckons back according to what Moses writes afterwards [Cap. 41, 46] that Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh. I say this so that one may see how fine the government was at that time, that the young people were soon given in marriage, so that the more fornication remained; although it still helped as much as it could. Finally, there are two children, as they are born, which belongs to the secret interpretation, which we will seek.

13. the woman's name is Tamar, and she is called

2) Nachmann = the second man after the first died.

3) "so" is missing in the Erlanger.

1) Erlanger: are.

in German, a palm tree. Now under other kind of the tree is that it carries sweet fruits, which one calls dates; so the wood has before other trees the kind, if one makes beams from it, and weights them, then it bends upward against the load; the more one presses it, the more it wants over itself. Now in this history is meant the whole mystery and essence, which is called the Gospel and Law of God. For I have said that God especially chose the Jewish people, which is called the synagogue, the ancient church and Christianity, which was the bride of His Son and His own people; to whom He gave the law and the priesthood, to teach and instruct the people daily, that they might be godly. For thus we have heard above [Cap. 25, § 26. Cap. 31, § 33 ff. Cap. 19, § 23] that the women Rebekah, Leah, Rachel, item the two daughters of Lot, were all figures and models of the people of God, who were governed by his word; thus, that the seed, by which they became pregnant, is nothing else than God's word, which the soul receives through faith, and brings forth fruits of love.

014 Now therefore it is written here, that she taketh two brethren to wife, but the third she taketh not. Then she comes to Judah her brother-in-law in the guise of a harlot. So it goes among the people until this day. The first man was wicked in the sight of the Lord, therefore he slew him; these are the preachers and teachers, who are desperate wretches, together with the people, who sin openly against the law, and keep it not.

(15) But the other, which lieth with it, and yet corrupteth it, that it be not fruitful, nor able to conceive; these are they which also have the ministry of preaching among the Jews with appearance, but it is not rightly conducted, but is corrupted, that no fruit cometh of it. These are the hypocrites, who have the right text of God's word and the law, but do not conduct it in such a way that it is better, but let it fall, and mix it under the ground, forcing it on our work. For if one wants to preach the law rightly, one must do it in such a way that it does not teach works, but recognizes what we lack; as Paul says [Rom. 3:20], "Through the law comes knowledge of sin," and that one leads the consciences away from it to the

Knowledge of grace. That would be the right way to lead the seed, from which the souls become fruitful. Those who do not lead in this way, but in the way and work of men, never come to grace, nor to fruit. Therefore this is called Onan, that is, a laborious sermon, so that only the consciences are weighed down and tortured, and no one can enjoy.

16 These two kinds of people are always found among the people, either those who take the law to the wind and even give themselves into the entrenchment, or those who only lead it for the sake of appearances. The former are the nefarious, public scoundrels, the latter are hypocrites and works saints; both are put to death, that is, condemned and rejected by God.

017 And it came to pass, that the third son should take the wife; but she could not have him. Then she went and disguised herself as a harlot, and received from the brother-in-law without his knowledge and will. God has written this so that it may be seen. If it were a secular, pagan history, it would be called shameful and whorish, but because it is God's, it should be held in all honor. We have heard above [Cap. 27, 1. 23. We also heard how Isaac, being old and blind, was deceived, that he lacked the blessing of his first son, and struck Jacob through ignorance; which means that when God let the gospel go out, it happened in such a strange way that those who got the gospel did not miss it, and again they thought that the great men and priesthoods, the wise and holy ones, should get hold of it, so they fell away, and the fishermen, bad, lowly people, came and preached it to the world. It is not that God did not know or provide that it should happen this way, but that it seems to our eyes as if it were happening accidentally, because He poses Himself so strangely that one thinks He wants to do this, but He does something else and lets it happen as if He did not know.

18. because she 1) meets Judah here as roughly as he thinks she is a harlot, means that the gospel among the people hits only those who think they are sinners; when Peter spoke in the ships [Luc. 5, 8.]: "Lord, go out from me, because I am a sinful

1) "sie" is missing in the original edition, in the Wittenberg and in the Jena.

Man." And, as Christ says [Matth. 21, 31.], "Harlots and knaves will precede you in the kingdom of heaven." Then God comes, and gives the gospel, and makes the people fruitful, who before had no fruit, that they now bear twins. So the Jews are deceived; because those who should have it did not want to grasp and accept it, the others come, who know nothing about it, and think that it is another woman. So then it seems in all God's works, so that it seems to us and is in everyone's eyes, as if God had erred and given the gospel to those to whom it does not belong.

19. further the text speaks: He no longer took them to himself, nor recognized them; that is, Christ gave leave to the synagogue, that they should no longer keep their law and customs, and is now free. He has now brought out two sons, so he leaves it at that. And she proves it by the sign which he gave her, that she had conceived by him; that is, if you look at the Scriptures, you will see that it is so, and find the signs that it should be so. Thus she remains in honor, and proves that God is such a Lord, who gives his grace to poor wretches and sinners, and rejects the great saints.

(20) But that a rift arises in the body above the birth, and he who was last comes out first, and again the first comes out last, is again the same figure. The Jews, who were to be the first, put forth their hand at the first, as if they would do it and leave those behind; but when it comes to the meeting, the works remain behind, and faith comes forward; so that the other son does not come forth with the hand alone, but with his whole being. Therefore the summa is: The faithful must appear to be the last, and yet they are truly the first; as we have also seen enough above [Cap. 25, § 37 ff.] in Esau's and Jacob's history.

(21) The fact that each one had a red thread around his hand is the figure that all the saints of works are bloodthirsty and desolate, and enemies of those who have the right faith. Thus, in this figure we have pictured what God works through the gospel in His people, how He makes the first from the last and lets the others go, and that He does not want to suffer the preachers who lead God's word to works and corrupt it, but who let it remain pure in faith, so that it can produce fruit.

## The Thirty-Ninth Chapter.

Joseph was brought down into Egypt, and Potiphar, an Egyptian man, Pharaoh's chamberlain, bought him of the Ishmaelites, which brought him down. And the Lord was with Joseph, and he became a happy man, and was in the house of his lord the Egyptian. And his lord saw that the LORD was with him: for all that he did the LORD prospered through him, so that he found favor in the sight of his lord, and became his servant; who set him over his house, and all that he had he put under his hands. And from the time that he set him over his house, and over all his goods, the LORD blessed the house of Egypt for Joseph's sake, and was the blessing of the LORD in all that he had, both at home, and in the field. Therefore he left it all under Joseph's

hands what he had; and receive nothing of it, but only the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was beautiful and comely in countenance. And it came to pass after this, that his lord's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph, saying, Sleep with me. But he refused, and said unto her, Behold, my lord knoweth not what is in the house, and all that he hath he hath put under my hand, and hath nothing so great in the house, which he hath hid from me, without thee, because thou art his wife. How then should I do so great an evil, and sin against God? But she spoke such words against Joseph daily; but he did not obey her, that he should sleep near her, nor be about her. It

1) "near" is missing in the Erlanger.

And it came to pass one day, that Joseph went into the house to do his business, and there was none of the servants of the house with him. And she caught him by his garment, and said, Sleep with me. But he left the garment in her hand, and fled, and ran out of the house. And when she saw that he left his garment in her hand, and fled out, she called unto the servants of the house, and said unto them, Behold, he hath brought in the Hebrew man to put us to shame; and he came in unto me, and would have slept with me: but I cried with a loud voice; and when he heard that I made a noise, and cried, he left his garment with me, and fled, and ran out. And she laid his garment beside him until his master came home, and said unto him the same words, saying, The Hebrew servant, whom thou hast brought in unto us, came in unto me, and would have put me to shame. But when I made a noise and cried out, he left his garment with me, and fled out. And when his lord heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, Thus hath thy Hebrew servant done unto me, he was very wroth. Then his lord took him, and put him in the prison, where the king's prisoners lay within; and he lay there in the prison. But the LORD was with him, and showed him favor, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison, that he should put all the prisoners in the prison under his hand, that all things which were done should be done by him. For the governor of the prison saw that the Lord was with him in all that was under his hand, and that the Lord caused all that he did to prosper.

. In the seventh and thirtieth chapter, v. 4 ff., we heard how Joseph was envied and hated by his brothers, and was sold to the stranger and brought to Egypt. Here Moses returns to the story of how he fared in Egypt. There are one or three chapters attached to each other, which we will discuss according to the story before we show the interpretation in it. Thus it is told how he was innocently hated by his brothers and sold like cattle under the hands of strangers, abandoned by all friends and acquaintances. What misery he had suffered there,

not everything is described, but only a piece or two is shown, to teach us and comfort us, how God drives with his saints so miraculously.

We have heard how God promised the pious Jacob to multiply his seed like the sand on the seashore, but the longer he does so, the stranger he acts, as if he had never thought or spoken of it, taking his dearest son from his right mother, who was now also dead, and now Joseph, and then Benjamin, whom he considers to be the right heirs, and it is not possible that they should not be dear to him. Therefore he is ever a strange God, attacking it so beyond all way and reason that no one could believe it. If he had said beforehand how it should come about, it would still have been believable; now he does not let him believe or know otherwise, because he is strangled and torn, let alone that he should believe how he should become the supreme ruler in Egypt.

How then must he do to him? He must keep God's word, and thus think: Even if all my sons were dead, God remains true that my seed should become like the stars in the sky and the sand on the sea. So he had to go straight against the stream and dampen all reason, even though it did not go sweetly for him, but rather became heavy and bitter, as the text also reports.

4 Thus God lets His saints pass over nature, and yet nature remains in them, namely, the great love and inclination for the Son; but He attacks them, and tries whether He wants to follow the inclination (which He Himself gave and does not reject) more than His word. It is all a good thing and God's business, nor does he want to do it with us in such a way that he sees and we become aware whether we prefer him to his goods; and thus strengthens his own, so that they can hold on to the word alone, should they immediately let go of all his goods.

(5) For this reason I say again, that we should not make sticks of the saints, but let man and nature remain as they are; as it hurts our nature when one loses a good friend; item, when we hunger and thirst, or when we are to die. How-

That is why it is good for us when we are healthy, have rest and enough. What can we do against it, because it is planted in us and is all of God? But it is important not to abandon God's word for the sake of it, and to be more attached to creatures than to Himself.

(6) Now then, behold how he willed to make Joseph a good man, by whom the land and the people, and especially his people, father and brethren, should be helped, that he might become a paragon among all the brethren; but before he comes to this, none is so well tried as he, that is, all thirteen years, from the seventeenth year even unto the thirtieth. In this way God wants to teach us how he is the right father, and our suggestions and thoughts are of no value. For then he tears the father and son from each other with great heartache and pain. The father is deprived of the son, the son comes to a country where he does not know the language, not to mention that he should know a friend to whom he would feel good. Above this, when God nevertheless provides him with a gracious master, since he has hardly enough food, he comes into another misery and distress for the sake of his wife, and lies innocently imprisoned for more than two years, when he had served his master most faithfully and had brought him much piety and benefit.

(7) There you see both God's wisdom and guidance, and His noble and tender gifts shining in Joseph. God's wisdom and care in that he is such a stranger to the father and son, and yet provides for him in such a way that the father could not provide for him with all his wealth, and puts him back before the father in such glory that he could never have wished for it. Is it not strange that he is sold so shamefully in his seventeenth year, that he is put into captivity, and that for thirteen years he is supposed to become the neighbor of the greatest king in Egypt, when he is now forgotten by all his brothers and almost also by his father? If we had no more history, should we ever learn from it what kind of a regiment God leads in the world, so strange that where one thinks it is the devil and death, there he is the closest.

8. he thinks he is abandoned by god and by the world, so his god is waiting, and has a

Eye on him. [He lets him be sold and captured, as if there were no God with him, but when the time comes, he sets him in the highest honor; so that the wise man in the Book of Wisdom says of him [Cap. 10, 13. 14.The wisdom, that is, the word of God, did not leave the pious Joseph when he was sold, and rescued him from sin, and was with him in the pit and in the bands, until it brought him the royal scepter, and went with him into the hands of the enemy, even into the dungeon, until he came out, and his wisdom broke forth, and he became ruler over Egypt.

(9) So the fathers looked highly upon this history, and marveled at the wisdom of God, when David also said in the 105th Psalm, vv. 16-21: "He caused a flood to come into the land, and took away all the supply of bread. He sent a man before them, and Joseph was sold as a servant. They forced his feet into a stick, iron went through his soul, until the time that 1) his word came, and the speech of the LORD ran through him. Then the king sent, and let him go, and the 2) lord over nations let him go out. He set him lord over his house, ruler over all his goods." It was hidden what God wanted to do with him; but that he should have in mind to save so much land and people through his misery, no one thought. But God gave him wisdom in his heart, so that he became a mighty ruler who could be useful to many people. If he had stayed at home, he would have remained nothing more than a shepherd.

(10) If, then, he is miserable and alone in a foreign land, and the eleven brothers are at home and think they are well off, and he must remain a miserable, captive servant all his days, God will turn him around and make him such a lord, as he had dreamed, that not only his brothers will be subject to him and fall at his feet, but all the land and all the people, except the king. Behold, this is what he who trusts in God and endures Him does. It is not with father and mother that they have given us

1) Jenaer: da.  
2) "the" is missing in the Erlanger.  
3) Erlanger: es.

(although one should be obedient to them); but the true Father is God alone, who helps out of all hardships and miseries to the highest honor. So that this example is quite an example and great stimulus to faith. Wherever I go, into the Father's house or into misery and foreign lands, that I may know that God is also at home there, especially where I can have no comfort and confidence in people, and am completely abandoned.

(11) I would also like, if it were granted to me, to be and remain with such a father as Jacob was, so that I could say, "I am ever with a godly father who has God's word, where the Holy Spirit dwells with God's fullness and blessing; but God casts out the son and leads him away into the land where only the devil dwells and reigns, and there is nothing of God that he must risk life and limb. This must have hurt him mightily, especially because he came from his father so young. But he learned from him and grasped the word he preached, as God had promised him that Christ would come from him; nevertheless, he had to think of him: Nevertheless I will not lose the God who is here, he will also be with me elsewhere; although it has hurt him. For flesh and blood will also have stirred, that sometimes his eyes have gone over with misery.

(12) Surely we should learn this once, if unbelief did not have the heartache and all the misfortune. What did the good Joseph have when he was taken away? They stripped him of his garment and left him not a penny, selling him into such a far country, where he, with hard work and for a long time, earned no more than plenty and abundance, and pious to the Lord. So God let him go and suffer grief for a long time, but not die of hunger. But when the time is over, he gives the whole land into his hand, so that they all have to be fed by him, and he gets so much power that everything he does is done. He has obtained all this by persevering 1) in faith and patience with God. 2) So God did

1) "Stop" is missing in the Wittenberg and Jena.  
2) The words: "that he... has endured" are missing in the Erlanger.

still with us, if we could so persevere in faith. There is no other God now than the one who reigned there, we have the same almighty Father, and the same word that he would not leave us. Now this is a piece of the challenge that he overcame.

(13) The second time, when he had come into favor, and was a little well, and was set over his lord's house (though he got not much more than the bread), a new temptation came on the right side. Then behold, what an excellent spirit he has, and a strange, high virtue of virginity, that the woman in the house, the king's chamberlain, wins him over and urges him to sleep with her. What could he not have achieved and acquired from her, that she would have secretly given him and made wonderful good days? The text says: She did not offer it to him once, but every day.

This is a great virtue, that he, who has so much space, time, place, person, and in addition stimulation, and could win good and grace, nevertheless abstains; in addition, he is a young journeyman, and fresh-blooded, that nature would not be able to stand against such daily stimuli and lust, because youth itself is hot.

015 But he answered her nothing else, but this: "My lord knoweth not what is in the house, and all that he hath he hath put under my hand, and hath nothing so great in the house that he hath hid from me without thee. This must have been a faithful servant, who takes care of all his master's goods, so faithfully that the master lets him do everything, and does not ask what he has in the house, even if he wants to disgrace his wife, so that he does not know anything about it; nor does he say, "You are a wife, I am a servant, and I owe allegiance to my master, which I will keep; and he continues: "How should I do such a great evil, and sin against God? Behold, what a great spirit, how high he sets God's commandment above all that is on earth, and leaves nothing so dear to him as to do against it, even though he is young and so incited.

3) Horny - persistently ask.



(16) Now where are our monks and nuns who boast of their chastity? See if they will not all be put to shame, because he has so much room and favor, the woman in the house, who lies and drives him daily, which is a heavy and annual challenge to a young man: he still remains chaste until his thirtieth year, that he touches no woman, has only God before his eyes, and the faithfulness of his Lord. [There is a pious, upright, honest spirit in him, which nevertheless has such great cause for fornication, and is driven without ceasing; which also would melt iron, as St. Jerome says, and would soon be provided that one would fall, even if he had no evil will, and had kept chastity for a long time. But he is nevertheless careful not to be around her, nor to lie next to her in the house, chamber, or closet. For this also belongs to the keeping of chastity, as St. Paul teaches when he says: "Flee fornication.

(17) It is not easy to overcome, so flee far from it; though you almost chasten yourself and hold fast, it is still dangerous when husband and wife are with each other; for flesh and blood remain flesh and blood. Therefore nothing is safer than to be far from each other, or to remain with each other forever, otherwise it will hardly come off pure. Therefore he would not be with her, nor deal with her, that he should neither see nor hear of her. But what happened? She was lying in wait and caught him once when no one was around. For it is a miserable plague, the more one wants to resist it, the more heated it becomes. This was too close to the boy and was a hard blow; but the spirit became brave and strong in him, so that he overcame it, and when he could not get away any other way, he left his coat behind. The Holy Spirit does not need so many words about it for nothing, knowing well that it is a strange, great example; for flesh and blood are furious and senseless in this challenge, especially when they are with each other.

(18) So when he jumped away and fled from her, and she sees that he does not want to do badly, she becomes furious and rages, and thinks to deprive him of life. So it goes, the whore's evil cannot be atoned for, unless another evil comes into it, as the poet says:

Cedit<sup>1</sup>) amor furii [Fury takes the place of love. Because it sees that it is despised and cannot gain its courage, the mind turns around and becomes mad and foolish. These are the fruits of flesh and blood, if God does not control and prevent them. Earlier she wanted to devour him for love, now she wants to strangle him for anger; so think: He wants to despise you, so now you have attacked him, he will reproach you and put you to shame that you lust after him, 2) and will reward you like a whore. Therefore she attacks him on the other side, becomes hostile to him, and brings this complaint before the Lord: "This is how you love me, this is what you mean to me, you have brought in the Hebrew servant to disgrace me.

This is a rather devilish little piece. She does not believe that God is also with him, thinks she wants to adorn and protect him, and deprive him of honor, life and limb. God is silent, however, and lets the boy be led to prison without guilt, most abominably, as an adulterer; but she passes with honor, no one excuses or helps him. Should it not have hurt him that he was so shamefully wronged that his heart might have wept? But he kept silent and commanded God. But the lamentation often struck him that it was not enough that he had come from the Father, but had to go further into misery and perish innocently for the sake of the wicked whore. This is how low God lets His saints get when He wants to lift them up.

20 O! who could grasp the examples that he is so gracious and good, when he attacks us so horribly. Joseph does not feel it yet either, but hopes that God will not let him. But as one looks at it, it is an unkind game, but basically such a great grace that he comes to honor afterwards. Who also knows how the harlot fared; the Holy Spirit does not write it, for he does not delight in misfortune. But this is what he indicates, that God means it in the best possible way, when he destroys us in the most disgraceful way. The world cannot believe this, for it is contrary to all.

1) Erlanger: dlnsvit.

2) to lust after someone ---- in a lewd way. (This meaning is missing in Dietz.)

Sense. But he alone binds the faith, if he can hold on, after that he helps in the future so strongly that [it] would be impossible to think of a man.

(21) For if Joseph had been given to wish, he would have wished that he might come out of the prison in which he was innocently laid, and return home to his father. Oh! what a small, narrow and weak prayer this was in the sight of God, that he should have to serve two more years even for this; for he wanted to give him much greater things. But that he should become such a lord in Egypt, and in addition get his father and mother again, he could never have thought. This is what Paul says [Rom. 8:26]: "We know not what we ought to ask, as it is fitting, but the Spirit himself represents us mightily with groanings unspeakable." If God would give us what we ask, only His abundant goodness would prevent it, so that He would not have given Joseph more than he had asked, would have been much too little, that He could not have proved His miracle. Therefore, in misery, we are to give GOD space, time and place, and not [be]stmmen as we would like. For we are fools, and know not what to ask. But if we keep still, and give him home according to his pleasure, we shall know how abundantly he is able to reward. But nature can

If he does not love you, he will not do so; but if he does not love you, he will give to you, but it is not good for you.

(22) This he preacheth and writeth unto us, that we may know his way. As the fourth Psalm, v. 4, says: "Know ye that the Lord leadeth his saints in a strange way. As if to say, "It is true that when we cry out to him, he hears us as often as we cry out and ask; but he does it so strangely that no one can understand it; just as Joseph would like to be free from his misery, he cries out and begs for help, and is heard so soon. But how strange it is: he hopes to get out soon, but it takes about two years. Is that answered? Yes, it is called miraculously answered. But it is not to be suggested to him, but he wants to be a master, and so make it that one blesses himself with miracles, and says: "If I had never believed that it would happen like this, so that you would jump for joy and have to confess that you were not only heard, but miraculously heard. It would be necessary for us to grasp this once, because the time is present every day when we need not doubt that we have certainly been heard; but how it is to happen, and how he will bring it forth, is to be known to him alone, so that he can do it in such a way that we must say, Praise God that it has not gone according to our will.

## The fortieth chapter.

vv. 1-23 And it came to pass afterward, that the steward of the king's taverns in Egypt, and the steward of the bakers, sinned against their lord the king of Egypt. Pharaoh was angry with them and sent them to the chamberlain's house, to the prison where Joseph was imprisoned. And the chamberlain set Joseph over them to minister unto them: and they sat in the prison some days. And in one night they dreamed, the baker and the innkeeper, each of them a dream of his own, and each dream had its meaning. In the morning Joseph went to

And when he came in unto them, and saw that they were sore, he asked them, saying, Why are ye so evil this day? They answered: We have dreamed it, and have no one to interpret it to us. Joseph said, "Interpretation belongs to God, but tell me. Then the chief of the taverns told Joseph his dream, and said unto him, I dreamed that there was a vine before me, which had three branches, and it budded, and grew, and blossomed, and the grapes thereof were ripe: and I had Pharaoh's cup in mine hand, and took the berries, and crushed them in the cup, and gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. Joseph

said unto him, This is the meaning thereof: Three vines are three days. For three days Pharaoh shall lift up thy head, and restore thee to thy office, and thou shalt put the cup into his hand after the former manner, when thou wast his minister. But remember me, if it be well with thee, and do mercy unto me, that thou remember Pharaoh, that he bring me out of this house. For I was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews by stealth, and I have done nothing here, that they have set me up. When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Joseph, "I also dreamed 1) that I was carrying three woven baskets on my head, and in the uppermost basket all kinds of baked food for Pharaoh, and the birds were eating from the basket on my head. And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation: Three baskets are three days, and after three days Pharaoh shall lift up thy head, and shall hang thee on the gallows, and the birds shall eat of thy flesh. And it came to pass on the third day, that Pharaoh celebrated his jubilee, and he made a feast to all his servants, and lifted up the head of the chief paster, and the head of the chief baker among his servants, and set the chief paster again by his pottage, to pass the cup into Pharaoh's hand. But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had told them. But the chief baker remembered not Joseph, but forgot him.

Now Moses wants to write how it happened that Joseph was set free again, but so that God let him remain captive for two more years. Now here something is to be said of dreams, because Joseph interpreted two dreams, and thereby enjoyed that he became free.

(2) But first, it can be seen here that there was not so much blindness in the land that they did not know about God. As also in the previous chapter, v. 3, it is indicated that Potiphar, Joseph's master, also knew God, because he clearly says: "He saw that the Lord was with him, and blessed him for his sake" 2c. This must have been a great, high knowledge, because

it is not a small mind. He who knows that God makes his goods grow and increase, and gives blessings, knows also that God is a creator of heaven and earth, and governs all things. Especially it must have been something, because the Scriptures do not report that they had and practiced idolatry; however, it may have been among them. As we have so far retained so much knowledge that there is a God who created heaven and earth and gives everything that grows there; although this same knowledge has been blinded by various idolatries and false trust and sects, by which this has been darkened, so that we have not remained on the right path.

(3) For although we have believed that it is the true God who creates all things, yet we have failed to hit the mark when we say, "Here is God. For if one wants to attach and bind him to time, person and place, and paint him with a color that he is so and so minded, as we think, then one has failed; as if one wants to serve him otherwise or in such a way, to do this or that work that should please him; as the whole ulcer has been under the pabstacy of orders, rules and doctrines of men. There the devil comes instead of God; otherwise the common knowledge of the right God remains.

For this is also true, which St. Paul says [Rom. 1, 19], that God has revealed to all the world that they must know that there is a God, has been hidden from the beginning of the world until the end. Which one also notices that if the pagans had not had knowledge of God, they would not have called their idols God. That there must be a God, they knew, and it was right; but if they said, "This is God," they were lacking as soon as they said it. But they could not lack if they did not know that God was. Now a higher knowledge is necessary, so that one may meet him rightly and not miss him. For where he is to be rightly met, there must be his word to teach us; our reason and wisdom will slowly find it.

Now we have to see the dreams here. Just now [Cap. 37, 7. 9.] we also heard about Joseph's dreams, which he told his brothers.

1) "also" is missing in the Erlanger.

in which he foreshadowed the history that would follow, how his brothers would fall under his feet and become his subjects. Thus I have otherwise said how one should believe dreams; but here you see a masterpiece, as the Holy Spirit indicates, how it is not certain to rely on dreams, because here two identical dreams are described, so that reason would have to say that they must also have the same interpretation, when Joseph interprets them contrary to each other. For just as in the dream of the gift-giver three bunches of grapes indicate three days, and he puts the cup into Pharaoh's hand, indicating that he should return to the gift-giving office, so also the baker's dream, that he presents three baskets of baked bread to Pharaoh, should indicate so much that he would be placed in his office after three days. Now the spirit comes in and immediately indicates the contradiction.

Now why is this written? Precisely because one should not rely on dreams. For I have said: It may happen that God gives a man a dream that is true, and so it happens as the dream sounds. As one reads of many saints, and He Himself says in the fourth book of Moses [Cap. 12, 6.], "If any man be a prophet of the LORD, I will make Myself known unto him in a vision, or in a dream will I speak unto thee." And in Joel [Cap. 3, 1.], "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your elders shall dream dreams."

7 But here the gloss is in the text, how it should be, namely, when Joseph speaks: "Interpretation belongs to God. Dreams or not, interpretation does not belong to you; to whom he gives a dream, and to whom he talks, he also gives a certain understanding to interpret, as he should. But with it the presumption is cancelled, that nobody interprets also right, divine dreams himself. Let one dream what one wants; if it is a right dream that God wants, he will interpret it well, either through himself or through a man, so that you feel it in your heart that it is a right dream; if he does it without means, he will make your conscience catch it, so that it is right.

8 So it is written of a pagan king, Attila, when the bishop Paulinus goes

When he was a prisoner and his gardener, he had a dream at night that he was standing in court and three men were judging him. Then he had Paulinus come before him, and when he looked at him, he was frightened and said, "At night I had a dream that three of them were judging me, and behold, this was the one. Then he became so stupid and despondent that he fell back and died soon after. Behold, this was a true dream, though he himself knew it not; for it passed through his heart, that he felt it as a ray.

9 One reads the same about Monica, St. Augustine's mother, and others. Thus, if they are right, they are such that God Himself interprets them, without means, or by means that the conscience feels good. Therefore, there is a great difference between dreams and interpretation. Do not interpret any of them yourself, for if you doubt and doubt that it is due to your conscience, do not do it. Either the dream is not right, or God has not interpreted it. If he interprets it, you will soon feel whether it is right. So Joseph here interprets it to the prisoners with certainty and without wavering, so that they feel it and accept it.

(10) Therefore they have erred far, who have taken from this text to write books and to interpret dreams: as the fool that made a book *de somniis Danielis*; have given some rules upon it, what this or that interpret. But it is in vain. It cannot be grasped, it is all false, also forbidden in the Law of Moses [Deut. 13, 3]: "You shall not pay attention to dreams", that is, you shall not subject yourself 2) to interpret dreams with certainty, but what true dreams are, God Himself shall interpret them. False dreams are like false doctrine, they get a semblance that one thinks it is something, but it is uncertain and deceitful. But God's word makes the heart sure. So it is also with faith and false conceit, or one's own worship. The former makes certain, the latter 3) remains uncertain. Therefore, let dreams remain dreams if God does not interpret them.

11 Now notice, because Joseph has the two

1) "not" is missing in the editions, but the Jena one has it as a conjecture in the margin.

2) "you" is missing in the Erlanger.

3) In the issues: this.

The same dreams are interpreted so differently (although the baker thought, because he interpreted the gift's dream so well, that his interpretation should also sound like this), when one acts in divine matters, that it is not valid to imitate. For this is what the devil has always done from the beginning of the world, that he wants to be God's monkey and imitate what he sees of him. When God commanded [Ex. 25:3-9] to build a tabernacle, and to sacrifice and burn incense there, he went there, and where he saw a beautiful green forest, garden or mountain, he also offered sacrifices and burned incense [Jer. 3:6], so that his worship had to be more valid than what God had commanded. So, in our times, because Christ commanded [Luc. 18, 1. 21, 36.] to pray without ceasing, the devil is there, and founds all the corners full of churches, where people whistle and howl day and night; and of monkey play innumerable many more. Item, one finds some who imitate the holy cross; because Christ commanded [Matth. 16, 24.] that one should renounce him himself and carry his cross, they go to and seek suffering for themselves, and put them through much torture themselves, and want to perform great miracles, thereby corrupting body and soul.

The world is full of such imitations everywhere, so that no greater deception and blasphemy can be found. In opposition to this, God here lets the one start with his hope that he thinks it should mean just as much, and leaves the interpretation to him alone.

Dream as you like, no one will interpret it correctly, but you. Before they come to pass, you may well think, 1) but think besides, that it is nothing. God does reveal things to some through dreams, but it is not up to us to understand them; if we interpret them ourselves, they will certainly be lacking. Therefore, beware of omens and imitations.

(13) So now we have a piece of Joseph's history, how he, for the sake of chastity, was brought into fear and distress by the woman, and was thrown into prison, and yet God was there with him, and gave him a little comfort, that he obtained favor and favor with the chief master, that he did not put him in stocks, but let the prisoner serve and care for him.

(14) Then we have seen how rich he was in faith and the words of God, that he remained so steadfast in chastity, when he might have had a goodly cover of chastity to do as he pleased, and had many gifts for it. Which was a noble virtue and high spirit, who was not only powerful in his flesh, but also in woman and the devil himself. In addition, God enlightened him and gave him a prophetic spirit to interpret dreams, which also caused him to be lifted up by Pharaoh, so that it is shown everywhere how God does not leave His saints, even if He withdraws His hand a little and lets them be rejected and oppressed.

1) ohmen == to make assumptions.

## The Forty-First Chapter.

After two years Pharaoh had a dream that he was standing by the water and saw seven of his oxen coming up out of the water, all of them skinny, walking by the pasture in the meadow. After these he saw other seven oxen coming up out of the water, which were shapeless and lean in body, and they stood beside the oxen on the bank by the water, and the shapeless and lean oxen ate the beautiful and fat oxen. Then Pharaoh awoke. And he fell asleep again, and dreamed again, and saw,

Seven ears of corn grew from one stalk, full and good; then he saw seven thin and scorched ears spring up, and the seven lean ears swallowed up the seven large and full ears. Then Pharaoh awoke and saw that it was a dream. And when morning came, his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called all the diviners of Egypt, and all the wise men, and told them his dream. But there was none who could interpret it to Pharaoh. Then the chief innkeeper spoke to Pharaoh, saying:

Today I remember my sin; when Pharaoh was angry with his servants and put me in prison with the chief baker in the court master's house, we both had a dream in one night, each of us according to his own dream. There was with us a Hebrew youth, the court master's servant, to whom we told it, and he interpreted our dreams to each of us according to his dream. And as he interpreted to us, so it came to pass; for I am restored to my office, and he is hanged. Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and let him out of the hole in haste. And he was clothed, and changed his garments, and came in unto Pharaoh. Then Pharaoh said to him, "I have dreamed a dream, and there is no one to interpret it. But I have heard thee say, when thou hearest a dream, interpret it. Joseph answered Pharaoh and said, "God will make Pharaoh happy, even without me. Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I dreamed that I was standing on the shore by the water, and I saw seven oxen come up out of the water, fat and thin, and going to pasture in the meadow. And after them I saw other seven oxen come out, thin and almost shapeless, lean in body. I have not seen such rough ones in all the land of Egypt. And the seven lean and shapeless oxen ate up the seven first fat oxen. And when they had eaten them, it was not known in them that they had eaten them, and they were without form, as before. Then I awoke. And again in my dream I saw seven ears of corn growing on one stalk, full and good. After that, seven thin, scorched ears of corn came up. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven good ears. And I have told my diviners, but they tell me nothing of it. Joseph answered Pharaoh: Both dreams of Pharaoh are the same, God tells Pharaoh what he is doing. The seven good oxen are seven years, and the seven good ears are also the seven years. It is one dream. The seven lean oxen and unshaped, which came up after those, these are seven years, and the seven lean ears and scorched, these will be seven years of theurung. Now this is what I said to Pharaoh,

God will show Pharaoh what he is doing. Behold, seven years shall come with great abundance throughout all the land of Egypt. And after them shall come seven years of trouble; and all such abundance shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt. And the flood will consume the land, so that no one will know about the abundance in the land before the time of trouble that comes afterward, because it will be almost heavy. But that Pharaoh dreamed another time means that such a thing is made by God, 1) and God will do it in haste. Now Pharaoh shall look for a wise and understanding man, whom he shall set over the land of Egypt, and shall appoint officers in the land, and take the fifth in the land of Egypt, in the seven years of plenty, and gather all the food of the good years that shall come, And they shall pour out corn under Pharaoh's power for food in the cities, and keep it, that food may be found ordained for the land in the seven precious years that shall come upon the land of Egypt, that the land perish not for hunger. The speech pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. And Pharaoh said to his servants: How can we find such a man in whom is the Spirit of God? And he said unto Joseph, Because God hath made all these things known unto thee, there is none so understanding and wise as thou. Thou shalt be over my house, and according to thy word shall all my people feed. But of the royal throne I will be more than thou. And said, Behold, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took his ring from his hand, and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in white silk, and put a chain of gold upon his neck, and made him ride in the other chariot, and proclaimed before him that they should bow the knee to him, whom he had set over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh: without thy will shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt. And called his name Zaphnath Paneah. 2) And he gave him a wife, Asnath the daughter of Poti-

1) to make ready, to prepare, to promote. In the Bible, that God will certainly and speedily do this.

2) Marginal gloss: Zaphnath Panea is Egyptian spoken, and still unaware what it is, without that, as much as one can feel, it is called, as one speaks in German: Der heimliche nächste Rath.

**Phera, the priest of On. So Joseph went out to see the land of Egypt. And he was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he departed from Pharaoh, and went through all the land of Egypt. And the land did so the seven rich years, and gathered all the meat of the seven years that was in the land of Egypt, and put it into the cities. Whatever food was growing in the fields of each city, they put into it. So Joseph piled up the grain in abundance, like sand on the seashore, so that he stopped counting it, for it could not be counted. And unto Joseph were born two sons, before the time of the theurung, which bare him Asnath the daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On. And he called the name of the first Manasseh: for God, said he, hath made me forget all my work, and all my father's house. The other he called Ephraim: for God, said he, hath made me to grow in the land of my affliction. And it came to pass, when the seven years of plenty were past in the land of Egypt, that the seven years of trouble began to come, which Joseph had spoken of. And there was a famine in all the land, but there was bread in all the land of Egypt. And when the land of Egypt was also famished, the people cried unto Pharaoh for bread. But Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph, and do whatever he tells you. And when the famine was over all the land, Joseph took up all that was with him, and sold it to the Egyptians. So the rioting took over in the land. And all the countries of Egypt came to buy of Joseph: for the spoilage prevailed in all the countries.**

(1) What I have said about the two dreams, the gift-giver's and the baker's, should also be understood here in Pharaoh's dream. When the time came for Joseph to come forth again, God sent him, without a second thought and unawares, to come up suddenly, not knowing how, so that it might ever be seen that all our things are in the hands of God alone, who creates and works as he wills, always coming before we think that it is all his goodness and grace. Joseph, the holy child of God, comes so shamefully from his father, but God is with him; I never thought that he would come to have a good, gracious master.

who gives him everything he has in the house and court. But when the wicked whore brings him into prison without his oversight, and [he] now has to go up again, he again knows nothing about it: that God's counsel always comes before us; but we are fools, we cannot judge ourselves in it, and yet we have to give it back to him. As this Joseph does, so he does again like a pious God and father, whose works and counsels are all salvation, happiness and grace, although it seems much different. Here, too, when he is in the deepest misfortune, he soon comes to the highest happiness. For he did not think otherwise, because now he would be forgotten, because the chief innkeeper had forgotten him, and now he had sat two whole years after him.

2 People often ask how far happiness and unhappiness are from each other. Then all reason must say that it does not know; it is also true that one cannot know, it must be believed. For there lies Joseph, as the 1) now should remain eternally imprisoned as an adulterer, but before God it is already decided that all knees must bow before him. So faith sees how close they are to each other. Just as life and death are closed in on each other, that life is in death, that [it] could not be closer, yes, is already one thing: so again there is unhappiness in the greatest happiness, in poverty and misery riches, pleasure and joy. Again, in the safest life, death is in a moment. Thus, when we are to die, we go to death as if we were to lie dead forever: the last day comes to us in a flash, that we say: Now I will live forever. This is what faith can grasp, that good and evil, life and death, are all intertwined.

God shows us this by many examples, how he is the Lord, who throws behind and lifts up, and everything must go according to his counsel, so that we do nothing of ourselves, but give everything to him to rule, of which almost all the Psalms of David sing, as [Ps. 94:11]: "The Lord knows the thoughts of men, that they are nothing"; as also everyone experiences in his life.

- 1) Erlanger: er.
- 2) "we" is missing in the Erlanger.
- 3) enhinter (enhinder) - back.

and must confess that nothing goes out according to our advice and suggestion. Now then, how God exalted Joseph and made him like the king by the interpretation of his dreams.

**V. 37. ff. The speech pleased Pharaoh and all his servants well. And Pharaoh said to his servants: How can we find such a man in whom is the Spirit of God? And he said unto Joseph, Because God hath made all these things known unto thee. 2c.**

4 But there you see a piece of God's works. The Jews thought that God alone was with them; but there He shows that He rules and provides for the whole world, as Joseph himself confesses from the Spirit: "God shows Pharaoh what He will do." Therefore, this Pharaoh must not be a bad man in the sight of God, but must have had right understanding and faith from God, because He Himself revealed this to him, and to no one else. For the text clearly says that he knew God, because he honors Him in Joseph and confesses that he has God's spirit, which no unbeliever would have done.

5 So we have also heard above [Cap. 20, § 21] in Abraham's history, from the king Abimelech, that there were many people who had right faith and understanding, even if they were not from the line and line of Abraham, who although it is promised, other people are not excluded, as Paul Rom. 3, 29. says: "Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, indeed, he is also the God of the Gentiles." For if you look at the histories of the Gentiles as well, as of the Romans, you will see clearly how God has acted and ruled, even though they have not understood it.

(6) So Pharaoh honors Joseph, that he may be seen to be a great man; therefore God also gives him such a man. For if God wants to help and advise a country, He must give people to it. So now this whole country must enjoy Joseph, so that it has become a paragon before all countries, which could also feed other countries that were corrupt. So God had a special eye on this land, and greatly favored it above all others, for Joseph's sake and for the sake of his father Jacob, because

He wanted to send them there so that many people would also be helped spiritually to learn God's word. I say this so that one may know how God rules in a whimsical way, assuming the whole world to find those who belong to Him in every corner.

(7) Moses, therefore, as Pharaoh set him over all the land, and commanded that they should bow the knee to him in all the land, calls him in Egyptian XXX XXX, 1) for which in our Latin Bible it is written, *Salvatorem mundi*, as if it were to say, a Savior of the world. But I think that some Jew, who instructed St. Jerome, joked with him as he pleased. I think he will have called him his chancellor and highest, most secret councilor, so that he gives him the ring from his hand.

For this he gives him a wife, the daughter of the highest priest. But someone might be annoyed that he does not take a wife from his blossom, but frees himself 2) with the pagans. But the priest Potiphera will have been a great, brave man. For the kingdoms that have been so graced by God have been provided with fine people. They have also held priests and teachers in honor; as we shall hear [Cap. 47, 22. 26.] that Joseph, when he burdened the land with interest to give the fifth, let the priests go free. Therefore they must not have been bad people; even though they were pagans, they had some right sense. So the king took the best of the mead, that he might set Joseph in greater honor.

(9) Neither was it forbidden to be free from the Gentiles; for David, Solomon, and others did it also: only that they did it not too much, and were not deceived by them: otherwise Joseph would not have gone in. [He] was acquainted with them, and talked and counseled with them, and corrected the fault, as the 105th Psalm, v. 22, says, "that he might discipline his princes according to his will, and make his elders wise"; that is, that he might make both, worldly and temporal, wise.

1) In the Erlanger: Zaphnat Pacaenea; in the Wittenberger and the Jenaer: Paenea.  
2) liberate-marry. - Erlanger: befreidet.



and spiritual regiment, in right pregnancy. Therefore it was by the special order of God that he had the wife, that he instructed her and his children, and the whole royal court. He was appointed as the master, who punished what was wrong and corrected all things, as is necessary when the word is preached.

(10) Further, Moses writes how he begat two sons, 1) of whom the Scriptures speak much. Above he told the twelve patriarchs one after the other, so that Joseph was the eleventh, and Benjamin the twelfth; but now afterwards he takes the two and makes them the chief sons, so that from one father, Joseph, came two tribes.

(11) He calls the first son Manasseh because God had made him forget 2) his father's house and all the misery, for the word Manasseh means forget. How is that Christian, that he boasts that he has forgotten his father?

1) Erlanger: gets.  
2) Erlanger: has.

and mother? [He wants to say: I see that God wants to take away the confidence that I have in my Father; for God is a zealot, does not want the heart to have a ground on which it relies and sounds, but on Him alone; therefore I must consider this, even if I never come to the Father, and am always alone; I have a God, if I have Him, I have everything.

(12) He called the other son Ephraim, that is, grown, as if to say, I am cut off from my father's house, I have no inheritance, I am dried up and dried up; but God has made me grow here in misery, more than all my friends.

(13) It is also necessary to know how the two countries, Egypt and Canaan, abut each other and meet at an angle. Canaan lies in the north, Egypt in the evening, so that they border on each other and meet like two corners. Therefore it was not a distant journey when they went in and bought grain, as follows.

## The Forty-Second Chapter.

(vv. 1-38) When Jacob saw that grain was on sale in Egypt, he said to his sons: Why do you watch? Behold, I hear that there is corn for sale in Egypt; go down and buy us corn, that we may live and not die. So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt, for Benjamin, Joseph's brother, would not let Jacob go with his brothers, saying, "He may meet with an accident. So the children of Israel came to buy grain, along with others who came with them, because there was also trouble in the land of Canaan. But Joseph was the ruler of the land, and sold corn to all the people of the land. When his brothers came to him, they fell to the ground on their faces. And he looked upon them, and knew them, and stood strange against them, and spake hard unto them, and said unto them: Whence come ye? They said: From the land of Canaan, to buy food. But

Though he knew them, yet they knew him not. And Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed of them, and said unto them: Ye are spies, and are come to see where the land is open. They answered him, "No, my lord, your servants have come to buy food. We are all one man's sons, we are honest, and your servants have never been spies. He said to them: Nay, but ye are come to see where the land is open. And they said unto him, We thy servants are twelve brethren, sons of one man, in the land of Canaan, and the youngest is yet with our father: but the one is no more. Joseph said to them: This is it that I have told you, spies ye are; by this will I try you; by the life of Pharaoh, ye shall not come hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you to fetch your brother; you will be tested.

But you shall be imprisoned. So I will test your speech, whether you deal in truth or not. For if not, then by the life of Pharaoh, ye are spies. And he put them in custody together for three days. On the third day he said to them: If you want to live, do so, for I fear God. If you are honest, let one of your brothers lie bound in your prison, but you go and bring your necessities home, and bring your youngest brother to me, and I will believe your words, so that you will not die. And they did so. And they said one to another, This is the fault of our brother, that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear him: therefore is this affliction come upon us. And Reuben answered them, and said, Did I not tell you, saying, Sin not against the lad, and ye would not hear? now is his blood required. But they knew not that Joseph understood, for he spake unto them through an interpreter. And he turned away from them, and wept. And when he turned again unto them, and spake unto them, he took of them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes, and commanded that their sacks should be filled with corn, and that their money should be restored every man to his sack, and every man's meat for the journey. And they did so. And they loaded their goods on their asses, and departed. But when one of them had opened his sack to feed his ass in the inn, he saw his money lying in the top of the sack, and said to his brothers: My money has been returned to me; behold, it is in my sack.

Then their hearts fell from them, and they were afraid one of another, and said: Why hath God done this unto us? So they came home to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, and told him all that they had met with, and said: The man who is master of the land spoke harshly to us, and took us for spies of the land. And when we answered him: We are honest, and have never been spies, but twelve brethren, our father's sons; one is no more, and the youngest is yet this day with our father in the land of Canaan, he said, By this I will know that ye are honest: Leave one of your brethren with me, and take the necessities of your house, and go, and bring your youngest brother unto me: and I will know that ye are not spies, but that ye are upright: and I will give you your brother also, and ye shall go to the land to advertise. And when they had heaped up the sacks, they sent every man his bundle of money into his sack. And when they saw that they were bundles of their money, they and their father were afraid. Then Jacob their father said to them: Ye rob me of my children; Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, Benjamin will ye take away; it is all upon me. Reuben answered his father and said, If I do not bring him back to you, strangle my two sons. Only give him into my hand, and I will bring him again unto thee. And he said, My son shall not go down with you: for his brother is dead, and he is left alone. If an accident were to befall him on the way you are traveling, you would drive my gray hairs down to hell with pain.

# The Forty-Third Chapter.

V.1-34: The land was oppressed by the famine. And when all the goods had been brought out of Egypt, Jacob their father said unto them: Go again, and buy us a little food. And Judah answered him, and said, The man bound us hard, and said: Ye shall see my face

unless your brother is with you. If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy food for you. But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. Israel said:

Why have you done so evil to me, that you have told the man how you have another brother? They answered: The man inquired so closely about us and our friendship, and said, Is your father still alive? do you also have another brother? Then we said to him, as he asked us. How could we know that he would say: Bring your brother down with you? Then said Judah unto Israel his father, Let the lad go with me, that we may make up and journey, and live, and not die, both we, and thou, and our little ones. I will be guarantor for him; from my hands you shall claim him again. If I do not bring him back to you and place him before your eyes, I will bear the guilt all my life. For if we had not gone away, we would have come back twice. Then said Israel their father unto them: If it must be so, then do it. And take of the best fruits of the land into your sacks, and bring down gifts unto the man, a little balm, and honey, and spices, and myrrh, and dates, and almonds. 1) Take also other money with you, and the money that was returned to you in your sacks above, bring also again with you; peradventure there hath been some mistake. For this purpose, take your brother, get up and come back to the man. But may the Almighty God have mercy on you in the sight of the man, so that he will let you have your other brother and Benjamin. But I must be like one who is deprived of his children. So they took these gifts and other money with them, and Benjamin, and arose, and went into Egypt, and stood before Joseph. And Joseph saw them with Benjamin, and said unto him that was over his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and prepare, for they shall dine with me. And the man did as Joseph had told him, and brought the men into Joseph's house. But they were afraid to be led into Joseph's house, and said: We are brought in here for the money which we found in our sacks before, that he may bring it upon us, and pronounce judgment upon us, that he may take us for his own servants with ours.

1) Marginal gloss: These names of the fruits are still uncertain, even among the Jews themselves.

Donkeys. Therefore they came to the man that was over Joseph's house, and talked with him at the door of the house, saying: My lord, we went down to buy food, and when we came to the inn and opened our sacks, behold, every man's money was on top of his sack, in full weight; therefore we brought it back with us, and brought down other money with us to buy food. But we know not who put our money into our sacks. And he said, Be at ease, fear not: your God, and your father's God, hath given you treasure in your sacks. Your money has become mine. And he brought out Simeon unto them, and brought them into Joseph's house, and gave them water to wash their feet, and gave their asses provender. And they prepared the present until Joseph came to the south: for they had heard that they should eat the bread there. And when Joseph was come into the house, they brought him home the present in their hands, and fell down to the ground before him. But he was kind to them, and said, "Is your father well, the old man, of whom you told me? Is he still alive? They answered: It is well with your servant our father, and he is still alive; and they bowed down and fell before him. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said: Is this your youngest brother? since you told me about him? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son. And Joseph made haste, for his heart burned against his brother, and sought where he wept, and went into his closet, and wept there. And when he had washed his face, he went forth, and held himself fast, and said, Lay up bread. And they laid bread specially for him, and specially for them, and specially for the Egyptians. For the Egyptians must not eat bread with the Hebrews, because it is an abomination in their sight. And they set them against him, the firstborn according to his firstborn, and the youngest according to his youth. They wondered among themselves. They were given food from his table, but Benjamin had five times as much as the others. And they drank, and were drunken with him.

## The Forty-Four Chapter.

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(vv. 1-34) And Joseph commanded him that was over his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with meat, as much as they may carry, and put every man's money in the top of his sack. And put my silver cup in the top of the young man's sack, with the money for the goods. He did as Joseph had told him. In the morning, when it was light, they sent the men away with their donkeys. And when they were gone out of the city, and were not far off, Joseph said unto him that was over his house, Go and pursue after the men; and when thou seest them, speak unto them: Why have ye repaid good with evil? Is not this that my lord drinketh of, and that he prophesieth of? It is evil that ye have done. And when he had taken hold of them, he spoke such words to them. They answered him, "Why does my lord speak such words? Far be it from your servants to do such a thing. Behold, the money which we found in our sacks above, we have brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan. And how shall we have stolen silver or gold out of thy lord's house? If it is found among your servants, let him be put to death. And we also will be my lord's servants. And he said, Yea, as ye have said; in whomsoever it be found, he shall be my servant; but ye shall be free. And they hasted, and laid every man his sackcloth upon the earth, and opened every man his sackcloth. And he searched, and lifted up the greatest unto the youngest. Then the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and loaded every man upon his ass, and departed again into the city. And Judah went with his brethren into Joseph's house: for he was yet there: and they fell down to the ground before him. And Joseph said unto them: What is this deed which ye have done? Know ye not that such a man as I am can guess? And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord, or how shall we speak? And what shall we plead? GOD has not

iniquity of thy servants found. Behold, we and he with whom the cup is found are my lord's servants. And he said, Far be it from me to do this thing. The man with whom the cup was found shall be my servant, but you go up in peace to your father. Then Judah came to him, and said, My lord, let thy servant speak a word in thine ears, my lord; and let not thine anger be kindled against thy servant, because thou art like Pharaoh. And my lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye also a father or a brother? Then we answered: We have a father that is old, and a young lad begotten in his old age, and his brother is dead, and he is left alone of his mother, and his father loveth him. Then saidst thou [to thy servants], Bring him down unto me, and I will cast mine eyes upon him. But we answered my lord, The lad cannot come from his father: if he came from him, he would die. Then saidst thou unto thy servants: Where your youngest brother cometh not with you, ye shall see my face no more. So we went up to thy servant my father, and told him of my lord's speech. Then said our father, Go again, and buy us a little meat. But we said: We cannot go down, except our youngest brother be with us, and we will go down: for we cannot see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us. Then thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife hath borne me two sons: one went out from me, and they say he is torn, and have not seen him hitherto. If you take this one also from me, and an accident befalls him, you will have my granen. You will lead my hair down to hell with lamentation. Now, if I come home to your servant, my father, and the boy is not with me, because his soul is attached to this soul, it will happen when he sees that the boy is not there, that he dies; so would we, your servants,

The gray hairs of thy servant, our father, with sorrow bring down to hell. For I, your servant, became surety for the boy against my father, saying, If I do not bring him back to you, I will bear the guilt all my life. Let your servant

stay here in the boy's place, to the servant of my lord, and drag the boy up with his brothers. For how shall I go up to my father, if the lad be not with me? I would have to see the misery that would befall my father.

## The Forty-Fifth Chapter.

(vv. 1-28) Then Joseph could not refrain himself from all that stood round about, and he cried unto every man, Depart from me: and there stood no man with him, when Joseph confessed himself with his brethren. And he cried with a loud voice, so that the Egyptians and Pharaoh's servants heard him, and said to his brothers: I am Joseph, is my father still alive? And his brethren could not answer him; so they were afraid before his face. And he said unto his brethren: Come near me. 1) And they came near. And he said: I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold in Egypt. And now be not grieved, neither think that there is wrath, 2) because ye have sold me hither: for for your life's sake God hath sent me before you. For these are two years that it is dear in the land, and there are yet five years that there shall be no plowing nor reaping. But God sent me before you, that he might leave you on earth, and preserve your life, by a great salvation. And now, you did not send me here, but God, he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord over all his house, and a ruler in all the land of Egypt. Now therefore make haste, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Joseph thy son saith unto thee, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not. You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and be near me, you and your children and your children's children,

Your flocks and your herds, and all that is yours, I will provide for you there. For there are yet five years of theuration, lest thou perish with thy house, and with all that is thine. Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that I speak unto you verbally. Declare unto my father all my glory in Egypt, and all that ye have seen; make haste, and come down hither with my father. And he fell on the neck of Benjamin his brother, and wept; and Benjamin also wept on his neck. And he kissed all his brethren, and wept over them. After that his brothers talked with him. And when the cry came to Pharaoh's ears, that Joseph's brethren were come, it pleased Pharaoh well, and all his servants. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Tell thy brethren: Do so to him, load your animals, go, and when you come to the land of Canaan, take your father and your servants and come to me, and I will give you goods in the land of Egypt, and you shall eat the marrow of the land. And give unto them: Do to him thus, take unto you out of the land of Egypt chariots for your children and your wives, and bring your father, and come. And spare not your household goods: for the goods of all the land of Egypt shall be yours. So the children of Israel did. And Joseph gave them chariots, according to Pharaoh's commandment, and victuals for the way, and gave them all, every one a garment of feasting: but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver, and five garments of feasting. But to his father he sent ten asses laden with goods from Egypt, and ten asses laden with grain, and bread and food to his father on the way. So he sent his brothers [and they

1) Marginal gloss: To me. These are the few words of the Gospel; thus Christ speaks to the soul in faith, after it has been humbled and troubled by the conscience of sin.  
2) In the Bible: that I may be angry.

**He said to them: Do not quarrel on the way. So they went up from Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father. And they told him, saying: Thy son Joseph is yet alive, and is a ruler in all the land of Egypt. But his heart cast it to [the] winds, because he believed them not. Then they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had spoken unto them. And when he saw the chariots which Joseph had sent to drive him, his spirit was quickened. And [Israel] said: I am satisfied that my son Joseph is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die.**

These four chapters are all related to each other, so we will go over them together. So far we have heard how Joseph came to great honor through the word of God, that he became a sovereign, and Egypt was saved through him; and not only Egypt, but also many other people; so that God testifies and proves how he is the right Father and Lord, who takes care of the whole world. Thus the history is more lovely in itself than anyone can say and emphasize; therefore everyone may grasp and consider it for himself.

2) In sum, we see here once again how God leads His saints so strangely. First of all, in that he leaves the old father Jacob sitting so long, that is, thirteen whole years, in great gloom and sorrow, and Joseph also, that they do not think otherwise, that it is over with them; and then suddenly brings about such great joy that even those who hear it must rejoice that the two are so heartily well.

This is the point that the Scripture holds up to us everywhere: What God wants to make honorable, he puts to shame beforehand; whom he wants to please to the highest degree, he makes full of sorrow and heartache beforehand. So that he would like to bring us with so many examples, so that he would shower us, that we would also once learn to know his way, how he acts in all creatures, especially with the elect. The deeper he humbles them, presses them down and lets them sink, the higher he wants to raise them and set them on high.

4. so from this history are a lot of sayings

The fathers therefore took it and learned it. Therefore we should also learn it once; but nature is too weak, it cannot judge differently than it feels. If Joseph should have followed this, as he lay in prison, and his honor and reputation were taken from him, that he had to suffer two kinds of misfortune at once, punishment and shame, and both innocently; for it is still gentle when one suffers in such a way that people know how to mourn him, and have compassion that he is wronged; but when one stands innocent with all disgraces, that is only bitter: if 1) he should now (I say) have judged according to this, he would have had to despair a hundred times. Again, if he had intended that he should come to such great honors, he would gladly have suffered ten times as much. Who wants to praise and exalt that it happens to him that God honors him temporally and eternally, spiritually and physically, that he becomes a lord over all the goods of Egypt, and lasts not ten or twenty, but seventy, yes, almost eighty years!

5 Now count them against each other: Thirteen years he suffers shame, disgrace and guilt; the time has become very long for him, flesh and blood could not sustain it so long; after that he becomes a lord, not only over the woman who must fall at his feet and beg mercy, but over the whole land.

Therefore, God cannot refrain from humiliating us and throwing us down, so He will lift us up all the more joyfully. This is what he wants us to think, if only we can persevere and have patience. This is also what Paul means in 2 Cor. 4:17; that we suffer here is a short moment, but it creates so much the richer glory that is to be revealed in us, if we do not look at the visible, but at the invisible.

7 Thus God wants to comfort us, as if he wanted to say: "Behold, how I am minded, take Joseph before you; as I have dealt with him, 3) so will I deal with you. Thirteen years have I made him suffer, but much more abundantly have I recompensed him with bodily honor, and much more with spiritual honor and goods; that he might

1) Erlanger: shall. Wittenberger and Jenaer: "shall". 2) Wittenberger: "nu" instead of: es. 3) "with him" is missing in the Erlanger.

the Savior and angel sent by God would be of all who are to enlighten the people and convert them to God.

This is the first and best part, the sum of the whole history, how he becomes at the same time a temporal lord and a spiritual governor of souls, and a right bishop over everything that strikes the land; for without a doubt, his doctrine has spread very far. So he did not celebrate, because he had everything in his hand and ruled, that the right doctrine went strong. Then you can think what fruit he has produced by teaching people to know God, as the Psalter says [Psalm 32:8]. But it did not come to that, it must have been broken before.

(9) Above this there is another great thing, as I have said, the third, that he became an everlasting lord, that is, that he became the chief of the people of Israel. For Israel had twelve sons, of whom God set apart one, Levi, for the priesthood, and he remained there. Then God took the two sons of Joseph and made the number full again, giving him two tribes before the other brothers, and also the kingdom of Israel, as long as it had stood; so that the man was not only blessed temporally and spiritually, but also his family and the people remained after his life so long that they did excellent deeds, and often brought honor against their enemies, and had great prophets, so that no people was so blessed with his blood and flesh as this one. If he had seen all this before, he would gladly have suffered a hundred years of death, and would still have been too small compared to the abundant good, so that he would be praised with his people. For there was no nation on earth that had such men, prophets, kings and princes as the nation of Israel, especially Ephraim, except the tribe of Judah.

10 God has done all this for the sake of our future comfort when we suffer, when we could only stand still and hold our ground, and gladly suffer more. But we are too soft, only want to see it beforehand, thus preventing his counsel. Who then is not moved by the example, what should move him? How are we so flesh

and blood against them! Therefore, because we cannot wait and wait, we will never see how he comforts and blesses his own. It hurt him that he had to suffer the shame; but if he had seen what God had in mind, he would have gladly let a thousand adulteries pass over him; but because he perseveres, he experiences how abundantly God can repay.

This is what Paul says [2 Cor. 4, 17]: "Suffering is small and easy compared to the glory that God wants to give us" when we believe. But when the suffering is there, it seems so great that no one thinks that there is any consolation, so that it also pleased the saints here; as also St. Job, as he says [Cap. 6, 2. 3.]: "If my wrath were weighed, and my suffering put together in a balance, it would be heavier than sand on the sea." But he who is able to repay God sees that where he can suffer one thing, all heaven is full of consolation; as Christ says in the Gospel [Matth. 19, 29.]: "Every one that shall save houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or child, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive it an hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life."

12 Then you see how it is true; he leaves Jacob with eleven brothers, and wins the whole land of Egypt, and after that eternal life. We cannot do that. That is why we only want to have our fist full beforehand and not believe; however, we will never come to that. So now understand this story, so that you know what God means by it, and learn how we should conduct ourselves when he deals with us in this way: so that we can draw comfort from it when things go badly for us. This is the first, most noble part.

(13) After this is also how God governs His saints so strangely that He does not take away the nature and inclination that is innate in us. This I do not preach so often for nothing, for it will certainly come again; as one already finds some such saints as those who have run into the deserts of people, and as the monks and nuns have made people to be wood and stones, thinking to come so high in virtue and holiness, that they have

1) Wittenberger: the.

would be like the angels. This is not seen of any saint in all the Scriptures; for the same natural inclinations are God's creatures, which they have denied and want to make for holiness, that we are neither blood nor flesh. I think Jacob is as holy as any pope, even St. Peter and Paul, and all the apostles, should do him honor and call him dear father, for he is exceedingly highly and richly graced by God: yet behold how God makes him weep and wail, and lament over the son, as if he were 1) all flesh. Joseph, now that he has suffered so much, is full of the Holy Spirit and of all goods; but behold how he softens, and the heart in him warms over his brother Benjamin in the flesh, that he must depart from him and weep. This is a natural inclination, implanted by God, which He does not want to condemn. So the brothers also become happy when they recognize him, and he, the father, then becomes completely alive again, as if he had awakened from a deep sleep.

(14) I say all this so that the rich work of God may be known, for it is not in his opinion to break nature. He created the eyes to see, the hands to work, the stomach to digest; every creature as he has made it, so he leaves his work; so he has given women a mother's heart to care for children, which no one can hinder or prevent.

(15) Therefore, let his kingdom remain so that it does not break nature, that it does not again make such mad saints who want to take away their very heart. This is what God does well, that he tempts the natural movement, and tugs with it, and resists it or stops it. So it was natural that Jacob would have liked to keep his son; but God snatches him away, yet does not take away the father's inclination; does not do what he would like, but does not take away his will. So he does not forbid to love this or that, but he often prevents that what we would like to happen does not happen; as that one is rightly scolded and promised, 2) whom I would like to hear praised; or a good friend dies, whom I would not like to lose, and the like.

1) Jenaer and Erlanger: es.

2) promise - to speak ill of someone.

(16) But the clever think that everything must be removed, that one must be free of the thing, and have such an opinion, [they] want to drive it away with works. He created it that it should be and must be; so we want to make it better, to fight it with commandments and to tear it away. [It is as much as if I said, The eye shall not be the eye, the belly shall not be the belly; yet hungers my belly when it is time, and bids it and forbids it as one pleases. So do all the natural works that are implanted; he leaves them, but he tortures them to try us. Therefore, beware of the same great saints who arose soon after the time of the apostles; as one reads of some of them in *vitis patrum*. If God did not take away the nature of the saints, whom he had shouted and described in the world as the best that he could find, and if he had had them better, had also had them written, and had preferred them as a paragon and his dearest children, then let us also leave it at that, and not become more holy.

But this we must expect and consider, that he tries and armors them, 3) to test how we want to hold in such a being, whether we can forgive ourselves all things for his sake. For this reason he gives us life, which is the most precious thing we have on earth, but often throws us into danger of death; at last he even takes it from us, so that it may be seen whether we can let it go for the sake of him who gave it. Should it therefore be wrong to love life? His gifts are not rejected, but only tried to see if they could be left; as he tried Jacob to see if he could leave his son for his own sake. He did so, but it hurt him. For it is impossible that nature should not be hurt when the implanted movement is broken.

18 These are the most noble pieces in history. For the fact that Joseph acts and disputes with the brothers in this way, and tortures and stretches them, 4) all this serves so that God's works may always be seen. He wants to make them happy,

3) armor sweep - clean, policies, rub, martyr. - to pardon oneself to renounce a thing.

4) stretch - torture. The term is taken from torture.



and prepare a good meal, therefore he tributes them well. So that one can feel and be sure when God starts to torture us, that he then has it well in mind; there he is before the door, as he also speaks in the Revelation of John [Cap. 3, 20]: "I stand before the door"; but the knocking hurts us. But behold how Joseph holds his peace, and opens to him, and lets him go in. Thus he prepares the wedding feast. That is enough of the story. We cannot cover all the points so that it does not become too long; if we want to save some points for the mystery, we will cut them out.

(19) This Joseph, as we have heard above [Cap. 37, § 10], is a figure of our Lord Christ; therefore he also has the name. For Joseph is called an increaser, that he always grows and increases, and becomes more and more, accumulates and piles up. God also fulfilled the name to him temporally, as we have heard, that he heaped and showered him with temporal, 1) worldly goods.

Now Joseph had a colorful coat, and was the right, dear child of the father, to whom also the regiment belonged, as also his dreams show; but his brothers become hostile to him, take him away, and sell him in Egypt, so that he comes to a strange place, and must serve the strangers there, and a strange woman disgraces him, seizes him once by his coat, which he leaves in her hand, and flees away 2c. The Holy Spirit has played with the figure before of the passion and resurrection of Christ. For that he comes in Egypt, is that he became man on earth; there he becomes a servant and serves, has no more than body need of it.

021 Then his wife cast her eyes upon him, and would have wooed him; but he would not, and she took him by the cloak, and accused him before her lord. This is what happened to him on earth. The synagogue, or Jewish people, is this harlot, the wife of Moses his master, who is the master of this people, and rules them as a man rules a woman; under whom Christ served, as Paul says, Galatians 3:13, 4:4, and gave and kept himself under the law.

Even though he did not need it. For he came in a stranger, and listened to him nothing, but serves him so that he puts all things under his hands, and himself knows not what he hath. This is that Christ has done enough for the law and fulfilled everything, so that no more can be required.

22 And the woman, seeing that he was handsome and fair of face, took pleasure in him, and loved him, and daily tempted him with words, that he should sleep with her; but he would not, so much so that he fled to be with her, until she caught him unawares in secret. This is the figure, when the Pharisees and scribes saw his examples and miracles, how the people clung to him and had great clamor, they could not punish his conduct and behavior. Therefore they would have gladly courted him, that is, they would have drawn him to them, and preached as they wished, and let their thing be right; as is finely indicated in the Gospel of John, how they would have gladly drawn him to them. But nothing came of it, he saw their deception well. No matter how often they tried, it did not help; so he remained innocent of them.

023 And at the last they caught him, and laid hold on him by the cloak. This happened when they captured him and accused him of being a seducer, of stirring up the people and hanging on them, and of preaching against the law. Then they condemned him as an adulterer with all shame. That he should be cast into [the] dungeon, that is, put away, dead, and buried; then he left the mantle in their hand, which they kept, that is, they have the writing still, which he left behind him; but he is of it, that they catch him not. And as the harlot put and kept the cloak for a witness against him, so they put the writing, which was against themselves, for a witness against him, as when they said in John [Cap. 19:7], "We have a law, and by the law he shall die." So he must die most infamously, and lies in the grave.

(24) Then come the prophets, that is, the dreamers, the tavern keepers, and the bakers; that is, that all the sayings of the prophets rhyme here, how his kingdom is, to judge the whole world, to condemn the unbelievers, and to save the faithful. But there comes Pha-

1) Erlanger: Temporal.

rao with his dream; then Christ comes forth and becomes a Lord of his enemies and of all the world, who has in his hands and rules all that God has created in heaven and on earth, so that all the world must bow the knee 1) before him.

(25) There the resurrection and the kingdom of Christ are most delicately portrayed. For as Joseph reigns in the temporal, so he reigns in the spiritual, that he feedeth all souls with his word, and divideth out the gifts of the Spirit, and maketh the whole land full and full, and increaseth his name and family, that kings and prophets arise among his people; so that his humility and affliction are abundantly paid for above all measure, as Paul saith in Phil.

2, 8-11. says: "He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God gave him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Christ every knee should bow, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father." He acquired all these things through his suffering, but all of them for our service, just as Joseph alone was sent by God for this purpose in Egypt, so that many people were helped through him.

26 I will leave the secret or spiritual interpretation of the other chapters for the sake of brevity, because they are easy to find from the previous interpretations, so that others may also have something to do.

## The Forty-Sixth Chapter.

Israel went with all that was his. And when he was come to Beer-saba, he offered sacrifices unto the God of Isaac his father. And God said unto him by night in a vision, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And he said: I am the LORD God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt: for there will I make thee a great nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt, and will bring thee up also: and Joseph shall lay his hands upon thine eyes. Then Jacob departed from Babylon, and the children of Israel brought Jacob their father, with their little children and their wives, in the chariots which Pharaoh had sent to bring him. And they took their cattle and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan. And they came into Egypt, Jacob and all his seed with him, his children and his children's children with him, his daughters, and his children's daughters, and all his seed [ , whom he brought with him into Egypt]. These are the names of the children of Israel who came in Egypt: Jacob and his sons. The firstborn son of Jacob, Reuben. The children of Reuben: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron and Charmi. The children of Si

meon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar and Saul, the son of the Cananaean 2) wife. The children of Levi: Gershon, Kohath and Merari. The children of Judah: Ger, Onan, Selah, Perez and Zerah. But Ger and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul. The children of Jesashar: Thola, Phuva, Job and Semron. The children of Zebulun: Sered, Elon and Jahleel. These are the children of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Mesopotamia, with his daughter Dinah, making all together, with sons and daughters, three and thirty souls. The children Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Suni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi and Areli. The children of Asher: Jemna, Jesna, Jesui, Bria, and Serah their sister. But the children of Bria: Heber and Malchiel. These are the children of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and bare Jacob these sixteen souls. The children of Rachel, Jacob's wife: Joseph and Benjamin. And unto Joseph were born in the land of Egypt Manasseh and Ephraim, which bare him Asnath the daughter of Potipherah the priest of On.

2) Jenaer and Erlanger: canan.

The children of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, Asbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Ros, Muppm, Huppm and Ard. These are the children of Rachel, born to Jacob, all fourteen souls. The children of Dan: Husim. The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer and Sillem. These are the children Bilhah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel, and Jacob bore these seven souls. All the souls that came with Jacob in Egypt, which went out from his loins (except the wives of his children), are all together six and threescore souls. And the children of Joseph that were born in Egypt were two souls. So that all the souls of the house of Jacob that came into Egypt were seventy. And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to shew him the way to Goshen: and they came into the land of Goshen. Then Joseph harnessed his chariot, and went up to his father Israel.

toward Gosen. And when he saw him, he fell upon his neck, and wept upon his neck very sore. And Israel said unto Joseph, I will gladly die, when I have seen thy face, that thou art yet alive. And Joseph said unto his brethren, and to his father's house, I will go up, and tell Pharaoh, and say unto him: My brethren, and my father's house, are come unto me out of the land of Canaan, and are herdsmen: for they are men that handle cattle; their flocks and their herds, and all that they have, have they brought with them. Now when Pharaoh shall call you, and say, What is your trade? then ye shall say, Thy servants are cattlemen, from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers, that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen. For the shepherding of cattle is an abomination to the Egyptians.

## The Forty-Seventh Chapter.

V. 1-3i. Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, saying, My father and my brethren, their flocks and their herds, and [all] that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen. And he took five of his [younger] brethren, and set them before Pharaoh. Then Pharaoh said to his brothers: What is your trade? They answered: Your servants are cattle herders, we and our bitters. And they said unto Pharaoh, We are come to dwell with you in the land: for thy servants have no pasture for their cattle, so hard doth the Theurung oppress the land of Canaan. Now therefore let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you; the land of Egypt is open to you; let them live in the best part of the land; let them live in the land of Goshen. And if thou knowest that there are men of valor among them, set them over my cattle. Joseph also brought in his father [Jacob], and set him before Pharaoh. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh. And Pharaoh asked Jacob, How old art thou? Jacob said [to Pharaoh], The time

The time of my pilgrimage is an hundred and thirty years; the time of my pilgrimage is few and evil; it does not equal the time of my fathers in their pilgrimage. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from him. And Joseph made his father and his brethren dwell, and gave them a place in the land of Egypt, in the best place of the land, even in the land of Raemeses, as Pharaoh had commanded. And he fed [his father and] his brethren, and all his father's house, as the young children, with bread. But there was no bread in all the land, for the famine was so severe that the land of Egypt and Canaan fainted from the famine. And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in Egypt and Canaan for the corn which they bought, and he put all the money into Pharaoh's house. And when there was a lack of money in the land of Egypt and Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph, and said, Provide us bread; why sufferest thou us to die before thee, because we are without money? And Joseph said, Bring forth your cattle, and I will give you cattle, because ye are without money. Then broke

They gave Joseph their livestock. And he gave them bread for their horses, and for their sheep, and for their oxen, and for their asses. So he fed them with bread for the year for all their cattle. When the year was over, they came to him the next year and said, "We will not hide from our master that not only the money but also all the livestock has gone to our master, and there is nothing left before our master but our bodies and our fields. Why hast thou caused both us and our land to die before thee? Take us and our land for bread, that we and our land may be a servant to Pharaoh; give us seed, that we may live, and not die, and that the field be not desolate. So Joseph took all Egypt from Pharaoh. For the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine was too great for them. And the land was Pharaoh's, and the people that went in and out of the cities thereof, from one place of Egypt to another. Except the field of the priests, which he took not: for Pharaoh commanded the priests that they should eat the things which he gave them. Therefore they were not allowed to sell their field. Then said Joseph unto the people, Behold, I have taken you this day, and have given your field unto Pharaoh: behold, ye have seed, and sow the field; and of the corn ye shall eat the fivefold.

Give four parts to Pharaoh, for sowing the field, for your food, and for your house and children. They said: Let us only live, and find grace in the sight of thee our Lord; we will gladly be Pharaoh's servants. So Joseph made them a law unto this day, over the field of Egypt, to give the fifth to Pharaoh, except the priests' field, which was not Pharaoh's own. So Israel dwelt in Egypt, in the land of Goshen, and possessed it, and grew and multiplied greatly. And Jacob lived seventeen years in the land of Egypt: and all his days were an hundred and seven and forty years. And it came to pass, when the time was come for Israel to die, that he called Joseph his son, and said unto him, If I have found grace in thy sight, put thine hand under my thigh, that thou mayest do mercy and faithfulness unto me, and bury me not in Egypt: but I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt bring me forth out of Egypt, and bury me in their buryingplace. He said: I will do as thou hast said. And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. Then Israel knelt down 1) against the bed at his head.

1) Marginal gloss: knelt. The all books in Greek and Latin have here thus: And he worshipped at the head of his scepter, as the epistle to the Hebrews reports at the 11th [v. 21.], as if Jacob had worshipped the scepter of Joseph; but in Hebrew it is as it is here.

## The forty-eighth chapter.

V.i-22. And Joseph was told, Behold, thy father is sick. And he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. And it was told Jacob, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee. And Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed, and said unto Joseph, The Almighty God appeared unto me in Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said unto me, Behold, I will cause thee to grow and multiply, and will make thee a Han people, and will give this land unto thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession. Now therefore thy two sons [Ephraim and Manasseh], which were born unto thee in Egypt, before I came in unto thee, shall be my sons.

They shall be like Reuben and Simeon. And they that thou begetteth after them shall be thine; but these shall be called by their brethren's names in their inheritance. And it came to pass, when I was come out of Mesopotamia, that Rachel died with me in the land of Canaan, by the way of a highway to Ephrath; and I buried her by the way of Ephrath, which is now called Bethlehem. And Israel saw the sons of Joseph, and said, Who are they? And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me here. And he said, Bring them hither unto me, that I may bless them. For the eyes of Israel were heavy with age, and could not well see.

And he brought her unto him. And he kissed them, and hugged them, and said unto Joseph, Behold, I have seen thy face, which I thought not of; and, lo, God hath made me to see thy seed also: and Joseph took them from his bosom, and they fell down upon the earth upon their faces. Then Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand, against Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand, against Israel's right hand, and brought them to him. And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon the head of Ephraim the youngest, and his left hand upon the head of Manasseh: and he did so knowingly with his hands, because Manasseh was the firstborn. And he blessed Joseph, saying, "The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has nourished me all my life to this day, the angel who has delivered me from all evil, bless these sons, that they may be called by my name and by the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, that they may grow and become many on the earth. But when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon Ephraim's head, it displeased him, and he fasted his father's hand, and turned it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head. And said unto him, Not so, my father, this is the firstborn; lay thy right hand upon his head. But his father refused, saying: I know it well, my son, I know it well, this also shall become a full one, and shall be great; but his youngest brother shall become greater than he, and his seed shall become full of people. So he blessed them that day, saying, After thy manner shall Israel be blessed, that it may be said, God set thee as Ephraim and Manasseh. And so he set Ephraim before Manasseh. And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die, and God shall be with you, and shall bring you again into the land of your fathers. I have given you a piece of land apart from your brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorites with my sword and bow. 1)

What follows is, in sum, an interpretation of the 46. 47. 48. chapter.

(1) Then we have heard how the heavy plague lasted two years in Egypt before Jacob came in, and how it lasted five years. But all that was in Egypt was consumed, and the money that was in the land and round about came in heaps into the king's house. After that, in the sixth year, all the livestock went up. In the seventh year the king's land and people became his own, like the servants, so that he had power over them as over the cattle. For this reason Joseph gave him an abundance of riches.

2 Thus, when God wants to make a country rich and great, He does so that it must become great even if all the others perish. Now we have heard that he was a fine king, pious and sensible, who knew God and learned God's word from Joseph. How is it then that Joseph, the holy man, and Pharaoh, the pious king, rule so horribly, burdening and subduing the land, leaving them nothing of their own, making them poor, serfs, even to the point of beating the fifth man over the land forever; is this also Christian or just?

3 Everyone knows that there is a common, regular interest in the countries, although it is not here with us, because it is called the tithe, that one gives annually the tenth part of all kinds of goods in the country to the authorities; one also considers it a beneficial, fine right. However, I would like to see tithing in this country as well, and I might even suggest that a fifth be given, so that everything would be bad; it would not be possible to act and act in the same way. For where one does not tithe, but strikes a named sum on a city, so that one gives as much, the other as much, the sum must fall one year as the other, God grant, it may be, as it may, whether it hardly comes to twenty or forty florins. If the income and the stock last once in seven or eight years, it will spoil five or six years after that; so that half of it will be gone in that way, and the people will have to give the greater part of their goods as interest. What have they gained?

4. i have overlapped what has been given to the spiritual beggars so far, and ge-

1) In the Erlangen edition, the text of the 49th chapter follows here.

The people found that half of the poor people's goods had fallen there, and they had to feed themselves on the other half. For a poor man's goods, land, cattle, and the like, whether they bear anything or nothing, they must give as much one year as the next. But if a man had to give a tenth cow and calf every year, and so on, he would have the advantage, if it bore him much, he would give much, if it bore him little, he would give little; then the 1) people should not be pressed with the said sum, but would have to wait for happiness with them. But now a poor man of misfortune must wait alone, the overlords sit free and secure; God give, one spoils or prosper, so the interest must fall.

Now say, whether these were not more reasonable people than we? have naturally put interest on the land, that it may have suffered and come to. It would be more painful to keep the ninth, or even the eighth part of the property, because one often gives away half of it, sometimes more than one takes in. That is why the cities have to pay interest on themselves, and why they are ruined by it. That is why people complain that there is no more money and property in the world, and soon everyone is ruined.

(6) Therefore they were wise men, and it was not unjust for Joseph to bring the land and goods under the king. The grain and the land were his; so it was a friendship that he sold them for an equal penny, and gave goods for goods; which is equal and fair in all the world, for he was not guilty of feeding them all; nor would it have been advisable. For one must keep the people in check and constrained; otherwise, if one fed him 2) Omnes for nothing, he would become too wanton and go dancing on the ice.

(7) If there were vain pious people, they should not be compelled nor tamed; but the rabble is too wicked, and as soon as too much will is left to it, no one can deal with it. Therefore, it is not worthwhile to let the common man go without coercion and insistence. It must be set in a regiment and order, which must therefore be left alone.

They do not give them enough for nothing, but goods for goods or money. Who else would work and sit still? You can see how it is about the heap; if you allow him a hand's breadth, he takes four and twenty cubits.

8 Therefore, though it may seem a hard and grievous thing for Joseph to make such complaints of the people, yet it has been gracious and profitable that both the common man and the authorities may prosper thereby. But there is no doubt that Joseph was so pious that he did not let poor people who did not have to pay for it suffer hardship, but gave it for free; but from others, who had to pay for it, he also took it. Further, we have heard above that the holy fathers, both Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob also, had many of their own people or servants, who were sold like cattle; item, also more things done that are worldly than received and shed blood; all of which can be considered as not having been done in a brotherly or Christian way. But to act in a Christian and brotherly manner does not belong to the worldly regiment; God Himself has determined how one should act with servants, maidservants and their children, and the like.

(9) Christianity and evangelicalism are to rule the consciences alone; but to rule the world are sharp and strict laws, to restrain the wickedness of which they are all full; but that it may be restrained, the other pious men, who have no need of it, must keep up, for the sake of common peace. So now he has brought the land to himself with God and honor. Whoever wants to count it further, let him do so, even if it is difficult to give the fifth. Let it come to pass that they give the sixth, or the seventh, or the eighth. [All this would be advisable if other burdens, customs duties, purchase of interest, and the like, which now daily abound, were abolished, so that both the authorities and we would have enough. And indeed in the Old Testament, with the Jews, one also had to give much, the tithe and all first fruits, and firstlings of cattle and men, to the priests, otherwise also the tithe of the first year, without other things [3 Mos. 27, 30. ff. Cap. 23, 10.], that it has probably become equal to the fifth, which Joseph put on.

1) Erlanger: the.  
2) He = Lord.

(10) But besides this, Moses here writes how the priests are exempt, that they keep their field and goods all as it was ordained for them, that they should eat what was appointed them. This is also one of the texts on which the pope's spiritual law wants to be based, and says that his priests should have their goods free, not subject to interest or tithes. To this the Gospel says: Go and preach, take and eat what is given you, for "a laborer is worthy of his food" [Matth. 10, 10.]. And Paul [1 Cor. 9:14], "The Lord hath commanded that they which preach the gospel should feed on the gospel." So it was ordered in the Old Testament, and here also among the Gentiles. I have often wondered at St. Paul's writing so much about how to feed the belly, and Christ himself is so careful about it; although he did not determine how much to give to the preachers, yet he commanded it so far that they could feed and sustain themselves on it.

So it was, because Paul lived, that they would give him nothing, which is why he speaks so much about it 1 Cor. 9, 14, and Gal. 6, 6. 7. he tells them harshly: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; what a man sows, that he will also reap. Christ himself would have had to go for bread and suffer hunger, had he not been able to make bread out of stones [Matth. 4, 3], if it had been necessary, and if the women had not hung on him, who had given him need. We cannot do it any other way, it will remain that the right, pious preachers must go for bread for the sake of the world. We cannot feed one or two right preachers, but we can fill a hundred and a thousand monks and priests who lead us to the devil.

(12) In the Old Testament, all twelve tribes could not feed the one tribe of Levi, so that in the end they had to leave God's word to teach and feed themselves with their hands. Besides, there was almost no spot in the land, there were altars and chapels, where one could give abundantly to the deceivers: When Isabel alone fed four hundred false prophets from her table, and beside them were four hundred prophets of Baal.

There were a hundred prophets who suffered hunger and hardship. Therefore it is true: Those who serve in the word, to them it is fair to give their food. For this reason I respect that Joseph and Pharaoh have set up proper people, and have considered it the noblest work to provide for them, since they are more important than the whole country.

I have also preached and written that the most important thing should be to take good care of the parishes and schools. But there is no one who wants to. Others, priests and fattened bellies, who do nothing but cause all kinds of misfortune, are given enough. What God will say about this, we will also become aware of one day. I have often said that God regards His gifts as precious and valuable; He has also confessed much to Him, He has turned His Son's blood to it, so that the Word would be preached and His apostles would be sent out. Therefore he thinks: The treasure is too noble and good, they are not worth to have it; therefore I will feed my worthy preachers myself. Therefore he does not give it to the mad world to do it, because to his Christians, one, or two, or three; the others let all preachers die of hunger in one day. It is too noble and too great, they are not worthy to do honor to the gospel and its preachers, otherwise they would say they deserved it.

14 So it will soon come to pass that the right preachers will have to leave their ministry and learn a trade just for the sake of food; then they will lose the word through God's wrath and punishment, and again, they will carry heaps to those who preach lies and deception to them. Because the treasure is there, no one turns to it; when it is gone, only then does one look back. Therefore it must go, as Christ [John 5:43] says: "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his name, him will ye receive." We may thank God that we know how it must go, and let the world go to the devil, and console ourselves that we have a Father in heaven who will feed us; if we cannot do more, we work with our hands, and we are excused. It is not possible for us

and have no nourishment from it, although St. Paul did it; it is also not necessary. But if it were necessary and I wanted to make an effort, with God's help I could also preach and do a trade at the same time.

(15) Therefore this example is not to be drawn, since the pope points it out, that they sit securely and firmly in their goods, and may give nothing to anyone, which they have not acquired, but are given by princes, not for the sake of preaching, but for the sake of masses, and endowed as a good work, but for the service of the devil; wherefore they also must have enough, and the true preachers are in want.

16 But this Pharaoh has been a righteous man and has acted in a royal way in taking care of the people who are to preach and teach. You will not find many pagan princes who do the same. So he has provided for both the secular and the ecclesiastical regiment in the best possible way, so that they do not suffer any hardship in body and soul.

17 There is nothing more special in the history, except in the 48th chapter, about the two brothers, Ephraim and Manasseh, whom he blesses and chooses as his sons. This he tells so that afterwards it may be understood how he often tells of the twelve tribes of the people of Israel; for out of Joseph came two tribes, so that he has twice as many as the others. For one generation was to be taken out for the priesthood, so that the place was to be filled again, and the two sons were to be added.

18 Now God performed a miracle: Joseph brought the two children to their father, placed the eldest on his father's right side and the other on his left, and Jacob laid his hands on them as they stood before him; but he turned them back and acted out of courage, so that Joseph was displeased.

19 Now it is evident how in the Old Testament much preference and freedom was given to the first son, that he always took two pieces of inheritance before others, and in addition won the regiment and priesthood; the others had to be his subjects in spiritual and temporal government. This is also due to the first son of Manasseh, but he takes it from him and gives it to the youngest son.

He said, "This one also shall be great, but the youngest shall be greater than he. And from the text also afterward the tribe of Ephraim was proud and haughty, that there was no proud people among the Jews, which boasted so of the blessing; they were but nephews, and the youngest; neither were they the greatest. For the kingdom and government of Israel consisted of them. Who now reads the prophets, he can understand from this, why they attract the name Ephraim so, just as we call with us the Roman empire. The patriarch Joseph deserved the honor with his misery, which he had suffered in Egypt; so that we should see how God rewards again and sets to great honors those who can wait and endure his hand.

20. But the fact that he shows the youngest son is done according to the Gospel, that God thus does: what is great before the world, he lets down; and again, what is least, he lifts up. He who should be called the first becomes the last, so that he never leaves his way; all this to comfort Christians, so that they learn more and more to recognize God as his way, work and manner is, to see only down what is small; whereas the world sees only above itself what is great and high, and thinks that the poor people are completely abandoned. We must hear and see this through all examples, yet we always remain in the old sense and thought.

(21) This is also the purpose of what we heard above [chap. 43, 3], how Joseph commanded his brothers not to see his face, because they would bring the least brother with them. This is also what we are commanded to do, that we always take care of the least of these; must not come before God, bringing with us the least and weakest of Christians. As Christ teaches in Matthew [Cap. 25, 40.], and thus concludes: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." But no one wants to look down and submit to the service of those who are nothing. Therefore we would like to make this a proverb among ourselves and admonish ourselves daily, because Christ is always pointing us to it.

22 So we have heard this history of Joseph to the end, that now is fulfilled the dream which he had dreamed before, how



This is also indicated by the text, where it says: "Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them," which is why they were also angry with him and pushed him away, but were so wonderfully fulfilled that he came to such honor and power precisely because of this, so that they thought to destroy him, and considered nothing so certain, because Joseph, where he lived, would have to be a miserable man all his days. So God goes with the 1) his own, gives them interpretation, what should happen, but so that no one is wondering how it will happen, but seems, how it should go back, and yet is so richly fulfilled. It was a sign that his brothers should call him merciful Lord, and fall at his feet. The dream was from God; therefore it had to happen in such a way that no one could believe it; it had to turn around, so that they made him a servant and sold him, and were sure that the dream was all lies. But since his all things are forgotten, they come and fall at his feet unknowing.

(23) These are all the works of God that He does and impels. He has promised us eternal life, that we may escape from the power of the devil.

1) "den" is missing in the Erlanger.

into eternal divine power. This is promised to us in baptism; but when it is to begin, it turns; [we] then go into the midst of [death], like the dear martyrs who had to go through sword, fire and all misfortune. So when he wants to make rich, high, pious, he makes poor, despised, sinners and evil consciences, so that he drives it everywhere according to the outward appearance, as if it should come to nothing and exist with lies. Blessed is he who understands and does not err or resent it! Joseph shall become a mighty prince, he shall be a poor captive, with great dishonor, as an adulterer; but the greater misery and dishonor have been, the greater welfare and honor shall be given him. So it would be with us, if we could only trust and wait once, we shall have no want nor need of body and soul, and God will be with us in all temptation and affliction, as He says in the 91st Psalm, v. 15. But when He attacks us, we cannot stand; we forget His way of fulfilling His word, namely, that He takes away what He wants to give; but He plays kindly with us, like a father with his dear children, until the time comes that He will shower us with joy.

## The Forty-Ninth Chapter.

(vv. 1-33) And Jacob called his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the latter days. Come in in multitudes, and hear, ye children of Jacob, hear your father Israel. Reuben, 2) my first son, you are my strength, and the beginning of my might, the chief in sacrifice, and the chief in power. He passed away lightly, like water. Thou shalt not be chief, for thou hast gone up to thy father's camp, and there thou shalt be chief.

2) Marginal gloss: Reuben should have the dignity of the first birth, namely the priesthood and kingdom. But both are taken away from him, and Levi is given the priesthood, and Judah the kingdom. Here means the synagogue, which defiled the bed of Jacob, that is, the Scriptures, with false doctrine, because of which it lost priesthood and kingdom.

you have defiled my bed with the rising. The brothers Simeon and Levi, their deadly defences are harmful witnesses. Let not my soul enter into their secret, neither let my glory be one with their gathering. For in their wrath they have slain the man, and in their strength they have maimed the ox. Cursed be their anger for its fierceness, and their wrath for its stubbornness. I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel. Judah, it is you; your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the necks of your enemies. Your father's children will bow down to you. Judah is a young lion, thou art come up, my son, sint the spoiler; he hath bowed down, and lain down like a lion,

And like a lioness, who will rise up against him? The scepter 1) of Judah shall not be taken away, nor a champion from his feet, until the hero come, and unto him shall the nations fall. He shall bind his fill to the vine, and his ass's son to the noble branches. He shall wash his robe in wine, and his mantle in the blood of the vine. His eyes shall be redder than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk. Zebulun shall dwell at the fords of the sea, and at the fords of the ships, and shall come upon Sidon. Issachar shall be a legged ass, and shall lie down between the borders. And he shall see the rest that it is good, and the land that it is pleasant, and shall incline his shoulders to bear, and shall become an interest-bearing servant. Dan shall be a judge among his people, as another generation in Israel. Dan shall become a serpent in the way, and an adder in the stairs, and shall bite the horse in the heel, that his rider may fall back. O LORD, I wait for thy salvation. Gad, armed, shall lead the army, and lead it round again. Bon Asser comes his fat bread, and he will give cute food to the kings. Naphtali is a swift deer, and gives pretty speech. The blissful child Joseph, the blissful child to look at. The daughters walk in the regiment. And although the shooters make him bitter, with him

Though they quarrelled and hated him, yet his bow remained firm, and the arms of his hands were strengthened by the hands of the mighty one in Jacob. From them have come shepherds and stones in Israel. From thy father's God thou art helped, and from the Almighty thou art blessed, with blessings above from heaven, with blessings from the deep that lieth beneath, with blessings in breasts and in bellies. The blessing, promised to your father and my forefathers, goes strong, according to the desire of the high ones in the world. Joseph shall become heads, and chief Nazirites among his brethren. Benjamin is a ravening wolf; in the morning he will devour the prey, but in the evening he will divide the spoil. These are the twelve families of Israel all, and this is what their father spoke to them when he blessed them, each with a special blessing. And he commanded them, and said unto them: I am gathered unto my people, bury me with my fathers in the cave of the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the twofold cave that is toward Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for an inheritance burying. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife. There they buried Isaac also, and Rebekah his wife. And there I buried Leah in the possession of the field, and in the cave that was therein. And when Jacob had finished his commandments unto his children, he put his feet together upon the bed, and departed, and was gathered unto his people.

Cap. 50, 1. Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept [over him] and kissed him.

V. 1-4. And Jacob called his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may declare unto you the things that shall befall you in the latter days. Come in multitudes, and hear, ye children of Jacob, hear your father Israel 2c.

001 Now this is the last thing that Jacob giveth unto his sons, to every one his prophecy, how he shall fare; and he taketh them one by one, as he begat them, according to their age.

2. the first one is Reuben. "My power (says he) and beginning of my strength", or fortune; that is, the first child, as the first good that I overcame. Hence the

1) Marginal gloss: Scepter. Here the blessing of Christ, who was to be born of Judah, is mentioned, and he is called Shiloh, that is, he who should be blessed, and freshly infused with spirit and faith, which before was sour and wretched by works. Therefore we call Shiloh a hero. For the former part of the blessing concerns King David, and there is nothing more of Christ in all the blessings, but everything else is of temporal salvation, which is given to the children of Israel. As that Zebulun should dwell by the sea unto Sidon, and Jeshachar should dwell in the midst of the land of the sea, and yet have been interestable unto the kings of Assyria. The blessing of Dan was fulfilled by Samson, Judges. 13, 24. 25. Gad has directed his blessing, when they reigned before Israel, Jos. 1, 14. Aser has held good grain land. Naphtali blessing is fulfilled through Deborah and Barak, Judg. 4, 6. 5, 1. The blessing of Joseph is upon the kingdom of Israel, and is entirely said of the fleshly regime, that the daughters [that is, the cities in the land] were well governed in time, and had many prophets and great men for cornerstones. And though they were often contested, yet they prevailed; and this kingdom was in the family of Ephraim. So the spiritual blessing and kingdom remained on Judah, and the physical kingdom on Ephraim. Benjamin's blessing was fulfilled by St. Paul, Phil. 3, 5. or the king Saul, and the citizens of Gab", Richt. 20, 25.

Scripture also calls the fruits of the field strength, as above [Cap. 4, 12.]: "The field shall not give thee its strength or fortune." And beginning of my fortune, that is, I had nothing for the first but thee. The chief in sacrifice and power, that is, 1) you should well be the chief, as the first child, to whom by right the priesthood is due, that is, the spiritual regiment, to preach and govern the consciences, in addition to the temporal regiment, which he calls the power. To this you were born; but you go too lightly, that is, you pay too little attention to it, you have relied on it too surely, and think that you are a nobleman, that everything you do should be good, you have taken it lightly and not taken it to heart: for the sake of lightness you shall not be supreme.

So here he must pay for what he had done to his father and slept with his stepmother. For God leaves nothing unspotted, however slowly he punishes; just as he leaves nothing unrewarded for his own. Jacob had to let it go and was not punished, even though it made him very angry and hurt him; but here it is paid for in the bestowal of paternal goods and blessings. That is why this tribe and lineage has never been something special, but almost the least and the last. So God punishes slowly but severely, does not ask about the person and the blood, that he has the first birth and is Jacob's son. Thus the honor that is otherwise rightfully his is taken away from him, and the priesthood is turned over to Levi, the kingdom to Judah and Ephraim.

**V. 5-7. The brothers Simeon and Levi, their mortal defenses are harmful testimonies. My soul shall not enter into mystery, neither shall my glory be one with their assembly 2c.**

(4) He took the two brothers by the handful, and gave them no good thing, but always paid them according to what each had earned. We have just heard what they did in chapter 34, v. 25 ff., how they killed all the Shechemites, even though they had promised them safety. This was also unpunished until now

1) "that is" is missing in the Erlanger.

But not forgotten; so that their children must pay for it, that they are divided and scattered in Jacob or Israel, that is, that they have no dwelling place of their own in the land. For Levi never had any special dwelling place of his own, but was tossed about and divided among the others. Simeon also had to make his own home in the tribe of Judah and remain in a corner.

(5) Now some say spiritually that Judas, the betrayer of Christ, came from Simeon; but the priests who gathered together against Christ, and were slain in anger, were of the family of Levi, wherefore they are now scattered abroad. But I leave it in the bad, physical sense, according to history; because for the sake of Christ all thirteen 2) families were scattered; but these two had to be divided in the people of Israel.

**V. 8. 9. Judah, it is you, you will be praised by your brothers 2c.**

6th This is a piece of blessing upon Judah, where Christ shall come in, for whose sake it is all written. Now here Judah is given the honor, and is preferred to all the brethren, that they should bow down before him, and it happened to him as the other histories give, that he became the royal tribe, which had under it all Israel, under David and Solomon, for almost a hundred years. After that, it was divided and divided so that only two tribes remained with each other, Judah and Benjamin; the others were taken by Ephraim or Joseph. Nevertheless, the kingdom remained with Judah, as it was promised, until Christ. But Ephraim did not remain, so that it did not stand with each other much over two hundred years. Therefore Jacob says here before that Judah should become great and keep the scepter until the right king, Christ, would come. Thus, the text strongly imposes that Christ had to come from Judah, as we will hear.

(7) So this prophecy has two parts in it; first, the physical kingdom, which David and Solomon and their descendants had until Christ, in which the spiritual kingdom began and continues without end.

2) Jenaer: twelve.

008 So then he saith, Judah, thou art the man," the right child of Leah the poor woman, "thy brethren," all the twelve generations, "shall have thee in honor; and thine hand shall be upon the neck of the enemies," that is, God shall give thee grace, that whithersoever thou turnest thou shalt smite thine enemies; which all is fulfilled in David. For though he had many calamities at home in his Hanse, yet when he went forth he smote all to the ground, that he never lost a battle. Thus the Holy Spirit describes beforehand how he would do it, for it is especially upon him that all the Jews should call him gracious Lord.

9th Therefore he saith, Thou art a young lion, fearless and valiant, and so strong that no man can overpower thee, as the whole history of David showeth. Item: "Thou hast come up against robbery," that is, thou hast committed robbery, which has lifted thee up, that is, against all the kings round about; for he has brought under himself all that opposed him. Item: "He knelt down like a lion," that is, because he so robbed and broke everything under him, he sat down and sat quietly in the regiment, was a king like a lion, who lay and sat so mightily that no one was allowed to stir against him. Thus far he speaks of the kingdom of Judah, in which he especially means David. Now follows the spiritual kingdom.

**V. 10, 11: The scepter shall not be taken from Judah, nor a champion from his feet, until the hero come, and the nations shall fall unto him. He shall bind his fill to the vine, and his ass's son to the noble branches. He will tie his garment 2c.**

(10) All this is now due to Christ. He calls the "scepter" the kingdom and regiment, which is to remain with Judah. As if to say, the whole nation of Israel shall not remain, but shall fall away; but the family of Judah must retain the rule. Even if it does not have kings forever, it will least of all have princes, so that the rule will remain, not only temporal but also spiritual.

11 For when he says, "Another master from his feet," he means the priesthood, prophets and teachers, to be listened to until

on the hero, Christ, of which they should be sure. In Hebrew, however, he calls Christ Shilo, which the Jews do not yet know what it actually means; it is not used anywhere else in Scripture, except here. We have rendered it "a hero". Otherwise it means such a man who is fortunate, who goes out freely, and who succeeds in everything he undertakes. For it comes from the word which means happiness and prosperity, as in the 30th Psalm, v. 7: "I said in my prosperity, or when it was well with me: I will abide forever." So he points it to Christ with hidden words, and determines the kingdom of Judah.

(12) From this we can now deal with the Jews and transfer their matter. For since they have neither kingdom nor government, neither spiritual nor temporal, they are also 1) cast out of the land, and scattered through the world: in short, there is neither scepter nor master: so the hero or Messiah must surely have come. They can also raise nothing against it, because it is such a mighty saying, as none in the New Testament. So it is undeniable that when Christ came, their reign was over, and the people perished, until now they are even driven away, that they have no certain place anywhere, and now a thousand and a half years have passed, that they must confess without their thanksgiving that he must have come long ago. So that also our gospel and New Testament is founded on this text, that it must be righteous.

13 Further Jacob wants to indicate what kind of king he should be. There the Jewish kingdom ends and goes to the spiritual kingdom. [First of all, he says: "The nations will fall to him," that is, he will be such a king and such a kingdom that will not force the people with the sword and bring them under him, as all other kingdoms do, but to whom not only the Jews but also the nations will flock and give themselves under him. There has never been a kingdom to which a people has fallen wantonly, without this king: this must be so delicious that all kinds of people run to it with desire and love. But if the Jews say that he is talking about a bad lord, to whom many people

1) "also" is missing in the Erlanger.

Let them interpret it as they like, we have it irrefutably that he shall be of the tribe of Judah, of royal blood, that is, of the king David, and shall only come when the scepter, that is, their kingdom ceases, and shall be such a Lord, to whom not only Judaism but also the Gentiles shall fall. What else would it be if he should think that the Jews alone would fall to him and stick to him, since the kingdom of Judah is not to remain, and all the Jews have already fallen to him, and yet did not remain with him? What miracle would it be that the Jews, his own people, would fall to him?

14 Now let them say where they had any lord, after the scepter and fleshly kingdom have ceased, to whom the nations, both they and the Gentiles, have fallen. But we have Christ from the tribe of Judah, to whom not only many Jews but all the Gentiles have submitted themselves, and have willingly accepted him as their Lord. For Jacob's words indicate that the Shiloh will be much greater than the previous scepter and kingdom of Judah. Now it could not become greater if only the Jews fell to it; nor has there been a greater one among them without this Christ; so that he indicates it as a special prize of this king, just as it is a great wonder that all the world should fall to a Jewish man, when the Gentiles have never been more hostile to any people than to the Jewish.

15) But with what will he do this, or what regiment will the king lead? "He will bind (says Jacob) his 1) fillings to the vine, and his" 2c. There his kingdom is described, and seems indeed a foolish describing [to be]. What delicious thing is this, that the king, who is to rule without a sword and be greater than David and Solomon, should be the highest prize, that he should tie his donkey to vines or grapevines, and wash his clothes in wine, and have red eyes and white teeth? Who ever heard a king more praised and described? Should he not praise him cheaply like this: He will devour land and people, cities and castles enveloped with army power.

1) Jenaer: "his fullness"; Wittenberger and Erlanger: a filling.

and bloodshed, that one might bathe in it, and ride in it in great, glorious splendor, and surrounded with pure gold, like King Solomon, who is probably described differently.

(16) If I were to praise a bad citizen, and should praise him as he tied the ass to the vine, and washed his garment in wine; item, of red eyes and white teeth, everyone would laugh at me and mock; yes, if someone spoke of a fool, as he could not do more than tie the ass to the vine, and let it eat, and spoil both garment and wine with washing, it would go. But to speak thus of such a mighty king, to whom all the world is given, is nothing at all, especially if it be spoken of so great a thing as God speaks. When he speaks of a kingdom, he means it seriously, that it is something great.

Therefore faith must rule here, and the understanding must be seen, which God means, which [reason] cannot attain. The Jews make a nose at him and say that he means such a rich, superfluous kingdom that the wine should be so good that the donkeys will eat grapes and wash clothes in the wine, so that everyone will want to bathe in it. But how 2) does the donkey rhyme with the grapes, or the garment with the wine? and where are the red eyes and white teeth? or when is this ever physically fulfilled? Therefore, this cannot be understood in any other way than spiritually, just as he is not a physical but a spiritual king. So that it is spoken of the preaching office through and through; as we have often said, that Christ's kingdom is not ruled otherwise than by the Holy Spirit with the gospel. All his sword, armor, strength and power is the word of God, as St. Paul says to Romans Cap. 1, 16: "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God which saves all who believe in it.

18) This is all the glory and splendor of this king, that he has a powerless, despised word, which is condemned before all the world and trampled underfoot; but no one shall be saved, unless he believes 3) in it and holds it to be true.

2) Erlanger: what.

3) "denn" is missing in the Erlanger.

mightier than all the power of the world. It is indeed a mockery and foolishness before it, especially before the holy people; but nevertheless it does this so that the hearts that grasp it, stirred by the Holy Spirit, fall away from all other things that the world considers delicious, from all 1) idolatry and our works, and rely solely on God's grace. Thus everything on earth is destroyed, [it] tears us away from all things that are not God, which no human power is able to do. For there has never been a worldly power so great that it could rule the hearts, so that they would willingly let themselves be moved and led.

19 So he rules by the word and with the word in the hearts, that his royal rule is nothing else than the ministry of preaching, which was meant here so long before and had to be proclaimed by Jacob. That is why St. Paul praises it to the Romans at the beginning [v. 2], that it is proclaimed in the holy scriptures. Nothing more is known about Christ's kingdom than the gospel; it does not rule by sword or force, the word alone causes 2) the rumor that mother and daughter, father and son are separated, as Christ says [Matth. 10, 35].

(20) Now this is what Jacob says, "He will bind the ass to the vine"; namely, nothing else, but to bind his Christians to the holy word of God, so that they will drink from it. What GOD has spoken and written is the noble vine and branches, but we are the ass or fill. Thus He does not speak of great men, but of lowly, poor asses, to indicate that His kingdom is a kingdom of grace, as He also indicated on Palm Day, when He rode in, and took the dumb animal, the ass, to it [Matt. 21:7]. We, who live in the flesh, are called donkeys by the Scriptures, just as we are also coarse donkeys, because the donkey is equipped to carry, but goes slowly, so that he must always be driven. These are just his dear Christians on earth, arranged that we carry the holy cross, have on the neck the lazy rogue, the old Adam, who is not inclined to good, and only resists; he must be resisted, and

He is afflicted by the cross until he dies. But he must stand on the staff and drink wine, that is, bound to the word that strengthens us, makes us drunk, joyful and bold, to suffer and die, that one may pass through without all fear.

(21) The same is also that which follows: "He shall wash his garment in wine, and his mantle in the blood of the vine," that is, in red grapes; as red wine is commonly found in the country, as red as blood. This is a strange kind of washing: if someone wanted to wash clothes and added blood to it, he would be considered nonsensical, as he would want to defile the clothes more than make them clean. Which, because it does not rhyme, as has been said, the text forces it to be understood of spiritual things, and is not spoken of otherwise than of the kingdom of Christ, which is its nature. The garment or mantle is us. Thus his kingdom stands in that it is but a bath; for we are not clean, but are made clean; it is not done, but is to be done; it is not of those who are perfect, but of those who must daily increase and continue. Therefore one must always preach and let the word go forth, so that one must always sweep, otherwise one would not be allowed to preach. For this washing and bathing cannot be done except through the word; this is the beautiful red wine, by which our consciences are cleansed without ceasing, as the apostles write, one should always increase in faith and love, [we] nevertheless remain no different than half men, flesh and blood is too deep within us.

22) Therefore the king has no other office than his robe and cloak, that is, his dear Christianity, which he adorns and adorns himself in; as he boasts in the prophet [Isa. 61:10]: I will adorn you as a bride puts on her robe and 4) ribbon. These are vain and strong sayings against the laws of men. For we cannot wash ourselves with the doctrines of men, but they must be washed in words; that is, they will be preached to, and by preaching they will believe, thereby they will be cleansed, and always more and more swept. Further:

1) So from us heirirbergenomien from the old edition of Walch. In the other editions: all idolatry.

2) Erlanger: all.

3) Erlanger: not one.

4) "that" is missing in the Erlanger.

**V. 12: His eyes are redder than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.**

(23) It is more fitting for a woman to be praised than for a king; it is fitting for her to be beautiful. A man's ornament would be better sword and armor. But because he thus comes into foolishness by speaking, he forces us to come from foolishness into his wisdom. "His eyes are reddish," he says, like strong red wine, and sets "red eyes" and "white teeth" against each other.

24. the eyes are those who preside over the word of God; for he still describes the preaching ministry and word, so that he may nourish and guide Christianity, and wants it to deal with it alone, and not know any other doctrine or rule. But the preachers who drive it, lead it, and have it in their hands are the eyes and teeth, that is, that a preacher should have two parts, preaching law and grace. Red or brown eyes are angry and serious; these are Christ's eyes, who is a bishop and overseer who allows no other preaching nor governing.

25 This is especially said about doctrine, for there is not so much in life. If one kept the doctrine pure, one could advise all things. God only gives grace that one preaches rightly; whether we do not all live rightly, one must bear patience. For it goes like this: where one preaches rightly, life goes on weakly, lazily and slowly; again, where one deceives people with false doctrine, it does not go on at all. For where the teaching is not right, the life that follows the teaching cannot be right either.

26 Therefore "the eyes" are preachers and apostles; they are red like strong wine, that is, sharp, so that they punish everything that is not pure doctrine, that is, that does not teach faith and love. But "the teeth" are they which bite, and yet are white as milk, which is sweet. Thus whimsical speech he performs before great delight in the kingdom of Christ. Now these are the same preachers who bite and punish when one is already in the faith, that one may receive the pure doctrine, rebuking by the law all men's doings, and then letting come up the pure faith. After that, when Christians have become believers, they do nothing, but always punish.

Yet they are sweet, pure and pure as milk; they are not poisonous or false, they do not seek their own, they desire nothing but the benefit and improvement of others; they are sharp, but they mean well; they do not pretend, but act sincerely, right and wrong. Teeth like milk are called *candidi dentes*, whereas they are called *lividos dentes*, rotten and poisonous teeth that are not pure. The pure also punish and rebuke, but mean it warmly and brotherly; as St. Paul also punishes the Corinthians, item, the Galatians.

(27) Behold, by such whimsical speech, so flowered and adorned, he so masterfully shows the whole kingdom of Christ, how it is not at all in bodily things, but only that the doctrine alone is right, and leads to the true faith, to this also the preachers who hold about it. If only this is done correctly, God can have patience with life. It is not so much a matter of the hearers as of the teachers; for the hearers are soon judged whether they live rightly or not.

Therefore, no greater mercy and greater gift can come, than that God sends right preachers who are faithful, and who fight the false teachers. Again, no greater plague nor heartache than when He takes away the right ones, lets false teachers arise with blue, poisonous teeth. Let us watch and beware of them. They are already there, and are tearing in; yes, even among us there are those who already are, or will become so. We have the gospel, we know what to do, how to believe and how to love; but we are soon choked and dead; so it is very soon that everything becomes full of false preachers again. Therefore, let us give thanks to God, and pray that it may remain pure, and ward off the false, seducing spirits.

(29) This is the noble text of the kingdom of Christ, how it should be done in the right understanding of the holy gospel, which is never to be praised enough; [it] is so great that a Christian heart must marvel at it; [it] does and accomplishes so much that no one can measure [it] enough, of which we have always preached, nor have anything else to preach. Therefore also the holy patriarch

so funny talked about it, to the very best he could and knew.

(30) Conclude therefore from this text that Christ has come; for the preaching has long since begun, which makes men so bold and joyful that they fear neither death nor the devil, and are able to bear the holy cross, having for this purpose fine, pure, and sharp preachers; as it was first fulfilled by the apostles and martyrs. Now that the preaching has begun, we can finely prove that we have the King, because so many nations have fallen to him, who happily shed blood for his sake and proved such righteous doctrine.

(31) Behold, these things God made known to Judah beforehand, and promised. This is also the main part of the whole chapter. For though he gives his blessing to the whole family, to all twelve tribes, to each of them, yet they were all done and written for the sake of the chief blessing, that Christ should come from the tribe of Judah. Therefore what follows is a temporal thing, which is proclaimed to the others, as it was to the first two, Simeon and Levi.

32 But it is long since God gives all things out of pure grace, and no one is overcome by his labor, toil, and prudence, for He tells them beforehand how they should fare before they are born, so that one may learn what happens to everyone is decreed by God from eternity, both how each one should live and how each one should die.

It is not man's reason or action, but God's will and order, whether it be good or evil. We let ourselves think that it is according to our dreams when something happens, think that we have done wisely, or that we have been deceived. [We should be ashamed of ourselves, if we look at this text rightly, that we think it is how we do it, not how he does it. If then I know that everything goes as he orders it, and nothing is encountered, it is so provided by him, and skillfully: what then shall we make of it? [We must say, you want it that way. Because we do not do this, we grumble about it and want to master God. So now we want to pass over the other blessings completely, even though they are not difficult.

But the Christians have fallen into it and have darkened it with their interpretation.

### **V. 13: Zebulun shall dwell at the fords of the sea, and at the fords of the ships, and shall come upon Sidon.**

034 What may Jacob make of it useless words? The word "fords the sea and borders Sidon" is no more than a promise to Zebulun, that he should keep the border that is on the sea and go as far as Sidon. This is what the landers know, how and where the great sea, on which one ships from Venice to Jerusalem, comes up against the land where one starts. How and when they took the land, one reads in the book of Joshua now and then.

Now this is a temporal thing, but it is a spiritual thing, as it is said that God not only gives what belongs to the soul, but also orders and sends good government and all things in the flesh, so that nothing can happen without His order. That the princes of Saxony have this land is not their power, but God's order and will, who says: So far be Lord, and no further. So, as Paul says in the Histories [Apost. 17:26], that he measures out the extent of every ruler's rule, but despite the fact that it could take up more than a hair's breadth, 2) that what everyone has he has and must take from the hand of God, who has the power of all things, though the world does not recognize it; just as the Jews did not recognize it, thinking that they did it by their sword. Thus he says above: Yes, if I did not do it, you would not have a hair's breadth.

We Christians must know this if we believe that he is the Creator of heaven and earth, that without his knowledge and will no hair falls from anyone's head [Luc. 21:18] and that he cannot have a morsel of bread unless he gives it. It is never enough to learn, although it is easy to say. If we believed it and held it to be true, we would not care for anything, nor would we be afraid, but

1) Jenaer and Erlanger: one.

2) In the old editions: "trotz ober das sie mehr ein harbreit künd einnehmen". - "ober" seems to us to be a misprint instead of: "aber", which we have set.



Let him do it, and wait for everything from his hand. But because we do not believe, we think he is far from us, wants us to take care of ourselves and think how we get what we need. Let this be given to Zebulun, and let him not reach nor reach further.

**V. 14, 15: Issachar shall be a legged ass, and shall lie down between the borders. And he saw the rest that it is good, and the land that it is pleasant, and hath straitened his shoulders to bear, and is become an interest-bearing servant.**

(37) This is not preached for the common man, but for the profound who study the Scriptures. To this tribe he gives a blessing: He shall have fine land, but he shall be a servant, and he shall be able to pay interest. The land is in the midst of Canaan, of a fertile soil, as Zebulun and Naphtali also; but it is in the border, where the heathen abut; therefore it should be contested for ever, and give the Assyrian king womb and interest. [So he will say, Thou seest it, and knowest it, that it is a goodly land; but thou shalt not be master therein. As if he should say: You will eat and drink and have all abundance, but you will not be grateful to God; therefore you will have to give it to other people and let them eat it. Now this is seen in history, how they are beaten by kings, have never saved the race, [it] has always remained under the kings of Syria and Assyria. So it has become true that he would be a legged ass, that is, who would have to bear great burdens and be oppressed, bear more burdens than he would be able to.

**V. 16-18. Dan shall be a judge among his people, as a generation in Israel. Dan shall become a serpent in the way, and an adder in the stairs, and shall bite the horse in the heels, that his rider may fall back. Lord, I wait for your salvation.**

(38) This is the reason why we must act, so that we may avoid loose talk and fables. For they carry about a book of the Antichrist, wherein it is said that he shall be born of the tribe of Dan, because it is written, "He shall be a serpent and an adder in the way." But it is all foolishness. The Antichrist shall not come from the Jews;

We already have the right one, of which Paul says [2 Thess. 2, 3.], the pope of Rome. But it is well said that the twelve families should be scattered abroad, and never arise, nor be gathered together, and become so strong that they should be called a principality. The Scripture is scanty, that they should come to naught, and have no regiment; as the 110th Psalm, v. 6, prophesies, "God shall bruise the head of the enemies."

But the kingdom of the Antichrist, because it is such a power that overcomes all the world, cannot come from it, but must have another origin, as St. Paul says. When the Roman Empire is gone, it will arise.

040 Thus he saith, Dan also shall become a judge like the rest. This is fulfilled in the strong hero Samson, in the book of the judges; he is just the one he is talking about here: The serpent in the way, and the adder in the path, that biteth the horse in his heels, and the rider falleth back: that is, he goeth forth, and putteth rider and horse to shame: as he did to the Philistines. [He] was a few men, without any stuff, he sneaked and attacked them, and drove them all back. So this is the allegory of this history, so Samson did, how often he broke in with his own person, and struck the Philistines, so that no one could resist him. See the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of the book of Judges.

41) When Jacob intervenes and says, "Lord, I am waiting for your salvation," he is referring to Christ, as if to say, "This is how it will be among the people, so long will the serpent reign, if God would have your Christ here soon!

**V. 19. Gab, equipped, will lead the army, and lead it around again.**

(42) Of this read the history of the book of Joshua, how they went before Israel, and were at the head.

**V. 20. From Asher comes his fat bread, and he will give cute food to the kings.**

43. eaters shall have the blessing of sitting in a delicious land of grain, and shall be rich.

**V. 21. Naphtali is a quick deer, and gives pretty speech.**

44) The story in the book of Judges [Cap. 4, 4. ff.] reads about the prophetess Deborah and Barak from this family, how they defeated the great royal captain 1) Sissera with a small army, came shortly after him, as nimble and fast as a deer. Of this they make a pretty spiritual song, there [Cap. 5.] described. These are the ten sons of Leah and the two maidens.

**V. 22-26: To look at the blessed child Joseph, the blessed child, the daughters come along in the regiment. And even though the archers have embittered him, quarreled with him, and hated him 2c.**

(45) That it may be understood, I have said before, that God divided the land and the people into twelve parts according to the twelve brethren, and to every one was given his portion. But the family of Levi he withdrew. So he made the royal family come to Judah until Christ, who made a spiritual kingdom out of it; but the kingdom was divided into two parts, one of them led by Judah, the other by Joseph or Ephraim. Judah retained only two families, the other ten all fell there; the latter was the least, yet the best; the latter was the most powerful, yet not so good. For Judah had many pious kings, but Ephraim never had a pious one; therefore God punished them and cut them off, so that at last the ten families were scattered and never came together again.

46 Now Jacob speaks here of the great kingdom of Ephraim, but nothing but of the temporal regime, that it was a fine people and rich, and that it should prosper because there were many among the people who belonged to God's kingdom. For it also had many excellent prophets, so it had to be lucky that the kings were pious or not; but the text is a little dark.

47. "Joseph (says he) is the dear child," binds the two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, to each other to One Person; "and is a blessed child," that is, the people of Joseph will be a fine people, according to the temporal regi-

not because of his person, that he was a beautiful boy, but because of his tribe, blood and flesh. For it was such a beautiful kingdom that other kings marveled, of skillful, wise men and fine prophets. But the daughters are called in the Scriptures, Cities and spots of the land; as it is written in Matthew [Cap. 21, 5.], "Tell the daughter Zion," that is, Jerusalem. So now he wants to say: The cities in the kingdom are well ordered in the regiment, [it] has gone fine in the swing and good peace, and prospered well, which is a great treasure and grace in a country. For what God praises as a fine regiment does not have to be something small.

48 The kingdom shall have this grace above others, that it may have a good, well-ordered regiment. And not only that, but also, if other kings set upon it than those of Syria and Assyria, to contend with it and bring it under themselves, it shall have no need; its bow and arm shall remain firm and strong, and always prevail; as the histories of [the] kings show. Although they are often contested, they have nevertheless won and preserved the regiment, but they have remained firm and emancipated; not by their forces (for they were often scarcely a tenth as strong and much as the enemies), but "by the hands (he says) of the Mighty One in Jacob." Thus we read of King Ahab, who was a wicked man in the sight of God, but a fine man in the sight of the world, how he slew in one day a hundred thousand men with a small company [1 Kings 20:27-29].

49] Further, "out of them shall come shepherds and stones in Israel. These are the great, fine prophets, Elijah, Elisha, Micah, and others; these were the cornerstones on which they were to rely.

50. further, he wants to say, this blessing does not happen to you because of your merit, or because of your fathers; [it] is a pure blessing of God, what you have. "With blessings from heaven, and from the deep"; that is, the sun shall shine upon thee, rain, 2) thunder, cold, and hot, as it is profitable for the earth: [it] shall all serve thee, even the deep or waters shall be

1) Thus the Jena. Wittenberg and Erlangen: König.

2) In the old editions: rain.

Moisten the land, and give steam, that the rain may come down from heaven. In addition also "with blessing in breasts and bellies", thus, that everything should be pregnant, bring fruit, and suckle, which has only bellies and breasts. Thus everything is written in colorful words; what can be fruitful of men and cattle, all shall multiply and have enough. [So much is said: The bearing of children, the bringing forth of cattle, and the prospering, and the grain in the field, are not all ours, but are God's grace and blessing.

51 Item: "The blessing promised to your father (says he) and to my forefathers is great. To me and to my fathers the blessing is promised, that we should possess the land with all the fullness of blessing, that [it] should be a goodly kingdom, all things sufficient and prosperous, and orderly, with strife and peace. "According to the desire of the high ones in the world," that is, as all kings and princes, and what is high, desire. So this blessing did not extend further than the kingdom of the flesh. And all things are thus written, that we may know how it is ordered of God beforehand, that he should give it, and we should not, and that no man should boast that it is his work, skill, and prudence. Everything must be His blessing. If it is not a blessing, it gives and creates nothing; but if it is given, it is purely God's blessing. Thus, God draws to Himself all the goods that we have in body and soul.

52. to the last he says, "out of Joseph shall be chiefs, and chief Nazirites among his brethren." That was Elijah and Elisha, [these] have ruled like the chiefs; in addition Nazirite, of which Moses writes [4th book, Cap. 6, 2. ff.]; that were fleshly saints, holy prophets, ordered to rule and teach the people, as also the prophet Samuel was. Thus the lineage is blessed, that it shall be well endowed with rulers, fine men, and all manner of abundance. Although they lacked in not serving God properly, yet they received the blessing of the flesh because of this patriarch.

V. 27. Benjamin a ravening wolf; in the morning he will devour prey, but in the evening he will divide the spoil.

What the text wants, I do not know too certainly. It would like to be understood of the king Saul, or also St. Paulo, because they both were of this tribe. But because the blessing is bodily, I mean in the simplest way that it speaks of King Saul, who was the first king, and fought against Amalek, and laid him low, and distributed the spoil [1 Sam. 14:47, 48]. Whoever wants to make it spiritual, and draw on St. Paul, may do so, so that he was a ravening wolf; first, when he persecuted Christianity, Apost. 8, 3. 9, 1. ff., but after that he was converted, ate up the plunder and distributed it, that is, he stole souls from the devil and the world and brought them to Christ, and accomplished much good in Christianity, yes, he preached to almost the largest part of the world alone 1) and made them Christians. That is why I do not mind understanding the text from him. For God has generally given a tribe one man, or two or three, by whom the whole lineage would be blessed. Therefore, these blessings are not to be drawn on all kinds of persons, but on one or two. So we read of no one from the tribe of Benjamin who was or did anything special, except for King Saul and the apostle Paul. Item, of the citizens of Gibeah, as it is written in the book of Judges [Cap. 20, 15].

54. Let this then be the summary of this chapter: How everything that happens is done by God's decree, that it must go this way and no other way, suggest it as you will, and no one can obtain it by his reason or work, nor can anyone hinder it, but all the world shut up, and boast nothing of its good. If you have anything, know that it is his blessing alone; if anything is taken from you, it is all, by a farthing, ordered and provided by him, that [it] must go thus.

1) Thus the Jena. In the other editions: preached.

# The fiftieth chapter.

(vv. 2-14) And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to anoint his father. And the physicians anointed Israel until forty days were expired: for so long were the days of anointing: and the Egyptians wept over him seventy days. And it came to pass, when the days of mourning were expired, that Joseph spake unto Pharaoh's servants, saying, If I have found grace in your sight, speak unto Pharaoh, saying, My father hath taken an oath of me, saying, Behold, I die; bury me in my grave, which I have digged me in the land of Canaan. So I will go up, and bury my father, and come again. Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as you swore to him. So Joseph went up to bury his father. And with him went all Pharaoh's servants, and the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt. And all Joseph's household, and his brethren, and his father's household: only their children, and their flocks, and their herds, left they in the land of Goshen. And they went up with him also chariots and horsemen; and there was almost a great host. And when they were come to the place Atad, which is on the other side Jordan, they mourned very sore and bitter: and he bare grief for his father seven days. And when the people of the land, the Cananites, saw the mourning in the place Atad, they said: The EgyPter carry there great suffering. Therefore the place is called the Egypter Sorrow, which is on the other side Jordan. And his children did as he commanded them, and brought him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the twofold cave of the field, which Abraham bought with the field, for an inheritance, from Ephron the Hittite toward Mamre. So Joseph went up again into Egypt with his brethren, and with all that went up with him to bury his father, when they had buried him.

1. this was an honest burial of the holy six patriarchs, abraham, isaac, jacob with their wives, who never had any of them.

They had a foot wide in the land that was promised to them by God, as St. Stephen says [Apost 7:16]. Why then did they want to be buried in the very place that Jacob also so nobly commands that his body be taken up and buried in his fathers' tomb? It was only to confirm the promise, so that the Jews would be all the more glad to exterminate the Gentiles and take possession of the land where their fathers lay.

For we are so skillful that what God promises and pledges cannot be imagined and blasphemed to us enough that we firmly believe it. That is why God rules so strangely. For they were now in Egypt, in a foreign land, and soon after Joseph's death they were so oppressed that it was not possible before the world that they should take the land. There were more than thirty kings in the land of Canaan, great and mighty men, so oppressed that it was not possible to drive them out, especially from such a small and weak people; as it is said, "The cock cannot be driven from its dunghill, and one man can do more in his house than four outside. For this reason the fathers wanted to be buried there, to testify their faith and to strengthen the children. Otherwise they would have said, "Yes, how can we believe it, since they themselves did not believe? But to prevent this, Jacob allowed himself to be led into the land with such splendor, as he certainly believed that he would be led into the land by God.

3 Thus God's work and word is always directed, so that reason cannot believe or comprehend it. For how should reason be able to judge this? This man dies in a foreign land, that he must also buy his burial; how fine a lord is he of the land? It seems so utterly untrue that reason must scoff and laugh. But if it is God's word, it must be done; heaven and earth would rather perish.

4. that is why Moses needs so many useless words, as it seems to us, that he should have their faith.

This shows how they had nothing of their own in the land to possess, and died on the same word of God, even after death they remained so firm that they had to be buried in it; so that there is nothing more than the word, and they occupy the land in the mere word. The body can be led into the land and buried, but the soul holds on to the word and remains in it in eternal life; which the epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 11, 20. ff.] has delicately emphasized.

(5) Thus we have also seen Jacob, in whose legend we have seen nothing, but only the exercise of faith in the cross and suffering from the beginning, that he was well cooked and weakened by so much sorrow and heartache, that he had to grow weary of life, and was extinguished at the last, like a light. For those who are tempted and broken on earth, death is not bitter for them, but those who have many good days, and go without temptation, die with great difficulty and reluctantly. For it is very hard to wait so long, until it comes to the trains, and then only gain desire to die, if one is not well accustomed to suffer all kinds of things before.

6th Now therefore the Scripture saith, He is gathered unto his people, as he also spake of Abraham above [Cap. 25:8]. [It] is a Hebrew way of speaking, and so much said, not where he went, but he came to the dead, where they are buried, as we say in our way, He came to the churchyard. But there is secretly signified the resurrection of [the] dead, that God would raise them again; wherefore the Scripture also calls death a sleep [Joh. 11, II. Marc. 5, 39.]. For those who sleep have the hope that they will rise again. So also the fathers are gathered to their people, as God has his eye upon them, and will raise them up in his time.

007 Now Moses writing how Jacob was anointed, and how he was buried, seemeth as if they were vain things: but therefore it is written, that it might be profitable for their children, and for their seed, to strengthen their faith. In this Joseph kept the way of the land, anointing him forty days, as Christians should always do according to other people's customs and traditions.

not to live according to their own sense. Now the Egyptians had the way of anointing their dead with noble, delicious ointments, or spices and spices, which the country carries, which the Jews also took from them afterwards; as also Christ was anointed with myrrh and aloes [Joh. 19, 39. 40.], that also some used to keep their parents in a crystal, like the emperor Titum at Rome. Otherwise the dead body could not have been granted, especially in the hot country; for they had to lead it a day or a hundred before they came to the burial.

(8) For Joseph to take leave of King Pharaoh to bury his father, and not to depart from his office without his will, is therefore written, that every man should obey the authorities, and do nothing without their will, especially they that sit in the office. For here he lets himself down as a servant, and asks the king's servants, all who were under him, to pray for him. God wants to honor the temporal authorities so highly. Against this, the pope and his troops stood up, taught and did, and withdrew from all worldly authority.

**(vv. 15-21) Now Joseph's brothers were afraid because their father had died, and they said: Joseph would be angry with us and repay us for all the evil we did to him. Therefore they said unto him, Thy father commanded before his death, saying, Thus shall ye say unto Joseph, Dearly beloved, forgive thy brethren their iniquity and their sin, that they have done so evil unto thee. Dearly beloved, forgive us now this iniquity, the servants of the God of thy father. But Joseph wept when they spake these things unto him. And his brethren went and fell down before him, and said, Behold, here are we thy servants. Joseph said to them: Fear not, for I am under GOD. Ye thought evil of me; but God hath turned it for good, to do as it is now in the day, to preserve much people. Fear not therefore, I will provide for you and your children. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.**

(9) Now this is a fine, sweet text, and a great example to comfort us. There the brothers stand, confess and confess their sin,

and they draw on God for a father, as do the true Christians. Joseph, however, is so full of love that his heart warms, and he cannot refrain from weeping; he has even forgotten the iniquity that the brothers have done to him. Whoever could form the mirror in himself would easily forgive his enemies.

10) Yes, even more he says: "God has turned it for the best, for you and for me, and has benefited many people. 1)" He does not praise their deed, but confesses that they meant evil to destroy him; but he teaches us how God has the hearts and minds of all our enemies in his hand, which, though they be evil, yet he can so turn them that it is just contrary to their opinion. Whoever believes this can easily overcome his enemies, must not be afraid of anyone, because he knows that God governs and masters all things, and that he has such a God who wants to turn all misfortune into happiness for him.

Therefore, if you are a Christian, let the world be angry with you and take everything away from you if it can, but take comfort in the fact that the worse they mean and think, the closer God is to you and means it for the best. Thus, the suffering and persecution of Christians is only for us to brave, and to know that God will turn it for the best. This is what Christ says in John [Cap. 12, 24.]: "Unless the grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit"; that is, if your thing is condemned and brought to nothing, it will all be better. Therefore the Scripture [Ps. 33, 10] says: "The Lord makes void the counsel of the Gentiles, and hinders the thoughts of the nations," as it was with Christ; for they, by crucifying him, brought it about that he became an everlasting king.

(12) So Joseph will also say: You wanted to kill me and destroy my dreams, but they have been fulfilled just by this; if you had not thought and acted such evil against me, I would not have come to these honors. This should ever be a great comfort to us; but to those who have not

Christians, it is said in vain, they do not believe it. Reason cannot grasp such things, it only wants to take revenge and suffer nothing; but faith says: I will gladly suffer what I should, my God, you will probably turn it for the best.

**Thus Joseph dwelt in Egypt with his father's household, and lived an hundred and ten years, and saw the children of Ephraim unto the third generation. The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were like them, and begat children in Joseph's bosom.**

(13) It is richly rewarded to come out of such misery to such honors; that this Joseph must have been a man of excellent faith, because he is rewarded so superfluously. He reigned in the land eighty years, and was chief after Pharaoh from the thirtieth year even unto the hundred and tenth, and saw the fifth generation of his seed in his life.

**V. 24-26. And Joseph said to his brothers: I die, and GOD will visit you, and bring you out of this land into the land which He swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore he took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "When God visits you, carry my bones away. So Joseph died when he was an hundred and ten years old, and they anointed him, and laid him in an ark in Egypt.**

14 Again, this is faith in the promise of the land of Canaan; for a sign and assurance that their children's faith would be strengthened, he also commands his body to be taken with them when they go out. [It is kept in an ark almost two hundred years after his death.

15 Thus we have the first and almost the noblest book of the Old Testament, which is in all places thoroughly full of striking examples of faith, and of love, and especially of the holy cross, and so rich in figures of our Lord Christ and his kingdom as no book of Scripture, so that both words and examples show and teach nothing else than the one Christ.

1) Above in the text and in the Bible: to receive much people.

# C. Sermon on the text Genesis 3:15:

Ipsium semen conteret caput serpentis, the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent.\*)

Held in Wittenberg, Monday in the Easter holidays, in the morning, April 2, 1526.

## Gen. 3, 15. The seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent.

Dear friends, while we are still celebrating and keeping the Easter feast, and celebrating the article of our Christian faith, where we say: Risen from the dead on the third day, through whom Christ, the Son of God, has brought us righteousness, that is, forgiveness of sins, conquest of death, the devil and hell, eternal life and blessedness; as you heard enough yesterday, praise and thanksgiving to God. So let us take before us today the first promise of God, or the first gospel, preached on earth in Paradise to Adam and Eve, when God says to the serpent who deceives Eve: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. The same shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

(2) These are the comforting words which restored and gladdened Adam and Evam; otherwise, in the fear of death, into which they were brought by the serpent the devil, they would have despaired and despaired, dying and perishing forever. And this is their gospel

lium, which they preached to their children. That is why it was called Adam's bosom in the first place, so that all believers were gathered together as in one bosom and were saved and saved by the word. The sermon lasted until Abraham, 2080 years ago, when Abraham wanted to sacrifice Isaac, and God denied Abraham this promise, Gen. 22:18, and said that in his seed all the Gentiles should be redeemed; then it was called Abraham's Bosom, as Christ says Luc. 16:22. But now it is called Christ's Bosom, because he has now come, whom God promised to Adam and Abraham.

(3) Therefore we do not want to discuss the serpent much, as only the words and the punishment go to the physical serpent alone, as the godless Jews fool; but go mainly to the devil, who possesses the serpent and speaks through it, because no creature on earth from the beginning of the world is given the gift of speech, but only man. But because here the serpent speaks to Eve, as with a bodily voice and human language, which Adam and Eve can understand: to this she does not speak only bad words, but speaks of God's word.

\*) Luther held this and the following sermon on Easter Monday, April 2, 1526 (not 1525, which the editions offer, misled by the Eisleben edition). Herr v. Enders has already shown in the 17th volume of the Erlangen edition, p. 153 ff-, that the sermon could not have been held in 1525, because Luther was not present in Wittenberg at that time; however, he was not able to determine the correct year. From Poach's index to Luther's sermons, which is in the Zwickau Nathsschulbibliothek, we see that Luther gave this sermon on the day we have indicated. (Buchwald, Andr. Poachs handwritten collection 2c., vol. I, first half, p. XXIV.) These sermons were first published in 1564 by Georg Buchholzer, provost in Berlin, under the title: "Three beautiful glorious sermons of the venerable Lord and Father v. Martini Lutheri, of blessed and holy memory, preached at Wittenberg in the parish church during the Easter holidays. The 1st sermon on the text Gen. 3: Ipsuru ssruuu contsrot vuput 8srpsntis. The 2nd sermon on the text Gen. 22nd: In ssinins tun ksns(lesntur niunn" Mntss. The 3rd sermon on the text Exod. 3.: Lubuii, czusiu viäsrut Lloissst them. At the end of the last sermon, that Joseph had also been a figure of Christ in Egypt 2c. In honor of the Roman royal majesty 2c. Now new and never before issued such, and by Georgium Buchholzer, provost of Berlin, in print verfertigt, Anno 1564." Printed this writing was "by Johan Eichorn" at Frankfurt an der Oder. In the collections: Eislebensche, vol.I, p. 198d; Altenburg"", vol.II, p. 878; Leipziger, vol.XII, p.140; Erlanger (1st), vol. 19, p. 1, and (2nd), vol. 17, p. 153. We give the text according to the Erlanger edition (2nd ed.). The sermon, which is marked as the third in Buchholzer's edition mentioned above, is found in the "Predigten über etliche Capitel des andern Buches Mosis" in this volume after the interpretation of the third chapter.

and commandment, of which the serpent knows nothing; yes, the serpent has not understood what the devil has spoken through his tongue and mouth, as Augustine also says, and falsifies God's word with lies, since he speaks: "You will not die of death"; this cannot be a bad serpent, but must be a high spirit. Just as the devil was a high spirit in the beginning, and a good angel created by God, who possessed the serpent and speaks through it. The objection of the Jews does not help either: If Balaam's donkey has spoken, why should not the serpent also speak here? Answer: But there the angel of the Lord speaks through the donkey, as it is written in the 4th book of Moses at the 22nd, v. 28. ff; but here through the serpent the devil does it.

4 Therefore these words of God to Adam and Eve against the devil and his kingdom, sin, death, the wrath of God, and hell, are spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, how man shall be, and after that how the devil shall lay hold on him, and kill him, and murder him. But the Lord Christ shall arise again, overcome the devil, take away his power\*, redeem Adam and Eve and all believers, bring them righteousness, life and salvation again; as we then want to hear through the grace of God.

5. First of all, it has been an abominable idolatry in the church that this beautiful, glorious text of Christ has been interpreted and drawn to the tender, chaste, pure Virgin Mary, the mother of Christ, as if she were the one who is to crush the head of the serpent, that is, to take away the power of the devil, to destroy sin, to overcome death, to bring back life and blessedness, and have perverted the word Ipsum, that is, the one, and made it Ipsa, that is, the one, as Mary; as she is sung of in all churches, which is not her office. Nor has she been honored by this, as was meant, but has been profaned to the highest degree, that what is due and belongs to her Son should be attributed to her. Therefore let us leave the devilish error, and remain with our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom Moses and all the prophets wrote; as Christ said to his disciples yesterday on Easter Day, as Luke read in the last [v. 44].

Therefore this seed of the woman Christ is our Lord, and the Hebrew language calls the children born of women, woman's seed, that is, as we say in German, a quite natural child of the woman, or of a woman. And here is the first part, that our Lord Christ should become a true, natural, pure human being, born of woman, or not of man; as if God said: "Now, you devil, who through woman, Evam (who was created and came from man while he was asleep, but without man's doing and work), brought sin, death and eternal damnation into the world: So I will bring you happiness again through a child, which shall come and be born from a woman and not from a man; this same child or woman's seed shall avenge everything on you; what you have brought about only through her shall come and go over your head. But if this child is to come and be born from a woman and not from a man, the woman or mother must be a virgin.

(7) Adam and Eve did not yet understand that the mother should be a virgin and give birth without the help of a man. As Moses writes in Chapter 4, v. 1, when Eve gave birth to her first son Cain, she does not think otherwise, that he is the man whom God promised and promised to her, who would avenge her on the serpent. Therefore she also says: "I have gotten the man, the Lord", the God Jehovah, the seed of the woman. So also, since Noah is born, after 1057 years, the patriarch or old father Lamech also does not mean differently, his Noah would be the seed of the woman, or the child. Therefore he says: "He will comfort us in our toil and labor on earth, which the Lord has cursed," as written in Genesis 5:29.

8. but the man or the child must not be begotten by Adam or Lamech, but only come from a woman, that is, from a virgin. As God had the prophet Isaiah Cap. 7, 14. say publicly in 1244: "Behold, a virgin is with child, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Then it became quite obvious and loud that this



The son's mother must be a virgin, and must not be the son of a man, but of a virgin. For all that is born of man and woman is conceived and born in iniquity and sin, as the 51st Psalm, v. 7, says. Now if this son is to be born without sin, he must not come from man and woman, but from a woman alone, that is, from a virgin.

(9) For if his conception and birth had been impure, as all men are, he could not have saved us from sins and death. For one sinner or thief cannot save another from the gallows; it must be done by a pious, innocent man. Now if Christ is to help us, His conception and birth must be pure and holy, the Holy Spirit must accomplish this through a virgin: as we confess in our faith that this is how it happened, and is described in the New Testament by St. Matthew [Cap. 1, 18] and St. Lincoln [Cap. 1, 35], the evangelists. Therefore, Adam and Eve believed that Christ, the Son of God, would come and become man, redeeming and saving them from sin, death, the devil and hell. But whether he should be born of a virgin, they did not know, because it was also not so publicly and so clearly indicated to them. Therefore, they did not worry so much about it, but remained simple-minded about the promise of God that the seed of the woman, our Lord Christ, God and Son of God, would come and be born, bringing them righteousness, forgiveness of sins, life and salvation.

The other piece here is: How will the woman's seed, the Lord Christ, fare? Thus God says to the serpent, "And you will prick him in the heel," that is, you devil will kill and murder him. For to prick the heel means that the devil will murder and kill this child. But pay attention to the words, as God says; does not say: You serpent, or devil, will crush or crush the head of the woman's seed: No, no, he shall leave him whole, but badly "prick the heel". If a man is pricked in the heel, he is hurt and wounded, but his head, heart and body remain completely unharmed, so there is no need.

So also here with the seed of the woman, the devil shall bring about so much that Christ shall be murdered and strangled, and stab him in the heel, but he shall not accomplish anything with it, but Christ shall keep the head completely, lift it up and come forth, that is, rise again from death, as one whom the devil's stab in the heel has not harmed, but who triumphs, and keeps the victory, and rises from death. This is what is said of the other part, how the seed of the woman, the Lord Christ, should fare.

11. now follows the third part, what now the seed of the woman, that is, Christ, when he shall arise again from the devil's sting, that is, from death, shall accomplish, when namely thus says God: "And the same seed of the woman shall bruise thy head." This is the right consolation that restored Adam and Eve, pleased and refreshed them, that in such great fear and anguish of their conscience they hear how the seed of the woman, Christ, the devil or the serpent, shall not take off a piece of the tail, but shall crush the very head. For it is said that if a large piece of a snake's tail is cut off, or if it is severely wounded in the body, and only the head remains whole, it has no trouble with it, heals itself again, and remains alive. Therefore, if one wants to strike a snake, it coils itself into one another, and does all diligence to preserve only the head; if it brings the head away unhewn, then it is healed. If one cuts or smashes its head, it is finished and has lost its power; and even if the body and tail are still cruel and horrible to look at, it has no more power, because the head is gone. Therefore God also says here: Christ, the seed of the woman, shall turn it back, shall not tear the tail of the devil, the old serpent, or wound the body, but shall trample and crush his head.

(12) Now what is the devil's head? First of all, it is sin, which Adam and Eve, by their fall, inherited and brought upon all men, who are descended and born of their flesh and blood, so that they are all conceived and born in sins. Through sin, God's wrath and death come upon them, devouring all people, as holy as they are.

After that comes hell and the devil, who condemn eternally. Therefore Christ, as John the Baptist says, as the true paschal lamb of God, shall bear the sin of the whole world by his death and suffering [Joh. 1, 29.] and graciously deliver from God's wrath, death, hell and the devil, and by his resurrection bring again righteousness, forgiveness of sins, life and blessedness, and all that Adam and Eve lost in paradise, and shall the Christ say, Behold, sin, death, hell and the devil, ye have stabbed me in the heel, killed and murdered me, but have wronged me, for I am not the man that is under your kingdom; therefore ye shall be my prisoners. And cast them under him, and trampled them under foot, and caused to be cried out and proclaimed in all the world by his gospel, that all who are under the enemies and under the burden of the devil should cleave unto him, and believe in him, that they should be justified, that is, delivered and set free from sin, the wrath of God, death, hell, and the devil, as St. Paul says Rom. 4:25: "Christ died for our sins, and rose again for our righteousness."

This is what God says here: The seed of the woman shall crush the head of the devil, the old, evil, poisonous serpent. For thus David speaks of Christ in the 68th Psalm, v. 21: "We have a God, 1) who helps, and the LORD HERN, who saves from death." So also St. Paul says 2 Tim. 1, 10: "Christ hath taken away the power of death, and life, and hath brought to light an incorruptible being through the gospel." How finely sweet, clear and brightly David and Paul speak from one mouth, and yet they have lived from one another for 1100 years. This is what Adam and Eve believed, as God promised them, and this is how they were saved and became blessed. So we must also be saved. This is now the third thing that Christ is to do to the devil, as his enemy and the enemy of all Christianity. Ah! Who would now fear the enemy, the devil, and would not cheerfully desire to die with old Simeon?

the [Luc. 2, 29. ff.]? "But thanks be to God, who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" [1 Cor. 15:57].

The fourth part: If Christ is to rise again from death, crush the devil's head, redeem from sin, God's wrath, death, hell, and bring back righteousness, life and salvation, then he must and cannot be the seed of the woman alone, that is, a bad, natural man. For then he would have been far too weak for the devil and death. For sin, God's wrath, death, hell and the devil are such a heavy burden that they oppress all people to death, no matter how holy they are. Yes, if all angels, all creatures, sun, moon and stars, as written in Job [Cap. 31, 23], were to bear this burden before God, they could not stand. Therefore, if the seed of the woman is to bear this burden, it must also be eternal, almighty God. For to bear such burdens is only God's work, as Isaiah, Cap. 43, 24. 25. clearly says. Therefore this woman's seed, Christ, is eternal, almighty God and Creator, through whom, as John says [Cap. 1, 3], all creatures are made and created, what is made and created.

(15) Adam and Eve looked at this and saw with the eyes of the heart in faith that this seed of the woman would also be a true natural God, like the father, but a different person. That is why Eve, when she gives birth to Cain, says in Genesis 4:1: "I have gotten the man, the LORD," the God Jehovah; does not mean the seed of the woman, but "the man, the God," who will now show himself to be a right man against the evil serpent of the devil that brought us into trouble, who is the right God.

16 Thus David also says Ps. 68, 21: "We have a God who helps, and Jehovah, the LORD, who redeems from death." Yes, dear David, who then is the GOtt? Thus he answers in the 68th Psalm, v. 8. 9. "GOD, thou that wentest before thy people, when thou walkedest in the wilderness, the earth shook, and the heavens trembled before this GOD in Sinai, before the GOD who is Israel's GOD." This is clear and bright enough that the God who descended from heaven to earth, as Paul says Eph. 4, 8. 9, died, rose from the dead, and returned to the earth.

1) "GOtt" added by us.

ascended on high, capturing the prison and saving from death, is the eternal, almighty God who gave the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai to the children of Israel. This is a powerful testimony that this Christ is eternal God. Thus also Jeremiah speaks on 23, v. 6, and Cap. 33, 15, 16: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise up unto David a plant of righteousness, and he shall be a king that shall reign, and do judgment and justice in the earth. In that day Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely. And this shall be his name, that they shall call him: LORD, who makes us righteous."

It is also clearly stated that David's offspring united in one person should have two natures: one human, from David's flesh and blood, the other divine, which he had from eternity from the Father. And here stands the great name of God Jehovah, which all Jews must confess that it belongs to the divine majesty alone. I have also often held this text up to the Jews, that David's son, Christ, would be the almighty, eternal God; for here it says Jehovah; they could not answer me. Therefore, this Son of David or Mary is not a bad man, but at the same time true, almighty God, who has eternal power to create and maintain heaven and earth and everything; therefore, humanity and divinity are One Person, and is also true God. Is also the God who makes us righteous, who therefore became "David's offspring", that is, a righteous man, that through his suffering, death, bloodshed and resurrection he wants to restore and acquire righteousness, which Adam and Eve lost, to give and give us forgiveness of sin, God's grace, life and blessedness; for this is called "making righteous".

This is what Adam and Eve believed. For all our blessedness lies in the fact that we do not separate these two natures from each other, but let them remain united in one person. As St. Paul also says in 1 Cor. 2:8: "They have crucified the Lord of glory"; not the bad man Christ, but the righteous God; not according to the Godhead, but according to the human nature. As the church sang on the good

Fridays: Dum fabricator mundi mortis supplicium pateretur in cruce etc. And on the holy feast of Easter: Crucifixum in cruce laudate etc. As also Peter speaks, 1. Ep. 4, 1. f.

19 But God hid this from the devil. For if he had known that this Christ, the son of the Virgin Mary, the seed of the woman, had been the eternal, almighty God, he would not have laid his hands on him and burned him. For he has well seen in heaven how he was God the Father's one heart, into whom God the Father poured all his divine essence and substance. That is why he experienced his divine power when he was pushed out of heaven into the abyss of hell because of the Son, Is. 14, 12. Luc. 10, 18. because Satan was after the Son's honor and wanted to be like him. God could not stand that. Therefore God hid it from the devil, that he wanted to see him in the Son who had become man, and did like a fisherman who wants to catch fish: he tied a line to a pole, and at the bottom of the line a sharp rod; he hung a little worm on it and threw it into the water. Then the fish comes, sees the poor little worm, but does not see the sharp rod hidden in the little worm, and bites into it, thinking that he will get a good cute little bite: but the rod gets stuck in his mouth or throat, and is thus caught and seized. God the Father does the same: He takes His only begotten, beloved Son, hangs Him on the line of the patriarchs and prophets, must take on Adam's, Abraham's, David's flesh and blood, and lets Him come into the world from high heaven; because the devil sees Christ as a poor, miserable worm, as he is described in the 22nd Psalm, v. 7. Psalm, v. 7, that is, as a poor, afflicted man, suffering hunger, thirst, cold, frost and heat, crying and having misery and sorrow in this world, dressed like another man.

20 But Satan does not know that this is hidden in this Christ, that he is the eternal, almighty God, like the Father, but a different person. Therefore he thinks, "Although Christ performs miraculous signs, the prophets also performed miraculous signs; but I have eaten them all up, how high and holy they were.

and thinks that he wants to have a cute little bite of the man; he lifts up, eats the Christ and devours him. But it gets him like the grass gets the dog. For the Christ gets stuck in his throat and has to spit him out again, like the whale spat out the prophet Jonah, Jonah 2:11, and just with the eating the devil murders and strangles himself and is caught by Christ. For this man, Christ, is real, true God, who cannot remain in death, but must come forth again, resurrect and live, and thus catch the devil. And here the word of the prophet Hosea, who lived 760 years before Christ, becomes true, who speaks of Christ in the 13th chapter, v. 14: "I will redeem them from hell and save them from death. Death, I will be a poison to you; hell, I will be a pestilence to you." Therefore also the prophet Hosea says before, Cap. 6, 1-3. that the Christians at the time of Christ will say: "Come, let us go again to the Lord; for he has torn us in pieces, he will heal us; he has smitten us, he will also bind us up; he will make us alive after two days, he will refresh us on the third day, that we may live before him. Then shall we take heed, and be diligent to know the Lord." All this was fulfilled and accomplished yesterday through our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who rose from the dead on the third day; we were redeemed from our sins, justified, healed, restored and made whole; we were refreshed and made alive from eternal death; and we lack nothing, except to believe these things in our hearts, to know the Lord Jesus Christ, and to sing with joy: "Let us all be glad, Christ will be our comfort, Kyrieleis."

This is the great wisdom of God, which must come from the Holy Spirit alone. For no human being can understand by human reason that this woman's seed, our Lord Christ, is not only man, but almighty God, like the Father and the Holy Spirit, in One Person, not in two Persons, as the two heretics, Nestorius and Eutyches, have deceived, but is only One Person, as a man with body and soul is only One Person.

22. but nevertheless this some person is,

Christ, right, true, almighty God and man, is not the Father or the Holy Spirit, but the Son, the other person in the Godhead; and yet the same God with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the divine essence or substance. The Jews of Christ's time did not understand this, nor do they understand it yet; neither do the Gentiles and the Turks, nor the Pope and his comrades; they must become mad and foolish about it, because they want to speculate and investigate it with their reason. But nothing will come of it, it must come from heaven alone, as Christ Matth. 16, 17. says to Petro: "Blessed are you, Simon, Jonah's son, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven has." Therefore it must be grasped by faith through the word, as Adam and Eve had to do; otherwise it is lost.

23. Therefore, between Adam and Eve's faith and ours, 1) there is no difference; only this, 2) that they believed that Christ, the Son of God, as true, almighty God, should become the seed of the woman, that is, a right man, and come into the world: the devil would stab him in the heel, that is, kill and murder him; but he would rise from death, and crush the devil's head, redeem from sins, God's wrath, death and hell, bring back righteousness, life, blessedness. But we now believe that it is not yet future, and that it shall come to pass, but that it has already come to pass, and that everything has been accomplished and fulfilled, as God promised and promised to Adam and Eve, and lacks nowhere, except that we wait for the resurrection of the body or of our flesh. Therefore, let us faithfully pray to God that we may remain in firm faith in this article, that Christ, as the true God, became man, died, and rose from the dead on the third day, bringing righteousness, forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation again, as Adam and Eve did. If we do this, it will be well with us; if not, woe to us all! But that we may remain steadfast therein unto the end of our days, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit help us, Amen.

1) Erlanger: Adam and Eve, their faith and ours 2c.  
2) Erlanger: this.

# v. Sermon on the text Genesis 22:18:

In semine tuo benedicentur omnes gentes, **in your seed all nations on earth shall be blessed.**

Held at Wittenberg in the parish church, on Mondays during the Easter holidays at Beiher, April 2, 1528.\*)

i Mos. 22, 18. In your seed all generations on earth will be blessed.

Dear friends, today before noon you heard from Moses the first gospel, which God Himself preached to Adam and Even in Paradise, by which they were comforted, justified, preserved and saved; otherwise they would have had to die and perish in God's wrath and their sins. But now let us take before us the other promise, or the other gospel of God, made to Abraham when he was about to sacrifice his son Isaac, after the beginning of the world 2080 years ago, when God promised Abraham with an oath, saying: "In your seed shall Col Goym", that is, "all the nations of the earth be blessed", as written in the first book of Moses, chapter 22, v. 18.

(2) Now we will not dispute much here whether this text is said by our Lord Jesus Christ or not, for we have our Doctor and Teacher of the Gentiles, who has received his doctorate from God Himself and from our Lord Jesus Christ, and has been made a Doctor of Theology, and the testimony of his doctorate is given in the Acts of the Apostles, Cap. 9, 3. ff, is abundantly and gloriously described by Saint Paul, who clearly tells the Galatians in the third, v. 8, that these words of Moses alone were spoken by Christ, and that he alone is the seed, and no one else.

3 About this our Lord Jesus Christ himself speaks to the Jews, Joh. 8, 56: "Abraham, your father, was glad that he should see my day, and he saw it and rejoiced. Yes, where did he see it? In this saying, when he heard how his seed shall be God and man, who shall bless all nations, that is, redeem them from sin, death and the devil, make them eternally righteous, alive, holy and blessed.

4 Therefore let us now turn to the text, and hear first of all what a "curse" is, of which this Christ, Abraham's seed, should redeem all the Gentiles, and what "blessing" is. Second, how the seed of Abraham must be a right man and die. Thirdly, as the seed of Abraham must rise again from death, so he must bless all the Gentiles. Fourth, as he also must be a true God, but a different person, because God the Father and the Holy Spirit. This is what we intend to do this time, as much as God will grant and give His grace.

(5) Now we hear clearly in the text that God says to Abraham: "In your seed shall all the Gentiles of the earth be blessed. If all the Gentiles, that is, all men, are to be blessed in this Christ, then all the Gentiles must have been under the curse before; otherwise the seed could not bless them.

Now what is this curse? This is what our doctor, Saint Paul, says to the Romans in the fifth chapter, v. 12: "Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death came to all men, because they all sinned. This is a true master, who can fairly illustrate Adam's fall in paradise, what he accomplished with the bite of the apple, namely, that he brought and inherited such a terrible curse upon all men, no one excepted, without our Lord Jesus Christ, that they are conceived and born in sins, and thereby are eternally damned and lost to death, the devil.

7. this curse is called peccatum originale, original sin, or natural sin, which we received by nature from our parents in

\*) Because of the time determination 2c. compare the first note to the previous sermon.

Mother's womb; as the one and fiftieth Psalm, v. 7, says, "Behold, I am begotten of sinful seed, and my mother conceived me in sins." And to Ephesians on the other, v. 3. "We were by nature children of wrath"; that is, by nature, as we are conceived and born, we bring sin with us into the world, and through sin comes God's wrath and death, that we are all lost and condemned. And this original sin is the real wellspring from which other real sins of men spring and originate.

8. no Jew or Turk knows about this piece, not even the pope; but Adam, Abraham preached it orally to their children, likewise the prophets, until it was clearly described by King David. But we Christians now know from the New Testament about this curse, how terrible and great it is, that it also tears away all people and takes them to death; no matter how holy they are, it is of no help; no one can pull the neck out of the noose [Ps. 89, 49], so heavy is the sin, God's wrath, death, hell and damnation, which we have inherited from our parents, Adam and Eve. This is what has been said about the curse that has come upon all the Gentiles; now let us hear about the blessing that this seed, Jesus Christ, is to bring.

(9) Now this blessing is not a bad man's blessing, as one man greets another, offering or wishing a good morning or day, as men cannot otherwise bless one another; but this blessing is God's blessing, which he alone can and will give, through the gospel he promised and promised. Such a blessing is not a bad, empty word that wishes us much good, and nothing comes of it, but gives and brings all that the word promises and pledges. Therefore, this divine blessing, promised and pledged in Abraham's seed, is a mighty, powerful and living blessing that brings and accomplishes what it promises or blesses.

(10) For he is promised and given of God against the curse, wherein the devilish old serpent hath brought us through Adam's disobedience and sin. And hereby God has denied the promise of the woman's seed.

He is now called Abraham's seed, and after that, David's seed [2 Sam. 7:12, 13], and finally became the son of the pure virgin Mary.

(11) Therefore, "to bless in Abraham's seed," as you heard this day before noon, means "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," that is, it shall take away sin and hell, and restore righteousness, innocence, life and blessedness. For sin and eternal death is the curse, as it is said, under which we would have to be eternally damned (unless we were blessed again through this seed, that is, made free from sins and righteous, made alive from death, holy and blessed, and this was preached and presented in all the world through the gospel to all peoples and Gentiles).

12. the dear patriarch or archfather Abraham understood this well; therefore he also rejoiced, as Christ says. And I think that will also have been a piece of this joy, when God promises him Isaac, he falls down on his face and laughs with joy in his heart, Gen. 17, 17.

(13) This also shall be our joy, which we shall have, that we shall be blessed in this seed of Abraham, David, and Mary the virgin; yea, we Goym all Gentiles, will embrace it, and boast of the faith, as Abraham did. And with the blessing will defy sin, God's wrath, death, devil and hell, singing and saying: Through Christ, the seed of Abraham, we have righteousness, that is, forgiveness, the washing away of sins, redemption from death, the devil and all evil, and praise and glory be to God the Father, that he has given us his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, and that he has become our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Paul [1 Cor. 1:31] says, "He that will boast, let him boast of the Lord" [Jer. 9:23] and of no other. Now this is said of Abraham's blessing, which is to be our comfort, joy, life and blessedness forever. Let us now hear what kind of person Abraham's seed must be to bless all the nations.

14 Now it is clear and bright, Christ is to be Abraham's seed, that is, a true

naturally child and pure man, who has Abraham's flesh and blood in him.

(15) Now if he is to be a true man, he must die; for whatsoever is a man must die [Heb. 9:27]. The judgment was passed on Adam and Even, who ate of the tree, and on all their descendants who are born of them, that they, as men, must die. But because Christ is to be Abraham's seed, that is, a true man, he must also die, for he has taken upon himself all the attributes of human nature, except sin. Now this is the other part, that this Christ, as a right, true, pure man, must die.

(16) Thirdly, if this Christ is to bless, that is, to justify, to bring forgiveness of sins, redemption from death, the devil and hell, life and blessedness, he must not remain in death; otherwise he could not bless, or, as Jeremiah says, Cap. 33, 15. 16., but must rise again from death, and in his name preach and proclaim such blessings, righteousness, repentance and forgiveness of sins to all the Gentiles and nations; as the Lord Christ himself says to his disciples on the day of Easter, and Luke is written at the last, v. 47. As we Christians also sing with believing hearts, "If he had not risen, the world would have passed away; but that he is risen, we praise the Father JEsu Christ, Kyrieleis." That is rightly sung. Abraham saw this in the word that the man, his Son Christ, must die and rise again from death, bringing righteousness, forgiveness of sin, life and blessedness to all the Gentiles.

(17) Fourthly, if this seed of Abraham is to give such a powerful and mighty blessing and bring it about among the Gentiles, he must not only be Abraham's seed, that is, a mere, pure man, who can do no more than say good day or good evening to us, which all men can do well, but must be the right, natural, true, almighty, one God, who has such a powerful, mighty blessing in his hand.

(18) For the abolition and overcoming of sin, death, hell and the devil, and the restoration of righteousness, life and salvation, are not the work of men or angels, but of some alone.

eternal, divine majesty, creator of heaven and earth, Is. 63, 3. ff. Therefore this Abraham's seed must be real, true, eternal, almighty God, like the Father from eternity, but another person.

(19) And we Christians must be careful, as we said before noon today, and will say even more now, not to separate the person of Christ, nor to mix the two natures, as the divine and human natures, into one nature or essence, but to distinguish the natures or essence here, and to keep the person united.

(20) For here the devil, through his companions, has made himself strangely twisted and curled, so that they either want to make the Godhead and humanity one nature and being, or else two persons, as some heretics have done.

21 Nestor, a patriarch or bishop in the imperial city of Constantinople, at the time of the emperor Theodosii the Disciple (against whom the Concilium at Ephesus, the very year Augustine died, after Christ's birth in 431<sup>1</sup>) year, was held), publicly taught that God, or Jesus Christ, Son of God, was not born of Mary the Virgin, died, and rose again. For God is a spirit [John 4:24], who cannot be born, suffer or die, but only man, the Son of Mary.

22) That is, Christ is made two persons, and here the one person of Christ is separated, that there is another person who was born, died, and rose again, another person who was not born, died, and rose again. And so every nature becomes one person by itself, and two distinct sons, or Christ's, one God's, the other Mary's son; which is just as much as that God did not become man, die and rise again.

23 And is openly contrary to the Scripture, which saith John in the first, v. 14: "The Word is made flesh." The angel Gabriel speaks Lucā on the first, v. 35.: "The holy thing that is born of you will be called the Son of God." St. Paul Galatians on the fourth.

1) Eisleben edition 435 - Augustine died August 28, 430.

V. 4: "God sent His Son, born of a woman's image." Jtem, 1 Cor. 2, 8.: "The princes of this world have crucified the LORD of majesty." And Apost. 20, 28, St. Paul says: "God purchased the Church with His blood," when, according to reason, God does not have blood. Just as we also speak in infant faith: I believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born, died and rose again; do not say that the Son of God is other than the one born of Mary, died and rose again. Therefore it is one Son, and not two sons. Let this be said of Nestorio the heretic.

The other heretic, Eutyches (who was an abbot of Constantinople, against whom the fourth main council was held at Chalcedon in Ponto or Asm, in the fourth year of the emperor Marciani, after the birth of Christ in 451), 1) also publicly taught that the man, Jesus Christ, born of Mary, is not the creator of heaven and earth, whom one should worship. This heretic once again separates the person of Christ, and makes two persons out of one person.

(25) Nestorius the heretic separates the person by tearing mankind from the Godhead, and makes of every nature a special person, that man alone was born Christ, died and rose again. But Eutyches, the heretic, separates and tears the Godhead from humanity by making a special person out of every nature: one who created heaven and earth, and who is to be worshipped as the divine nature alone; separates and sets apart the divine nature from the human nature, as that Mary's Son is not the Creator of heaven and earth, whom one is to worship.

(26) But this is also contrary to the Scriptures and to our Christian faith. For when we say: Christ, the man, is Creator of heaven and earth, in whom one should believe and trust, or whom one should worship, we do not speak of the mere and separate man, of, apart from and without God, but speak of the man, or of the person, who is at the same time God and man in

One person, unspoken and undivided, namely de Deo incarnato, of whom I must say not in abstracto or absolute, as the ancients called it, but in concreto thus: Christ, the Son of God and of Mary, is the Creator of heaven and earth, to be honored and worshipped; who overcame death, destroyed sin, broke hell, and by his suffering, death, and resurrection restored righteousness, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and blessedness; who with God the Father and the Holy Spirit is one God, and with his Godhead and humanity is one and indivisible person. This is what we must learn. I have told it to you at greater length, so that you may the better comprehend, understand and retain it. For I see and note that the devil, through the new sect of the Sacramentarians, wants to bring forth this old heresy again, and to separate and divide this person of Christ.

Therefore I warn you and ask you to learn this article well, and do not let the enthusiasts mislead and seduce you. For in this article, Jews, Turks, even the pope, and our new sect, the Sacramentarians, are at odds with each other. But let this be our Christian glory and joy, that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is the true one God, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, who became man for our sake.

Therefore we say rightly: God suffered, God died and rose again, but according to the flesh, as St. Peter says 1 Petr. 3, 18. For God and man are One Person. For what the man Christ does, speaks and suffers, that God does, speaks and suffers; and what God does, speaks and suffers, the man Christ does. For he is both the Son of God and the Son of Mary, and yet has two different natures, divine and human. The dear Abraham recognized all this in this promise of God, and certainly believed and saw it in his heart.

29 But one thing we must also report and indicate. For since our Lord Jesus Christ is not the person who said to Abraham, "In your seed shall all the Gentiles be blessed," he must be another, different person; for the God who says to Abraham, "In your seed,



who is not Abraham's seed, but speaks as of another, who is to become Abraham's seed. From this follows the difference of the two persons; and still remains the one, eternal, undivided God in his one divine being. Now where these two persons are, there is also the third, as, the Holy Spirit, who now said these things verbally through the angel to Abraham, but had them written through Moses, as St. Peter [2 Ep. 1, 21.] speaks: "The holy men of God have spoken, driven by the Holy Spirit."

(30) There we have our article of faith that there are three distinct persons in the Godhead, as God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and yet is only One, Eternal, Almighty God.

31) As Moses, Gen. 18, 1. ff., writes that God appeared to Abraham in the grove of Mamre, when he was sitting in his door, and "when he opened his eyes, three men stood against him, and he ran to meet them, and fell down before them, and said, Lord, if I have found grace in your sight, do not pass by before your servant. You shall be given a little water". Here Abraham speaks to God in singulari, as to one, saying, "Lord, have I found grace in thy sight." Then in plurali, as with many, as he says, "You shall be given a little water." And the text clearly says that this vision or appearance was God Himself who appeared to him at his door.

32 Although the Jews say against it that this text is to be understood of the angels of God that appeared to Abraham, and they want to prove it from the 19th chapter afterwards, with the two angels that go against Sodom. But it is quite different with these three, who talk and eat with Abraham, as one God, as the whole chapter testifies. For there the text is clear and bright: it is the Lord who appeared to him in three persons, and he also worshipped them all three as one. That is why Abraham rightly recognized and believed in the Holy Trinity. And we Christians must also learn to recognize and believe this, for all our blessedness lies in it. This article sets us apart

of Jews, Turks, and Gentiles, that in the eternal, unified, divine being there are three distinct persons, and we must be careful not to mix the persons nor separate the being, as many heretics have done.

(34) Therefore we must judge by the Scriptures alone, for our reason is of no value here, and remain with the word creed.

The difference of the three persons in the divine being is this. First, the Father, as the first person, who is the fountain or source of the Godhead, that the eternal, omnipotent God is of Himself, and from eternity gave birth in His fatherly heart to the Son, and through the eternal birth gave Him His Godhead.

But the other person, as the Son, is eternally born of the Father, who has his divinity not from himself, but from the Father alone.

The third person, as the Holy Spirit, is not born like the Son, but proceeds at the same time from the Father and the Son, from whom he also has his divinity from eternity.

So, in short, the Father who gives birth, the Son who is born, and the Holy Spirit who proceeds from both the Father and the Son. With this faith we can resist the devil, Jews and all heretics.

Therefore let us not mix the three persons into one person, but remain simple that there are three different persons in the one, eternal, divine being, who is nevertheless all three one God, creator, sustainer and agent of all things, towards us and all creatures.

(40) Abraham, as Moses wrote, and as you have now heard, knew and saw this by the three men who appeared to him. And therefore Abraham and Moses were two good Christians. For Moses proclaims to us with his writing that GOD promised Abraham such a rich blessing, which agrees with the whole New Testament, that GOD should send his son (who is the same GOD with him) to take Abraham's flesh and blood. Yes, if he were here now, his own present Jews (where they are otherwise of his blood, as I do not believe) would call him an arch-heretic, as is sometimes almost in the

Desert [Ex 17:4, Deut 14:10], kill and stone them.

41. This we want to have said for this time; for I have made it almost long, how our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, true Abraham's seed and became man; and by his suffering and death saved us from the curse, and as an eternal, almighty God rose from death; but another person, as God the Father and the Holy Spirit; and again, blessed all Gentiles abundantly, that is, restored righteousness, forgiveness of sin, life and blessedness, redemption from eternal death, devil and hell.  
(42) Abraham believed all these things, and by faith he was justified and saved with all believers, as St. Paul says (Rom. 4:3). Therefore is called

Also the blessed word Abraham's bosom, as Luc. 16, 22, is written. Now it is called Christ's bosom, for he has come and fulfilled all that was promised and promised to Abraham.  
(43) And now we lack nothing, except that we believe (as Abraham did) with our hearts, and confess with our mouths, and we shall be justified and saved, as St. Paul said to the Romans in the 10th verse, 10. May God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, as three Persons, and yet only one, eternal, almighty God, in One Divine Being, help us to this right, true and living faith, so that we may also persevere and remain in it until our end, both in life and death, in good and evil; to Him be glory, praise and thanksgiving for these benefits forever, amen.

# II. interpretations on the second book of

## A. D. Martin Luther's Interpretation of Several Chapters of the second book of Moses. \*)

[From the 1st to the 18th chapters.]

Preached at Wittenberg from October 2, 1524 to 1526.

### Preface.

So far we have interpreted the first book of Moses and have heard of many beautiful, comforting sayings, in which the main articles of our Christian faith are contained. In addition, we have been presented with all kinds of wonderful examples and models of a godly and Christian life in the Old Fathers and Patriarchs, and have learned from the

The same book also teaches how God is the almighty Creator of heaven, earth, and all creatures, whom alone we should honor, love, fear, and trust above all things; likewise, how all things are in God's power and hand, and He must govern, protect, and preserve all things; item, how the human race may multiply and grow.

\*) After Luther had finished the sermons on the first book of Moses, he began to preach on the second book of Moses in the vesper services on the 19th Sunday after Trinity, October 2, 1524. Only in the year 1526 he came to an end with it. This time determination, which Aurifaber gives in the first part of the Eisleben collection, is confirmed by a note in an index volume to Poach's sermons in the Zwickau Rathsschulbibliothek (Buchwald, Ungedruckte Predigten, Vol. I, p. XX, Note 3.): "Anno 1524 Sonntag nach Michaelis hatt er angefangen

Adam and Eve fell into sin, death, and the power of the devil and the devil's shells, but through the promised Seed they attained righteousness, eternal life, and blessedness.

(2) We have also heard how the two generations of men, the godly and the ungodly, that is, the right, true church of God, and the false church, the bride of the devil, have lived, grown and prospered in the world. And in this book we are also presented with comforting examples of divine graces and benefits, how God blessed the pious and did good to them, and on the other hand, examples of wrath, how he punished the wicked. This book is therefore worthy of our knowledge and learning, so that we may draw from it to the kingdom of Christ and to a Christian, penitent life.

3 Now we turn to the interpretation of the other book of Moses, in which the following is said

of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, when they were delivered and redeemed from the house of bondage and the hard prison of Pharaoh. This also presents us with beautiful, glorious examples of how God truly keeps His promises; item, examples of divine grace and kindness toward afflicted, troubled and frightened Christians; and, on the other hand, examples of His wrath, punishment and disgrace toward the stubborn and impenitent. And after Abraham's, Isaac's and Jacob's descendants were to become a nation and kingdom of their own, God also gives them laws and rights in this book, orders worship and religion, and sets up authorities, as Moses, who is a commander and captain of this people, who is to lead them out of Egypt; and divides the people into twelve principalities or tribes, over which he sets twelve princes. [So he set up this people with laws and rights, so that (because this people was very many) every man might know what he should do.

# The first chapter.

(1) In this chapter we hear of various things, especially how God began to help His people out of the bondage of Pharaoh, where they were in Egypt, and how He appointed Moses as duke over the children of Israel, and brought him to the office in a strange way, who sought all kinds of excuses, so that he might avoid such a profession. First of all, the text says:

**V.1-7. These are the names of the children of Israel that came with Jacob into Egypt: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher. And all**

**The souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy. But Joseph was in Egypt before. And when Joseph was dead, and all his brethren, and all that were alive at that time, the children of Israel grew, and begat children, and multiplied, and became very many, so that the land was full of them.**

2. in the first book of Moses we have heard how God drew a line or cord and led it from Adam, also all the other old fathers and patriarchs up to Jacob, and God did not place Himself otherwise than as if He alone looked at the cord, so from Adam, Seth, Noah, Shem, Abraham and Isaac, up to the Pa-.

to preach and explain the other book of Moses." These sermons did not flow from Luther's pen, but were intercepted. A manuscript of them was in the possession of the provost Georg Buchholzer in Berlin; however, as he wrote to Count Vollrath von Mansfeld, it was stolen from him in 1564 during his illness. Another, incomplete copy (which contained only the sermons on the first eighteen chapters) was found among the books of Philipp Fabricius, former pastor at Ringleben; this was purchased by Wolf von Schönburg, Lord of Glauchau and Waldenburg, and given to Joh. Aurifaber for publication. Aurifaber published these sermons in 1564 in the first part of the Eisleben Collection, where they are found on pages 279 to 392b. After that, they are reprinted in the Altenburg edition, vol. III, p. 523; in the Leipzig edition, vol. III, p. 471, and in the Erlangen edition, vol. 35, p. I. We give the text according to the Eisleben collection.

Jacob, and acts as if he does not know the other generations in the world, nor does he know anything about them; as he then honestly touches all the others who have lived next to this line and cord 1). Although this line of the human race was very small (for he did not get any further with it than Jacob and his twelve sons, and those born of them, namely seventy souls, who had gone to Egypt, Gen. 46, 27.), yet in the beginning of this first chapter it is described how this people of Israel grew in Egypt, begot other children, multiplied and increased so that the land became full of them, and afterwards they got their own regiments and kingdoms, spiritual and temporal.

From this we see our Lord God's masterpieces, how wonderfully he rules, fulfills and keeps his promises and pledges. God is thin and narrow when he wants to put his promise, made to Abraham and his seed, into practice. For He had promised him [Gen. 15:5] that his seed would become a great and innumerable people, as the sand on the sea and the stars in the sky; also [Gen. 17:6] that kings and princes would come from his loins; but the promise can be seen as if it were to become water. For Abraham and Sarah, like Isaac and Rebecca, are single men, and die, having few children. Where is the promise? God sees it as thin and small; only with the patriarch Jacob does it start a little, to whom God gives twelve sons, of whom seventy souls will soon be begotten, and now the promise wants to see something and lets itself be seen.

These are the great people that the patriarch Abraham is to have. He dies and goes on believing that God will keep His promise to him, even though he no longer sees his Sarah but only Isaac. For God is true in His words and promises. But nevertheless he acts strangely and strangely, as if he did not want to keep the promise, and yet he does. By this we are to be caused to believe God's promises, to build firmly upon them.

and to rely on it in all afflictions and temptations, and also to wait with patience for His help, so that God will come at last and comfort us and save us from our troubles. Continue:

**V. 8 There arose a new king in Egypt, who knew nothing of Joseph.**

(5) How this happened, whether perhaps the land of Egypt fell in a heap with the previous king, I cannot know. But it can be seen that the pious Pharaoh, who lived and ruled at the time of Joseph, died and a new king was chosen in his place, who did not know anything about Joseph. For Joseph lived to be a hundred and ten years old [Gen. 50:22] and was nine and thirty years old when his father, the patriarch Jacob, came to him in Egypt. After that he lived another seventy years, and reigned at least fifty years after his father's death. Then in fifty years there was a great change, that one or two new kings followed in Egypt after Jacob's and Joseph's death.

Egypt was a fine land and kingdom, and was then in its prime. When Joseph, full of the Holy Spirit, reigned in it, it was the most beautiful and fruitful kingdom under the sun; but when Joseph dies, and the right head and nucleus are gone, things are much different; as regiments and kingdoms are wont to rise and fall.

Thus God does with all kingdoms and regiments. He gives each country its time to grow and rise, so that it may increase and expand in wealth, power, honor and authority, and so that it may flourish and soar in honor and dignity. But even if it seems to be the time of our Lord God that such a country should fall again and go to the ground, it also suddenly falls again, so that no one can endure it. Therefore the prophet Daniel [Cap. 2, 21] rightly says: Deus constituit et transfert regna, it is God who establishes and changes kingdoms.

8 Thus he helped the Roman empire to its feet, so that it forced many other kingdoms under it and suppressed them, and became a mighty empire; but it has again gone to ruin. Item, the Jewish Empire has God

1) "honest - hardly.

The Babylonian empire was also made glorious and great, but now it lies in ashes again. Similarly, the Babylonian empire was a mighty regiment on earth; but it did not stand long, after which it fell again over a heap. In the same way, God gives to every city its time, when it is growing and flourishing; when the time of its growth is over, then suddenly the regiment is over, and comes again into decline and fall.

(9) Thus acts our Lord God: He can make everything out of nothing; a small kingdom he can make large, and again, a great empire he can easily overthrow, so that all the world has enough to cool down [Isa. 13:19]. And if it is then in the change or in the turning, that he pushes a kingdom to the ground, then no defense still helps to hold out; yes, if it hung on iron chains, or stood on iron stakes, then it must go to ruins and to the ground.

10 Thus Egypt was a blessed, Christian, glorious kingdom and principality, which had God's word abundantly preached through the high patriarchs, Jacob and Joseph, and also through the twelve sons of Jacob, who even planted a fine church there for our Lord God. God also gave this kingdom praiseworthy kings and rulers, who gave shelter, protection and protection to the church, and were its nurturers, suckers and protectors [Isa. 49:23], who heaped up and sheltered [the] patriarchs.

The worldly government is also glorious and excellent, that in this kingdom judgment and justice were found. God also gives it great wealth and nourishment. It has had high people in the spiritual and temporal regiments, and this kingdom has stood on strong and solid legs. But when the time comes that this kingdom should also take a blow and fall, it lies in a heap, so that religion and worship perish, and justice, judgment, discipline and restraint cease and come to an end.

12 But when does this happen? This is what the text says: "When Joseph had died, and all his brothers, and all who had lived in his time, there arose a new king in Egypt, who knew nothing of Joseph" 2c.

The downfall of the church and religion, and the destruction of the worldly government, occurs when the godly patriarchs, preachers, bishops and pastors, as well as the Christian, pious kings, princes and capable rulers are taken away. It is also written in the book of Judges, chapter 2, v. 8 ff: "When Joshua the son of Nun died, the servant of the Lord, when he was an hundred and ten years old, and all that were alive at that time were gathered unto their fathers, there arose after them another generation, which knew not the Lord, neither the works that he had done for Israel. Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim, and forsook the LORD their fathers' God, which had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and went after other gods." So it goes, when the pillars and support are gone, so the church and worldly regiment have carried, it falls over a heap. When the kernel is eaten out of the nut, one keeps only the empty shells in one's hand, only the husks or the foam remain. The greater the blessing of God was before, the greater is his curse, malediction and disgrace afterwards [Matth. 11, 23]. And if in the same land the saints of God were honored before, afterwards they are thought to be put to death, as happened to the children of Israel in Egypt. Thus the land is turned back, and the people become ungrateful to God, depart from His word, and lose the true worship of God.

**V.9-11. And Pharaoh said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are many, and more than we. Let us therefore subdue them with stratagems, that there be not so many of them. For if there be a war against us, they will join themselves to our enemies, and fight against us, [and go out to the land]. 1) And he set over them servants of valor, who should press them with service. For they built for Pharaoh the cities of Pithon and Raemses for treasuries."**

Here let the ingratitude of the world be known. Even if you do everything good for it and serve it for a long time, it will still hit you on the head as a reward. The world is

1) The bracketed words are missing in the Eisleben edition.

applies good deeds with evil deeds. Until now, the Egyptians have received many good things from Joseph and the children of Israel, such as the true knowledge of God, that they were rid of the abominable, pagan idolatry and now knew the true, right service of God and could find the way to eternal bliss. Thus they also had a Christian, well-ordered, worldly government that was pleasing to God. Item, they had had pious authorities, fruitful years, and many years ago good peace and other bodily benefits more; so that God, for the sake of the Israelites, had blessed the whole kingdom of Egypt. The host had to enjoy the guest. The Egyptians had from the people of Israel salvation and blessedness of their souls, good government, a common peace of the land, food and abundance, since the theurungs began, and all spiritual and bodily welfare. How then the godless world of the Christians still enjoys much; and for the sake of the pious it must often go well with the wicked. But this is all forgotten among the Egyptians; Pharaoh and the Egyptians now think how they would destroy and oppress all the children of Israel with cunning.

14 Such is the world's drink money and reward for faithful service. It gives such evil drink money. We must also get used to it, it does not work differently in the world. For, as the pagans have said: *Nihil citius senescit, quam gratia*, one forgets nothing so soon as good deeds; item: *Beneficium in pulvere scribitur, in marmore noxa*, good deeds are soon thrown to the wind, but if one has done something to another's annoyance, that can be remembered for a long time.

(15) Now Pharaoh wisely proposes, first, to destroy the children of Israel by sour, heavy, hard labor, that they may be cut off by the laying of bricks, and other glad tidings of the fortresses. He wants to hang the food too high for them, if he could deceive them 1). But what happens? The text speaks:

**V. 12. The more they pressed the people, the more they multiplied and spread out. sAnd they held the children of Israel as an abomination. 2)**

1) deaf - to muffle, to suppress.  
2) The bracketed words are not in the Eisleben edition.

Here again, behold the wondrous work of our Lord God, how he will perform his word and promise and bring it to pass. He handles it in such a way that it cannot be said that men have carried it out in this way. God had also promised Abraham that he would make a great nation out of his seed. Now he deals with the children of Israel in such a way that they have to be servants and slaves in Egypt, and lets the opposite happen, as if they would even be exterminated. Nevertheless, in the end they become a great nation, for God brings them out of Egypt in great numbers [Ps. 136:11, 12]. So, even though Pharaoh is also very tyrannical, raging and furious against the children of Israel here, he plagues them hard with joyful services and other burdens, nevertheless it does not help at all, he has to let this people stay.

God mocks the tyrants even more, when they thus lay against the Christians with their ravings and persecutions, and does it to their scorn and vexation, yes, in spite of them, that he protects and preserves his own. As if he should say: Dear, go to and forbid me! Nevertheless I will let my people grow and become great, so that all of you will have to confess yourselves that it is not done by any human power. For God has the children of Israel in Egypt forced, pressed, pressed and weakened, and yet makes them so fruitful. It happens with them. Childbearing came more easily to the wives of the Jews than otherwise; it did not become so sour for them in childbirth as it did for the Egyptian wives. For God had it in mind to bring this people away. The more one has resisted here, the more the people have increased; the less one wants them to suffer in the world, the more God receives them [Proverbs 19:21]. And after God had promised that they should become a great nation, they were sure in their conscience that it pleased God that every man should take a wife. Therefore, the more Pharaoh resists, the more it goes.

18 It is the same with the dear gospel. Where it flourishes, all the attempts of the tyrants, who otherwise want to control and prevent the gospel from progressing, must recede. But against God's word

No wisdom, power or force helps, but it penetrates and sweeps away everything in its way. For just as water in a pond may be stopped for a time, so that it cannot flow out, if it is dammed up and buried with rice wood and earth, and its course is blocked; But it swells in the pond, and the water in it grows, increases and accumulates, until it finds some hole in the dam where it can break out and flow out; or, when the pond becomes full of water, it runs over the dam, because it wants to be unrestrained, and to have its stream, river and course: So the devil and the world also oppose the dear gospel, want to hold it up and stop it, hinder preachers and listeners, oppose it with all kinds of tyranny and persecution; but it does not help. The divine word wants to have its course, and should the devil and the world become furious and nonsensical about it.

(19) But what is God's pleasure in this? He does it so that we do not think that we do it, but that it comes from God, who alone does it. For so it goes on, even if the world becomes mad and foolish about it. Here we have an example. The more Pharaoh intends to weaken the people of Israel, the more it spreads and grows. Pharaoh is being foolish here. He builds two strong cities, or two fortresses, two treasuries, and the children of Israel have to work like donkeys. This is the first plot of the king in Egypt and his advisors, so that they think they are making this people less. But God remembers in the meantime: O, my hand is not too weak that I should not feed, protect and defend this people, Isa. 50, 2. 59, 1., and mocks Pharaoh in addition.

20. For thus God does against the world and the devil's wrath and raging. They must not only do no harm to the gospel with their tyranny, raging and fury, but only promote and spread it further and tear the head in two against the gospel. As the other Psalm, vv. 1-5, also teaches us, when David says: "The nations rage, and the peoples speak in vain; the kings of the land rebel against the Lord.

Lord and his anointed and say: Let us break their bands, and cast away their cords from us. But he that dwelleth in heaven laugheth at them, and the LORD mocketh at them. One day he will speak to them in anger, and with his wrath he will "terrify" them, so that they will fall to the ground for a little while.

21 All this is done so that we may learn to trust God and believe in Him. For He will not and cannot abandon us. Our enemies do no more with their anger than to promote God's work the longer the more, and only hinder themselves. God allows the enemies to rage, so that they may offend him, and God will pay them again and give them their deserved reward. But in the meantime, God has the other part pressed hard, and sees through his fingers that they are hard-pressed, so that he may soon help them out and save them.

(22) It is the same for us today. Our doctrine is violently persecuted, Christians are drowned, hanged and burned from time to time, I and you are badly plagued; and we can see what the pope, cardinals, bishops and princes have in mind. If they could drown us all in a spoon, they would not take a rivet 1) to it. But God is sitting up in heaven, watching them, and says: "You boys, you have long since deserved that I should strike you with a sharp rod; therefore, make haste with your persecution, be very angry and wicked, so that I may come upon you the sooner and destroy you.

(23) For the enemies of the gospel must burn their fists against our Lord GOD, that they may perish in their persecution and lie in ashes. For God is too strong and mighty for them that they may not push Him from His throne and chair; therefore the game is over their heads. As also the Lord Christ says to Paul in the stories of the apostles [Cap. 9, 4. 5.], when he was still snorting against Christianity with persecution: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It will be hard for you to lick against a thorn." For

1) Zober Zuber.

Whoever does such things makes himself blood disgraceful, paralyzes and corrupts his feet. Just as St. Paul did not accomplish much more with his persecution, but finally had to stop with his raving.

24 This is very comforting to all Christians, that they know that if they cry out to God in their anguish and distress, He will hear them and deliver them from persecution, and will also give their enemies and persecutors their reward [Ps. 142:2, 74].

**v.15-17. And the king of Egypt said unto the wombs of the Hebrew women, the name of the one was Siphra, and the name of the other Puah, If ye help the Hebrew women, and see out of the throne that it is a son, slay him. But if it is a daughter, let her live. But the wives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt had told them, but let the children live.**

(25) Since the first attack did not help, the king used another practice, which our Lord God also beat to the ground. For God's power is strong. It may at times appear weak and impotent, but in the end it shows itself again and prevails. In the same way, God sometimes acts foolishly and foolishly, but His wisdom finally persists. For human and divine wisdom run counter to each other, and human wisdom must lie below.

026 Pharaoh will cause the sons of the children of Israel to be strangled here, and not the daughters, that the people of Judah may not increase, and that the Egyptians may be driven out of the land: remember, we can compel the wives of the Israelites, but they must be our handmaids, and in time we will kill them also. Let the women go, but not the men; otherwise the women must die in time.

27 Thus Pharaoh thinks that he has blocked up the hole for our Lord God, so that he cannot get a hair through it, and so that he cannot help the children of Israel; therefore he takes the Egyptian mothers of sorrow for his attack, and not the Hebrew mothers of sorrow. But God disgraces the king's counsel with his mothers of sorrow; as Solomon says in the book of Proverbs

in the 21st chapter, v. 30, says: "No wisdom, no understanding, no art helps against the Lord" [Job 5, 13]. And the prophet Isaiah [Cap. 8, 10.] says: "Decide on a council, and nothing will come of it; talk it over, and it will not stand; for here is Immanuel." It does not have to go out to Pharaoh in such a way as he has in mind. There are many things that go wrong with his own ideas and his own cloth. The tyrants are often lacking in their attacks.

Why does God need the Egyptian mother of sorrow for this, when He could have used others to help the Israelites? But God does it because the enemies of the Christian church must themselves do good to the Christians, often against their will and thanks. For the Egyptian women were otherwise by nature hostile and opposed to the Hebrew women; [that] still, against the king's earnest command and strict order, they should let the Hebrews' babies live. Someone here might have said, "How wise is our Lord God! Should the Egyptian wombs help the children of Israel, since they are their mortal enemies? But what does our Lord God do? Where men have no counsel, salvation, help or comfort, he will help; as he is called in the 9th Psalm, v. 10, a helper in trouble. Therefore he comes and takes away the heart of the mothers of sorrow, and turns their mind and courage, and inclines their heart to the children of Israel. This is a small art to our Lord God, for he rules in the midst of his enemies, says the 110th Psalm, v. 2. Therefore he often makes the Christians' adversaries and enemies their friends. As Solomon in the 16th chapter of the book of Proverbs, v. 7, also speaks of this in a glorious and comforting way, saying: "If a man's ways please the Lord, he also makes his enemies happy with him.

(29) So this attack must also be lacking in Pharaoh the king. For God puts fear and terror into the hearts of the mothers of sorrow, so that they do not kill the children; as God in the fifth commandment seriously forbids that one should not kill; therefore, they do not want to act against this commandment of God, they are afraid of God's wrath and punishment. Thus, God can control the iron eaters, angry squires and scoundrels, and bring them to justice.



Make them cowards. Therefore the 72nd Psalm, v. 9, says: "Before him those in the wilderness will bow down, and his enemies will lick the dust", that is, the enemies of Christ must not be so hopeful, but let their throbbing, defying, pawing and persecuting. To lick the dust means to be in fear and trembling, and not to know what to do in fear and trembling, that one may also let his feet go over him. Kissing stones, licking earth means to be frightened by God's wrath, to desist from persecution; like Paul, the persecutor, when he was struck down with lightning before Damasco, he also became frightened, licked dust, stuck his nose in the ashes, said with trembling, "Lord, what shall I do?", Apost. 9, 6, becomes an apostle and preacher. Before, he strangled the Christians with thirst, now he makes them alive with the teaching of the gospel and does all good to the Christians.

(30) But these pious, honest matrons, these two mothers of sorrow, have dared to transgress this mighty king's mandate, not wanting to strangle the innocent little children, but having God more in mind than their king. And it is right and well done. Saul's followers [1 Sam. 22, 17] did not want to kill the five and eighty priests of Nobe 1) who betrayed Doeg that they had fed David in flight, and the king commanded them to kill the priests with the edge of the sword. So [1 Kings 18:4] when Ahab king of Israel, with his wicked Jezebel, chased Eliam and the other prophets out of the kingdom because of Baal's false worship, and wanted them all dead, Obadiah, king Ahab's chamberlain, was against the king's lord's ban, and hid a hundred prophets in caves, and fed and nourished them.

These all feared God more than their kings. Just as the Lord Christ also confesses, when he says Matth. 10, 28: "Fear not those who can kill the body, but him who can cast both body and soul into the infernal fire. If the king had known this, he would have punished the Egyptian mothers of woe much more severely than all the Egyptians.

Hebrew women. But God with His wisdom disgraces the great king so that two old cripples have to mimic and fool such a mighty king. They are not afraid of his great power, but of God's displeasure and wrath. Only God does this.

32 Now the king finally realizes it, and is very angry with the mothers of sorrow. Then they devise a lie, as follows in the text:

**V.18. 19. Then the king of Egypt called unto the women of sorrow, and said, Why do ye this, that ye suffer the children to live? And the women answered Pharaoh, The Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women: for they are hard women. Before the mother of sorrow comes to them, they have given birth.**

They apologize and say: Before we come to them, we have failed. Here is the question: Have the mothers of sorrow also sinned, that they turn their nose to their king and authority, and speak a lie? Abraham also told such a lie when he called his wife Sarai his sister in the presence of King Abimelech [Gen. 12:13]. To this it should be answered, that though Christians have the Holy Ghost, yet have they flesh and blood in them: so also much sin and infirmity doth hang and cleave unto them, wherefore they must always pray: Lord, forgive us our trespasses [Matth. 6, 12]. And whether the saints of God do too little or too much at times, it nevertheless goes away with the heap and multitude of the forgiveness of sins [Ps. 32:6] and belongs under the heaven of graces, that is, under the forgiveness of sins.

34 But lying is when one wants to harm his neighbor. If a lie is of this kind, that one wants to harm or deceive someone's property, honor, life and limb, then it is a sin, because I am seeking my own benefit and the harm of others. This is mendacium perniciosum. But if I lie in such a way that I do not harm but serve and benefit someone, that I promote his good and best, then it is called a friendly lie, mendacium officiosum, if someone presents himself in such a way and fabricates something for the benefit of others. When Lucä on

In chapter 24, v. 28, the Lord Christ stood against the two disciples who were going to Emmaus, as if he wanted to pass by, and yet he did not; he did not have it in mind, and yet he allowed himself to be asked. This lie is the same here. The mothers of sorrow want to serve the children of Israel and save them from Pharaoh's fierce rage; they do not want to harm the Israelites with this, but prevent and spoil them, 1) so that Pharaoh does not shed innocent blood with the little children; they want to ward off the murdering devil, who would have gladly caused a bloodbath with the babies of the Hebrews. So they, the mothers of sorrow, want to break the devil's entrenchment with this prudence of theirs and keep the Hebrew babies alive.

**V. 20. 21. Therefore God did good to the mothers of sorrow, and the people multiplied and became very many. And because the wombs feared GOD, he built them houses.**

(35) Behold, how God rewarded abundantly the mothers of sorrow in Egypt for not strangling the children of the Hebrews in childbirth, that God might do them good again; their godliness must be rewarded abundantly. Just as godliness has the promise that it will be rewarded and paid for by God with spiritual and physical goods. For thus also the Lord Christ says Matth. 6, 33: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all the rest shall be added to you." And St. Paul to Timothy [1 Ep. 4, 8.] says: "Godliness is profitable for all things; it hath promise of the present life and of that which is to come." And 1 Sam. 2, 30. God says: "Those who honor me, I will honor again." That is, those who live godly lives must again be blessed by God, so that it may go well with them here in this life and there in the Kingdom of Heaven.

(36) A house in Scripture is not called a beam, a rafter, or a roof, but a tabernacle, a dwelling, or a dwelling, a garrison, where man and woman, parents and children, masters, wives, and servants dwell together, having food and drink, food and covering. So also a church is called a house of God, where people come together to worship God.

They act according to the word, use the sacraments, and perform the true service of God, even though there is no house or roof there. Thus a house, a regiment or a household is called, that God has blessed the mother of sorrow, that she has received men, children, wealth, money and goods, and that her family has increased and spread. For house also often means a family; as we Germans say, the House of Saxony, the House of Brandenburg, that is, the tribe, the princes of Saxony and the margraves of Brandenburg. This reward was given to the mothers of sorrow for their service and office, that they let the Hebrew babies live in the birth, and not for the lie, that they deceived the king Pharaoh and destroyed his evil plan, tyranny and murderous plots.

**V.22. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, All sons that are born cast into the water, and all daughters let live.**

(37) When the first two acts of Pharaoh, his persecution and tyranny, and the glad tidings, and the murder of the children in childbirth, had fallen, Pharaoh the king nevertheless continued in his bloodthirsty murderous purpose, desiring to destroy the people of Israel root and branch; therefore he sent forth a public edict or mandate in the kingdom, that all the children should be cast into the water, and drowned.

(38) This was an earnest commandment, that the devil, the murderer of the flesh, should be grievous to the children of Israel, and that many children should be slain; and this commandment might have stood twenty years. Moses is also born immediately in this edict. His brother Aaron is three years older than he, and has not been in this danger of death, but Moses is put into the water to be drowned.

39 But what does our Lord God do about it? This third attack of Pharaoh must also be nullified. For persecution and murder must not harm the Church of God and the Christians, the Christians must not become less by it, as Pharaoh would have liked to wipe out the people by his bloodthirsty attacks, but the Church takes its place under the cross, of the

1) degenerate - to forestall, resist.

As the old teacher of the church, Tertullianus, said so well: Sanguine martyrum rigatur ecclesia, that is, the church is sprinkled, moistened and watered by the blood of Christians. From the blood of Christians there always grow other Christians, who reflect and marvel at their faith, confession of Christ, patience in the cross and constancy, and who are also converted to the Christian faith and become blessed.

(40) In our time, the pope and his followers have also raged against the gospel and its followers, and have driven many Christians into the misery of their wives and children, their possessions and goods, and have burned them, hanged them, watered them, beheaded them and strangled them, thus wanting to hinder the preaching of the gospel and reduce the number of Christians. But the longer the gospel has been spread under this raging of the devil, the more Christians have become, just as the children of Israel have increased under this persecution.

The devil, along with the world, means ill and would gladly devour the Christians, but God sends it for the good of His own. Such persecution, hardship and temptation must be a cause for them to cry out to God in earnest, to trust in Him, to patiently await His help. He can certainly send it differently, namely, that the Christians will finally be delivered from their distress, and the wicked will be overthrown with their rage. As he does here, Pharaoh throws the sons of the Israelites into the water and drowns them, but in the end he must stop. For God also finally takes Pharaoh the king, together with all the people of Egypt, and drives them through Moses to the baths in the Red Sea, where they must all drown. This shall be the end of the tyrants.

(42) Thus far we have heard in the first chapter of the second book of Moses how the children of Israel were afflicted and oppressed by Pharaoh the king in Egypt with three kinds of plagues. First, how he weighed them down with burdens and labor so that they would not multiply. But it did not help. Second, as the king commanded the mothers of woe,

to kill the young children at birth. This did not happen either. Third, he ordered that the male children be thrown into the water and drowned, but that the female children be left alive. But nothing happened.

(43) So it must be with the people who have the true word of God, through which word they escape the devil body and soul. The devil slaughters them as sheep for the slaughter [Ps. 44, 23], he tortures and torments them, otherwise he lets false teachers and other godless people remain safe and in peace and quiet; only those who have God's word must let him have their hair and suffer persecution from him. As St. Paul also prophesied [2 Tim. 3:12], "that all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. The Lord Christ also said [Matth. 10, 38. 16, 24.]: "Whoever wants to be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me. The Lord Christ himself had to suffer persecution from the devil and the world; why should we want to be better off than he was?

(44) But we have also heard of the great wonders God does for His own who trust in Him and believe His word and promise. For though at first he may well set himself against them, as if he would forsake them altogether, that they should perish and perish: yet he comforts them again, and helps them out of persecution; he takes hold of the game of the tyrants, throws away their dice, bites their cards, and puts them to shame with all their attempts and persecutions.

### **Allegoria or spiritual interpretation of the first chapter.**

(45) We have often told your dear ones, and especially those who want to study the Scriptures and become preachers, to beware of spiritual interpretations or allegories (as they are called). For I have also hitherto proceeded by leading the histories to a secret understanding; there have 1) well to beware, who there-

1) Taken by us from the old edition. Eislebensche: has one.

with, and they must be properly instructed.

46) It cannot be prevented that one should not take histories before oneself and draw secret meanings from them, which Paul [1 Cor. 13:2, 14:2] calls mysteria. Than that I give a gross example: Isaac is sacrificed on the altar and yet remains alive, that it means Christ must die and rise again and come to life. This must be allowed to happen. For St. Paul says: The Holy Spirit speaks mysteries, that is his office, he can also meet and interpret the mysteries. As St. Paul also does to the Galatians [Cap. 4, 23] with the two wives, Sarah and Hagar, which are the two testaments. Item, with the two sons, Isaac and Ishmael, which mean two different nations. If he did not lead and interpret it this way himself, then sows should have fallen in, wildly and desolately interpreting it.

47 For this reason, it does not suffer that anyone should fall with his head into the Scriptures, and therein ponder and mow, 1) as he pleases. No one should refrain from doing so, unless he has the Holy Spirit. And St. Paul said to the Romans in chapter 12, v. 7: "If anyone prophesies, let it be similar to faith", *analogia fidei*. Whoever wants to interpret secretly, let him see to it that he interprets them on faith, that they rhyme with faith.

I say this because I myself have wasted and lost much time in Gregorio, Hieronymo, Cypriano, Augustino, Origene. For the fathers, in their time, had a special lust and love for allegories, walked around with them and [clicked] all the books. Origen is almost a prince and king over allegories, and has made the whole Bible quite full of such secret interpretations, which are not worth a damn. The cause is this, that they all followed their conceit, head and opinion, as they considered it right, and not St. Paul, who wants to let the Holy Spirit act in it, or that the allegories would be similar to faith.

49. And I did not want to preach about it either,

1) mähren - to stir around.

If I did not do this, I would make you accustomed to use the allegories correctly, and I would be able to take away the power of the interpreters and teachers who thus err with the allegories, and I would be able to contradict them and keep the right mind. Origen did Christ much harm with this. For the Jews mocked the same teachers who "interpreted" the Scriptures by allegory, and knew how to interpret Christ's word in such a way that everything written by Isaac should be understood by Christ. For frivolous spirits, who were full and satisfied with the divine word, only gave themselves to searching for many allegories; and there one could not quite grasp God's word before the same interpretations.

50 That was a delicious thing, and people's mouths were opened; when one hears something new and brings something strange, one wants to know everything, writes and clicks everything; but nothing good comes of it. For when one is weary of history, one seeks what the world looks at, and one seeks his honor, the other something else in the Scriptures, and preach for the sole purpose of opening people's eyes, ears, mouths and noses, and one says: O, a learned man is this! But they lose the right reason and understanding of the Scriptures, and lead the people astray.

Look at the books of St. Jerome, I have also read them. But he thinks he has got it right, uses splendid words, but it is a bad thing, and is only the shells of the nut, the husks of the pea. You have to bite the nut open and break it out, and that's where you'll find the kernel; if you don't do that, you'll get dirt in your mouth. A young teacher might fall for it, and think that it is right and good, yes, that there is a secret mystery hidden inside, just as there is a kernel in the nut; he regards the histories as shells, in which there is nothing, and considers it a dead thing. I have also treated the histories as the best way to live a Christian life in faith, love, and patience, and to pray and keep oneself in the cross.

52 Therefore I have asked that whoever wants to study the holy Scriptures should not forfeit his pride and desire in the holy Scriptures.

Take before you Homerum, Ovidium, Virgilium, or any other poet, and try your art there, and do not plump here into the holy Scriptures, for you have washed your feet beforehand, so that you may get the kernel out of the nut and not the shells; therefore turn it over and seek the best. The main part and the reason, or the best in the Scriptures, they also call the shells without the nut, as, the histories read above and know. But let it also be your best study, that we may know how the histories go, how Abraham lived in the word of God and faith, and how he fared.

This corrects people, straightens and comforts consciences that are in great anguish and distress, and gives an example of how to live rightly, so that they may also remain in the simple mind. And history brings the fine examples of faith and love, yes, it brings forth their life. If you seek and ponder anything else from it, it is not good; for you are on the wrong track and go astray, and have already opened the door to the devil behind and in front, and have a reckless spirit that despises the holy Scriptures. Then the devil's head is made so full of allegories that you pour out sacks full of them, and you even become a fool about it, since you think you are very clever.

54 Now, I do not want to deny it, but I ask that you keep the core, the right treasure, and the most important part of the holy scriptures, namely, that you learn the holy scriptures well according to the historical way. For I warn you that you will find it much different in the old teachers, who are full of allegories. Origen has entangled himself and his disciples and the whole world with them, yet St. Jerome of Origen boasted that he, after the apostles, would place his doctrine on none but Origen. But I did not want to cough up St. Hieronymi and St. Origen's art. For any pointed head could do the same. Since they are supposed to teach me the history of how one should live in the Word of God, and also how one should believe and practice love, they are quite mute and stiffly go over it.

55. these masters of christianity have not

A history properly executed. It is fitting to show how life goes on in faith, and how a man holds fast to faith and leaves his wife and child above it. This should be the most noble thing, and one should be full of it. Therefore keep the rule: that whoever wants to act the prophets should act them according to faith and restrain himself from allegories. For they have made great thoughts out of them, and let him who studies them beware; for these Doctores are to be read as yearly as any poets, nay, Virgilius is much more harmless than they. Then we know that Virgilius and other poets are fools and have erred, but these let themselves be seen with their doctrine, that it is all good what they pretend, and yet they put dirt in their mouths.

(56) Take heed, ye that study, that ye learn not backward, and forget more than ye have learned. For it was the same with me. When I was still in school, I lacked a proper master who could have taught me such things. But now it is told to you, watch and keep it. One must take from the Scriptures the right treasure, the core, strength, power, juice and taste, which is the example of faith and love; one should look at it; where God has written it out, you must not dig deeply for it. After that, when you have this most noble piece, you can introduce secret interpretation along with the public text, decorate it, and attach it as beautiful clasps.

(57) As St. Paul also does, since he preached for a long time in the epistle to the Galatians that faith makes righteous and not the works of the law, he then finally [Cap. 4, 22. ff] also comes to the allegorism or interpretation, and leaves it at that. So that he shows that allegories may well be used, but in such a way that they rhyme and serve as a basis. For I also know well that the secret interpretations do not hold the sting, nor should they be the reason on which we rely. For this alone the clear, explicit and public word of God should and must do, as believing in Christ and loving one's neighbor; thus one is blessed. Other doctrines and allegories you leave aside, as that also is St. Paul [Gal. 4, 22. ff.] with Abraham, that his two sons mean the

two wills. 1) Otherwise, 2) if there were no reason for it here, my heart would waver and always think how I would be sure of it. For one would say: Who knows whether it means this, whether it is also thus? The heart must fidget there, and cannot be sure, must also not base itself on the allegories, or rely on them. I must have the public text and leaf of the holy scripture.

58. Therefore, be prepared to consider the spiritual meanings as your least study, and take hold of the faith, love, and word of God that the patriarchs had and were preserved by. Let this be your highest study, and then come after it that which the doctors have otherwise considered the greatest; then you will preach and study usefully. You must turn it around, and throw back the allegories, and not interpret them, as Origen did; for I interpret and lead them all to serve the preaching ministry and faith. So do you also. As you will hear here in a rough example of the third chapter [v. 2 ff] that Moses saw the fiery bush burning. This green bush, in which was the flame of fire and God Himself, was drawn to the Virgin Mary and sung throughout the world during Advent. This pleased the world that it meant this; plump in so soon and must be delicious thing, that it should hit the Virgin Mary.

(59) Now if one had asked him who had given and interpreted these things: How does it rhyme that the bush should be the Virgin Mary standing there with her virginity and pregnant womb? Give me the reasons: then he would stand as a piper. For you say: Where does it rhyme? Does it also lead to Christ? Does it also lead to faith and Christianity? Then one must say, No, for it goes only to the Virgin Mary, the mother of the Lord Christ, and to her virginity; there it rhymes.

1) Here the relation seems to us to be unclear and deficient. It would be to be read approximately: Other teachings and allegories you leave, but accept only those that are founded in the holy scripture, as which is also 2c.

2) In the Eisleben edition, "sonst" precedes "allhier".

like a fist on an eye. Therefore it is an annual thing to lead and interpret the holy scripture as we want, as seems right to us. For how does it rhyme to be a mother, or to conceive, and to burn? How can the fiery bush be the mother Mary? The fact that the bush is not consumed should mean that Mary remains a virgin.

(60) If anyone is interested in this fool's work, he may read the history of the feast of the conception of Mary, in Advent, and see what the same fool there has fooled with the Scriptures, since he attributes the ark of Noah, the high mountains that look out of the water, the tree of paradise, and other things, all to Mary, and shows all the letters with the secret interpretation of the Virgin Mary. And we have also done it in the Papacy, that we have drawn everything to the Virgin Mary, as that she is the one where one should put all comfort and confidence; item, that she can save us from troubles. Take the feast of the body of Christ before you, and see what patchwork there is, so that it looks as if the swine had spit it. The notes and the chant are good, but otherwise there is a piece here and a patch there, and the bread of heaven must be the Lord's Supper, so that it looks like an embroidered and patched cloak. 3) The highest theologians have said this about the feast of Christ. The highest theologians have done this, and have been fools in the skin.

61 Look at Gregory, how the same man is a juggler. When he opens his mouth in his sermons, he forgets the text of the Scriptures and says nothing about faith, love or the cross, but only about spiritual interpretations; these teachers must still be called the pillars of Christianity, which should preserve the church. They last a good year.

62 Let this be said as a preface and instruction, so that one may beware and not be reckless and presumptuous in handling the holy Scriptures in this way, and in playing tricks with them. One should not and cannot prevent it, but be gentle with the allegories. If you have taken the histories [as a basis], then do

3) Eislebensche: er.

4) Added by us.

a neat allegoriam to it. If the spirit does it, then it will be found whether the allegory goes to faith or not 2c. Therefore I conclude, and say that few allegories belong to Mariam.

Now let us take the first chapter before us, and take the secrets, or hidden, secret interpretations from it and act upon them. For I will not let it be called a spiritual interpretation, for the whole of Holy Scripture is spiritual, and without it no other books.

The first part is that the people of Israel, who had God's word, were oppressed and afflicted by Pharaoh the king with brickmaking and other hard labor, so that they could not multiply. This is the main point in this history, that those who want to be God's people must suffer persecution. For Christ [Matth. 16, 24.] says: "Whoever wants to become my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me." So St. Paul [2 Tim. 3, 12.]: "Whoever wants to live godly in Christ JEsu must suffer persecution." Item, in the 44th Psalm, v. 23, the Christians are called sheep for slaughter, who are tormented daily for Christ's sake 2c. We have a clear, bright example of this here; and now show it to the preaching ministry, so this story can rightly and well suffer a secret interpretation and a hidden understanding, namely, how the right preachers and false teachers deal and do with the people. The people of Israel have God's word and righteous preachers, then Pharaoh comes with his drivers and his tyranny, oppresses the people, and the oppression of the body must also be drawn on the conscience. The holy scriptures are full of how the statutes of men weigh down the consciences and corrupt the faith, and cause it to perish; as the prophet Jeremiah and other prophets are full of complaints against the statutes of men, which weigh down the consciences and oppress them with false doctrines of good works.

So this interpretation of the office of preaching, as of the right and wrong preachers, is without a doubt, and rhymes with the Holy Scriptures and with faith. And I am sure that if this history rhymes with preaching

The first is that the interpretation is certain, and that the Holy Spirit interprets it Himself. For the heart of man can never rest unless he has the right doctrine or the divine word, so that he believes in God and holds fast to him; and he who has this can also lead a right life. The devil cannot stand this teaching, so he sets up false teachings and sends false preachers, forcing the people with laws to do good works, so that they will go to heaven, as we monks have done with our vows and other works. These false teachers are the devil's servants, who beat one burden over another on our consciences, torturing us with the stroke of a brick. For the works have not served us, nor have they benefited us; we have had no more than trouble from them, and have thus been weighed down and martyred with the striking of bricks; it has not benefited us, but the pope, bishops, monks and priests, who have become rich from it.

66 Thus the history can be rightly interpreted, that Pharaoh builds two cities from the sour labor of the children of Israel. For so it is with all those who live under the laws of men and under the priesthood; they are not improved by them, and their consciences are only oppressed, tormented and afflicted by them.

67. For whose benefit is it that these bricks are painted? We are the pabst's brickmakers, he has fattened his belly and filled it with our goods; but we have been weighed down hard, lest we should conceive and bring forth children; that is, the word of God has not been preached to us, lest we should believe in God and be saved. For where the Word of God is not preached, believed, prayed for, and taught about, we know nothing of God, and we are not God's children, begotten for the Kingdom of God. Just as the children of Israel were troubled and wearied here, so that they could not multiply and beget children in the flesh.

68. this could be drawn rightly against good works, and would this secret mind and understanding also be right, so that our good works might be put down, and God's word and

our faith would be established. As Saint Paul also did when he said: Sarah is the right housewife and the free one, who has God's word and faith; but Hagar, the other woman, is the law, who deals with works. So the prophecy rhymes and is similar to faith, if one leads the allegories to the word and faith against the works.

69 Two cities are built for Pharaoh, and his kingdom comes to power, honor and wealth, so that he becomes a great, strong and powerful king. In this way, we too have been greatly burdened by the pope's kingdom, but his errors, his decrees and canons have been confirmed. Which the devil does for this reason, so that he may hinder God's word and prevent us from multiplying or being made a great nation and begotten for the kingdom of God.

70 Therefore Pharaoh also has a proper name. For Pharaoh means to stand idle, or to walk idly; as when a woman has no veil on her head, or a man has not put on his hat, and has no clothes on his body, or walks idly with his jewels and coverings. As then in the fifth book of Moses [Cap. 32, 42.] in the song it is said of uncovering the head; that is, when a man is torn from God, that God does not hover over us, for otherwise he is our head; as St. Paul [1 Cor. 11, 3.] says that the man is the head of the woman; thus God is the head of the man, but the man rules the woman, and God rules through the man; God is the regent of the man. And this is also said of the authorities, that God rules through them [Rom. 13:1 ff. Ps. 82:1 ff]. Therefore one should humble oneself before it, for it is the lid, the head and regent, since we must go as God governs us through it.

(71) He who has such a ruler is not called bare, nor is he bareheaded, for he goes under God and has a cover to govern him, to protect him, and to wait on him; just as a woman goes under a man and has a ruler by her husband. But he who is without a ruler, the Scripture calls bare and bareheaded. So Pharaoh is called such a ruler or king, who makes us bareheaded, that we are without a ruler and without a kingdom; that is, these false teachers tear us from

God, that Christ and God is not our head, Lord and King, that we have no faith in Christ, but have lost Him, go bareheaded, are under Pharaoh, just as Pharaoh is also called bareheaded.

This rhymes well together. For this is the manner of all those who bluff themselves with good works, that when they do many works they want to be saved by them, and yet they do not attain to salvation, nothing comes of it. So we are bareheaded, and go without the head, Christ, if we want to be saved by works; just as Paul also says to the Galatians [Cap. 5:4], "You have fallen from grace, and have lost Christ, because you want to be saved by works," that is, you have fallen from the kingdom of Christ, and go without the head, Christ; just as a lewd woman runs away from her husband and goes to another. The head is there, but the harlot wants to be without a head and walk bareheaded.

73] In this other book of Moses [Cap. 32, 25] it is also said that Moses saw that populus esset nudatus, that the people went bareheaded and naked. For Aaron had made them naked, because he pretended a special service, that they should sacrifice to the golden calf, that he might tear them from God and make them bareheaded, because they trusted in the same good work.

(74) This is what this king means; therefore he must have this name, that he may show who he is, and what kind of fellows they are who teach laws and good works, and keep silence from the faith, that they are Pharaoh's oppressors, who trouble the consciences with good works, and help no man to rest and peace. Therefore it is not right to preach in Christendom that one should preach by faith alone against good works and the law of men. But I say of those who are Christians. For with the wicked it is already finished, they belong under the executioner, who is called to paint bricks and to weigh down the consciences; but we speak of those who are Christians and remain in Christianity, these are not under the law.

(75) To paint bricks, to work with clay in Egypt, is to be well blued and martyred with good works, that one may become pious, and to be a good man.



complaining to themselves with statutes, from which one gets a stupid conscience, because no one becomes rich or happy from it.

(76) The other allegory is also to be drawn to the ministry of preaching, if it will not help that the labor and burden of the people may be less, that the king commanded the mothers of sorrow in Egypt that they should kill the children of the Hebrews in childbirth as soon as they were young. For the false prophets, when they hear that a man preacheth of the faith, straightway they will have one dead, and put the people under ban. [But they let the maidens live, that is, those who depart from the preaching of the faith and fall into good works, and want to live a better life before God than other people. Those who are strong in the faith, and hold themselves as men, and do not want to rely on good works, the same

strike them dead, says the devil; but let the others live who continue in good works. But these are righteous Christians, who abide in the doctrine of faith and keep it, are also improved by such doctrine.

(77) Pharaoh's throwing all the little ones into the water and drowning them is the power and authority of taking hold of doctrine by force and thirst, and drowning people with water, that is, with the doctrines of men. For water is superfluous, false doctrine, when one falls into good works and lives without faith; in it one must drown and perish. So you have heard the first chapter, in which faith and the ministry of preaching were explained, and this doctrine is thus confirmed, that faith alone is valid before God, and works do nothing but serve the neighbor.

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## The second chapter.

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**V. 1-4: And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. And when she could hide him no longer, she made a little box of reed, and glued it with clay and pitch, and put the child in it, and laid him in the reeds by the riverside. But his sister stood afar off, desiring to know how he would fare.**

1. The summary of this chapter is how Moses was born and secretly hidden, but finally placed in a small box and set on the water, when the king's daughter found him and raised him for her son in the royal court; And how Moses, after forty years, went out to the brethren of his people, slew an Egyptian, and fled out of the land, after which he became duke, captain, and commander of the children of Israel, who brought them out of Egypt, and established of them a kingdom of their own, prescribing and regulating religion, worship, and secular police, laws, discipline, and discipline.

From this we learn the great miracle of God, how he cares for his believers so fatherly and abundantly, and helps them miraculously out of all hardships, that even their own enemies and worst adversaries often have to help and serve his Christians for their honor, benefit and welfare. For King Pharaoh must raise Moses in his daughter's womb, who wanted to drown and kill Moses and all the children of the Hebrews. No one notices this. For God does not reveal His counsel and purpose soon or to everyone, but keeps it secret and hidden for a time. And since no one knows it, it is done in such a way that no one pays attention to it. And God arranges His things so wonderfully that no one realizes, feels or understands them until God has accomplished them.

3 But see if God does not mock the angry Pharaoh in his fist. For in this persecution of the children of Israel, when the oxen (as they say) are standing on the mountain, and the death and destruction of this people is in sight, Moses is born.

4. there will be special doubt to the children of

Israel must have fared badly in Egypt. For the Egyptian women kept a diligent eye on the Hebrew women when they were with child, and they revealed and betrayed it. But in the midst of this tyranny, and when the edict is most strictly and severely enforced and kept, God causes the king's enemy, and the captain of the children of Israel, to be born. Since Pharaoh is so angry and wicked, Moses must be born to throw Pharaoh into the sea. Yes, that is even more, God sends it so that this enemy, Moses, must feed Pharaoh's daughter himself and raise her in the royal court. It is a strange thing that this king, who is the enemy of the children of Israel, should raise up the Savior, helper and protector of the people of God himself, who will later destroy him and his land and people. Pharaoh raises a serpent in his own bosom, which shall bite him afterwards; he raises a wolf, which shall tear him and devour him.

So wonderful are the judgments of our Lord [Is. 40, 14. Rom. 11, 33]. But if they had known it in Pharaoh's court, they would have put Mosi to death a hundred thousand times over. But God says: I will tell you, Pharaoh shall raise his own enemy with his own bread and with his own goods, and feed a serpent in his bosom; his own daughter must be Mosi's mother. That is, Pharaoh's mouth and nose grabbed, and all his plots and tyranny put to shame.

(6) With this glorious example of divine grace and goodness toward the faithful we should also comfort ourselves, and in cross and tribulation prepare and send ourselves to faith, invocation and hope of divine help. For help must finally come, for God does not abandon His own. He himself speaks in the one and ninetyeth Psalm, v. 15: "I am with him in trouble, I will snatch him out" or save him, "and he shall praise me" [Psalm 50:15]. So the fourth and thirtieth Psalm also says, v. 19: "The Lord is near to all those who call upon him," and those who call upon him in truth, he looks upon our distress and misery, and will deliver us out of it [Ps. 145:18].

(7) Who were the parents of Moses, it is also said here that he was born of the tribe of Levi. For a man of the tribe or house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi, whose father's name was Amram, and whose mother's name was Jochebed, as it is written in chapter six, v. 20.

8 These parents would have liked to hide the child, Mosen, and protect it with life, keep it secretly with them for three months, but finally, for fear of the royal edict, have to let it be put into the water in a small box, covered with clay and pitch, so that the child would not drown so soon. These parents were undoubtedly Christians, looked to God's promise, and waited for redemption from the house of Egypt, which had to squeeze under Pharaoh's tyranny, like a mouse in a trap, and looked and hoped for God's help.

9 The epistle to the Hebrews in the eleventh chapter, v. 23, also speaks of this, that through faith Moses was hidden from his parents for three months after he was born, because they saw that he was a beautiful child and were not afraid of the king's commandment. They see that the child is beautiful, and they hope that God will give them a man according to His promises, who will bring them out of Egypt, as He promised the patriarch Abraham, when it is said: "You shall know that your seed will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and there they will be forced to serve and tormented four hundred years. But I will be judge of the people whom they must serve, and after that they shall go forth with great good. And they shall come again after four men's lives." And Gen 48:21 the patriarch Jacob said to his children, "I die, and God will be with you, and will bring you again to the land of your fathers"; and in chapter 49, v. 29, he commanded his children to bury him in the land of Canaan, where Abraham and Isaac were also buried, to indicate that the children of Israel should not remain in Egypt, but be brought out again to their fatherland, the land of Canaan.

10. and in the 50th chapter, v. 24. 25, Joseph says to his brothers: "I die, and God will visit you and bring you out of Egypt into the land which he swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Therefore he took an oath from them, that in going out of Egypt they should carry his bones with them to the land of Canaan." With these promises they comforted themselves, and hoped that there would soon be an end to Pharaoh's servitude and tyranny. For when the string is stretched to the utmost, it is apt to break, and when the weather is hardest and coldest, it breaks. So they hoped in the midst of the extreme distress that the time of redemption was now at the door, that God would now help and perhaps help the people of Israel through their son (who was a beautiful child); therefore they hid the child with them for three moons.

**V. 5, 6 Pharaoh's daughter went down to bathe in the water, and her maidens were walking by the water's edge. When she saw the box in the reeds, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child, and, behold, the babe wept. Then she wept and said, "There is one of the Hebrew children.**

11) See here how God has such a merciful eye on the poor child, Moses, that the devil does not have to drown him, but he must be pulled out of the water and remain alive, and since otherwise his father Amram's maidservants would have waited for him, Amram's daughter must carry the child Moses herself in a box to the water and let it flow, but still looks from afar where the child remains. He would have perished in the water and been eaten by the fish, but God still has such great regard for Moses that the king's daughter takes him out of the water and orders him to be raised.

12 Thus it is God's strange providence that even his own mother must become Moses' nurse; he is brought back into his father's house, nourished and raised there. And before Moses should suffer hardship, the devil himself would have to serve him, and the daughter of the raging tyrant would have to raise him,

and take her for her son. The daughter of this great king must still be the handmaid of our Lord God, and raise Moses, although ignorantly. Moses is a Hebrew foundling, and Pharaoh's daughter will often have played with him, danced with him, and also loved him very much.

(13) Such is the art of our Lord God, so he cares for his own and helps them wonderfully. "He kills and brings back to life, He leads into hell and brings back to heaven", as Hannah, Samuel's mother, sings in her song of praise [1 Sam. 2, 6]. The child, Moses, must first come into danger of life, and be thrown into the jaws of death, before he shall be made the leader of the people of Israel. Again, God lifts him up first. So that Moses would become great, he was brought to the court of the king's daughter and became her son, since he was to overthrow the persecution in Egypt. But we also see here how God makes fools and fools of the world. For who will resist his wisdom? It does not realize this divine counsel with Moses. For it also does not seem that this child should become such a man, for God does it secretly until he has made it happen. For he rules in such a way that he can make something out of what is nothing at all, and place it before our eyes so that we can see it.

**V. 11, 12: In those days, when Moses was grown up, he went out unto his brethren, and saw their burden, and perceived that an Egyptian smote one of his brethren the Hebrew. And he turned to and fro, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and buried him in the sand 2c.**

014 The Jews have made up many lies here, saying that Pharaoh the king was angry with Moses, and that he presented to him his royal crown, an apple, and coals of fire, and wished to know by them whether he was his son or not. But Moses pushed the crown away and bit into the coals, so Moses lisped afterwards. But these are Jewish tales. St. Stephen speaks much differently in the stories of the apostles in the 7th chapter, v. 17-22, and says: "Now the time of the promise was approaching,

The people grew and multiplied in Egypt until another king arose who did not know about Joseph. This one deceived our family and wronged our fathers, and caused the young children to be thrown down so that they would not live. At that time Moses was born, and was a fine child in the sight of God, and was nourished three months in his father's house. And when he was cast down, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and brought him up to be a son. And Moses was taught all the wisdom of Egypt, and became mighty in deeds and words.

(15) Moses was a man who was well educated in Egypt, and Pharaoh's daughter knew well that he was a Hebrew man; therefore he had to learn all kinds of languages, arts and other things, and was a respectable man in Pharaoh's sight with his advice and deeds. He was brought up as a noble boy to be used as a counselor in the regiment, who would be competent in the worldly regiment.

16 This has been granted until the fortieth year. In the meantime (as I believe it to be) the horrible, terrible edict and commandment to drown the Hebrew children will be abolished. Now the redemption starts, and wants to make the game; however, it still consumes a while, until Moses becomes a great 1) man, then he runs away from the court, and wants to see and visit his brothers, the children of Israel; because there his heart was. At the court he was the queen's son, a splendid court jailer and a great man; there was power, honor, wealth and splendor in abundance, and he had the expectation 2) that after Pharaoh's death he would become king. But he had to suffer much, and at court, because of the pagan religion and the sinful, annoying life, he had to see a lot of drunkenness, ambition, hopefulness, 3) and infidelity that hurt him. If he remained silent about this, he had neither peace nor quiet in his heart; but if he spoke, the wild, desolate life of the court

If he had to rebuke and punish, he also had to expect disfavor, enmity, resistance and danger from the courtiers, that he was despised by them and considered a priest and a fool; therefore his heart was full of pain.

17 The epistle to the Hebrews in the 11th chapter praises this little piece, that Moses withdrew from the royal court of Egypt and left the life of the court, and says, v. 24, 25, 26. By faith Moses, when he grew up, denied to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter, and preferred to suffer adversity with God's people rather than to have the temporal pleasure of sins, and regarded the reproach of Christ as greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, because he looked forward to the reward" 2c. And it is also a beautiful example of faith that one can, for the honor and obedience of God, take and leave a kingdom, country and people, so great money and goods, honor and power, and on the other hand stand by the poor, oppressed, burdened, persecuted and afflicted children of Israel, with whom they suffer poverty, danger, mockery, contempt, hunger and sorrow. A man of the world would not have done this, but would have said, Let one hold himself to the head as much as to the buttocks or back, or spoken: In large waters one sows large fish. Such a man would remain at court all his life. Just as some people like court life very much, so that they run and run to get to the court and sit high up on the board. For he who is not at court wants to freeze to death. Everyone wants to come close to the fire, so that he may become rich, powerful and great.

(18) And the same fellows are like chickens walking in a courtyard, and see that other chickens, which are shut up in a basket, have plenty to eat and drink, so the same chickens walk around the basket, and would also like to go in with the others, which are fattened, and are soon to be slaughtered and eaten. So such fellows also see that at court, soups are eaten, there is a lot of eating and drinking, beautiful clothes, court life, splendor is felt, even money and property is obtained there; about this some

1) Eisleben: larger. - For our reading compare Hebr. 11, 24.  
2) Awaiting -- Awaiting.  
3) Finance --- intrigue, fraud.

Even in danger of life, limb, honor, goods, and loss of happiness, and this fire burns him badly, or the smoke of the court even suffocates him. As in many a court, a godless sow's life is led, and one loses both body and soul. Hence the common saying: Long at court, long in hell.

19 And because the Egyptian court had also been beaten over this bar, that idolatry had broken down there, unbelief, tyranny, violence, injustice, oppression of the subjects had taken over, Moses gave leave to the court life, because he could not have stayed any longer with such a godless, sinful and annoying life with a good conscience. Because faith and an angry, sinful life cannot get along with each other. Thus the time was also present when God wanted to redeem the children of Israel from the service of King Pharaoh, and this was to be done through Moses. Therefore, God takes Moses away from his life, and Moses follows our Lord God, putting aside all worldly, transient pleasures, joy and glory, which are an occasion and incentive for many sins, evil and wickedness, and knowing that God will not allow this loss of earthly life to continue, He knows that God can abundantly repay him for this loss of earthly joy and temporal goods, and he also firmly believes that God will turn around the hardship and persecution that he and the children of Israel have to suffer from the Egyptians, and will redeem and save them from it.

20 And Moses went out of Pharaoh's court, and saw one of his brethren slain by an Egyptian: and Moses went and avenged the Hebrew man, and slew the Egyptian again. For his mind has always been that he would gladly have helped all.

21 Now a question arises: whether Moses was right in killing the Egyptian? But I let such a question remain in its value and dignity, and hold that he was right in doing so. And Moses himself does not know otherwise, and considers himself not to have sinned in it. For he has watched these thirty years, how this people had to suffer under the Egyptians, and there was no salvation at all. So

he heard from his brothers that God had promised their grandfather, Abraham, that He would visit the Jewish people, save them, and bring them out of the house of Egypt, but punish the Egyptians. He did not doubt this redemption, but hoped for it, because it is said in Proverbs: When a string is stretched to the utmost, it is ready to burst; therefore the cruel tyranny of the Egyptians against the children of Israel would break and gain its 1) end, because it had come to the utmost and was driven.

22 The Holy Spirit gave him the heart and the courage to lead the way and slay the Egyptian. For he does not do it out of vengeance of flesh and blood, but out of the impulse of the Holy Spirit; there is a divine, heroic impulse in him. For God wanted to use the man, Moses, to be the captain of the children of Israel and to deliver them from Pharaoh. In this act, the children of Israel were to have a prelude or example of what God wanted to do through the man Moses to Pharaoh and all the Egyptians, namely, that he would also strangle and kill them; as they all drowned in the Red Sea afterwards.

23 Therefore this death of Moses is a special deed, just as [1 Kings 18:40] Elijah the prophet came and killed all the Baalspawn in the time of King Ahab in Israel; item [Numbers 25:7, 8] Phinehas the high priest took a knife and stabbed the Israelite man who was publicly fornicating with a Midianite woman. But these special deeds of the great miracle-workers, which happen by special inspiration of the Holy Spirit, are not to be imitated, and we cannot follow such examples either. One must leave the miracle-workers of God alone with their heroic miracles, and not make a consequence or example out of them, which everyone would also want to imitate, but one should leave such deeds alone, unless one also had the Holy Spirit, as they had, and received such a high calling from God, and one also had such causes as they had.

24 Otherwise, everyone abstains from the death-slaughter.

1) Eislebensche: to be.

for murder is a sin against the fifth commandment, since God says: "You shall not kill. Moses had God's word for him that the Jewish people should be saved from the Egyptians, and that God wanted to do this through him, as St. Stephen testifies in the stories of the apostles in chapter 7, V. 23-25, where he says: "When Moses was forty years old, it came into his heart to look at his brothers, the children of Israel, and saw one of them suffering injustice, he overreached and avenged the one who had suffered, and slew the Egyptian. And he thought that his brethren should hear that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they heard it not." And the Hebrews, his brothers, should ever have reflected and comforted themselves in this, how God would also save them all from the tyranny of Egypt.

**V.13-15. On another day he also went out and saw two Hebrew men quarreling with each other, and he said to the unjust man: Why do you strike your neighbor? And he said, Who made thee ruler or judge over us? Wilt thou slay me also," as thou slewest the Egyptian? And Moses was afraid, and said, How is this thing spoken? And it came to pass before Pharaoh, that he sought after Moses to slay him. But Moses fled before Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian, [and] dwelt by a well.**

025 When the slain Egyptian was buried in the sand, and Moses saw that two Hebrew men were quarreling with one another, he would also make them reconcile, and execute his office as a ruler and lord of the children of Israel, who should preside over his people with judgment and justice, protecting and guarding them, that a common peace of the land might be preserved, that the pious might be honored, and the wicked punished; for he is a ruler, and will not wrong the innocent. [Moses therefore saw his office in time, that he wanted to be a commander of the Jewish people, but he soon lost his office and his power. For, as they say, it soon bends, what there wants a hook 1)

1) Cisleben's: "a hoe." The word "one" will be wrong, because in Luther "hoe" or "Hacken" (that is, hook) is masculine.

become. Item: Urit mature, quod vult urtica manere. He lets himself be seen to be their lord and helper, whom God would have sent to the children of Israel.

26 How is it now with Most that he wants to help the innocent Hebrew? He wants to be a slayer, and might well get Scheidemann's share; as one is wont to say in the proverb: The slayer generally gets the best of it, they are gladly slain: so also this Hebrew, Mosi's brother, becomes the slayer of good Mosi. He says to him, "Will you also slay me like the Egyptian?" and brings it before Pharaoh the king, who is after Mosi to slay him. Pharaoh would have cut off Mosi's neck, as a death-striker, if he had gotten him. So Moses must flee from Pharaoh, which is Mosi's reward and drink money, because he has left the royal court and joined his brothers, and wants to lead them out of Egypt. Then they called him a murderer, and he was put in danger of life and limb by them. He did not want to remain in the royal court with the idolatrous Egyptians in great wealth and glory, and falls among the ungrateful, wicked Israelites, to whom no thanks is due.

(27) Thus it is in the world that many a one wants to escape from the rain and falls into the water. But this ingratitude of the world should not deter us from doing good to others. It is no different for Christians in the world; good deeds are repaid with evil deeds. Thus, danger, persecution, misery and hardship, poverty and contempt, banishment and all kinds of misery follow all those who want to serve God and faithfully wait for their profession, status and office [2 Tim. 3, 12]. For since Moses carries out his ministry here and helps the oppressed, he cannot be sure of life and limb before King Pharaoh. But God is with him in this exile, and he abstains in the land of Midian, dwells among the unknown, and gets a wife and child there.

**V.16-20. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came to draw water, and filled the gutters to water their father's sheep. Then the shepherds came and pushed them away. But Moses got up and helped**

**and watered their sheep. And when they were come to Reguel their father, he said, How came ye so soon this day? They said: An Egyptian man delivered us from the shepherds, and drew us, and watered the sheep. He said to his daughters: Where is he? Why have you left the man, that you did not invite him to eat with us?**

028 And the Midianites came up against Egypt toward the east, and Moses fled thither. For when he had first visited his brethren, he returned to the king's court, and kept it, until the stroke of his death broke out, and the king slew him: then he fled into Midian, and there God appointed him an inn and a host. For the seven daughters of the priest (who drew water at the well, but were rejected by the shepherds, and Moses helped them and rescued them from the shepherds) brought the cry of Moses to their father Reguel, and made him take him in as an inn, and gave him a daughter in marriage. This lasted almost until the fortieth year.

Thus, God is whimsical. Moses had hoped that the redemption of the Jewish people would soon begin, for they were burdened with unbearable work. But when Moses begins the work of redemption and smites an Egyptian to death, God immediately breaks the beginning for him, so that he has to become a fugitive in Midian, and postpones the redemption until the fortieth year; in the meantime, He lets Moses become a stranger in another and unknown land, so that it would have neither appearance nor reputation that he should be the man who should redeem the people of Israel, and drown Pharaoh with the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

(30) No one has seen this counsel of God, not even Moses himself, but God alone knows it. But we should learn to send ourselves with right faith and trust into this way and delay of God, that he always leads out his counsels so wonderfully. For the unfortunate unbelief has the misfortune, and spoils everything, that we cannot look God in the fist, keep still, and await His help with patience. Therefore Sirach also says [Cap. 2, 16]: Vae illis, qui per

diderunt sustinentiam [Woe to those who do not persevere], and the 106th Psalm, v. 13. speaks, "They did not endure the counsel of GOD."

31 Thus God gives Ziporam to Moshi as a wife, and she bears him children. The first son he calls Gershom, that is, a sojourner; the other Eliezer, that is, God my help, so that God would help him out of Pharaoh's hands and deliver him. For the Jews called their children by the name of the case that occurred. Isaac was also called so, that the mother Sara had laughed [Gen. 21, 6]. Jacob is called therefore that he had seized his brother Esau with the heel [Gen. 25, 26.]. So Moses also calls his first son Gershom, a stranger or sojourner, then the other Eliezer, God my helper; for God had preserved him and helped him in Egypt.

32 We should also learn from this that if we trust God and believe in Him, we shall find house and home, wife and child, shelter, food and all the necessities of life, wherever we may go in the world, whether we are in exile or not. For here is proof how God blessed Moses abundantly in his exile in Midian. As the 34th Psalm, v. 11, also says: "Those who fear the Lord shall not lack any good." And the seventh and thirtieth Psalm, v. 25, says: "I have been young and have grown old, and have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed go after bread." And another Psalm [Ps. 112:1, 3] says: "Blessed is he that feareth the Lord: riches and plenty shall be in his house" 2c.

### **Allegoria or spiritual interpretation of this other chapter.**

(33) We have hitherto heard how the Scriptures are to be acted upon, if one wishes to seek a secret interpretation, that one may first see how to keep to the main sense and written understanding, which is the foundation and core of the Scriptures. Then, if one desires to seek even such a secret, and, as it is called, spiritual interpretation, let it be applied to faith and the ministry of preaching; otherwise one goes to and fro, and is uncertain what one is doing.

34 In the first chapter we heard how the children of Israel were afflicted with much labor and burden in Egypt, and how the king drowned the little children in water. These are examples of those who rule the consciences with the ordinances of men, and fall from the grace of God, and are ruled not by God but by men, which is a damnable doctrine, and turns people from God to the devil, and gives them much trouble and labor.

(35) In this second chapter we hear how Moses was born and secretly hidden and concealed alive by his parents for three months, and laid on the water in a pipe box covered with pitch. Also, how the king's daughter found him and broke out the box and raised Moses as her son at court until he was 51 years old, when he went out to visit his brothers the Israelites, slew an Egyptian, and had to flee, took a wife and begat two sons. This is what is said in the other chapter.

In this history, as you have heard, we are taught faith, namely, that God also feeds and protects us through our enemies and adversaries, who otherwise would even want to kill us. For He gives life through death, and righteousness through sin, and does good to His own, even through their enemies, which art He alone is able to do; as also the Scripture [Proverbs 16:7] says: "To whom the Lord is well pleased, even all his enemies must be favorable."

The secret interpretation is: The box is the divine word, Moses lies in the box. For in this book Moses is a preacher and teacher, who guides God's word, and especially preaches the law of God; therefore the little tube means the mind of the divine word, and the holy scripture, which lies in it, disguised and pledged. For by the holy scripture it is described, and the divine understanding of the scripture is written therein. Now this box is not beautifully decorated, as if it were covered with gold and silver, or made of precious wood 1).

1) Heseck. 27, 5. Fladdernholz (Fladdern wood) ----- Burl wood, from maple trees.

but is woven from cane and coated with pitch or covered with clay. There is nothing but cane, reeds and rushes 2) to see. For in Egypt there was a large reed that looked like paper, and ships could be made of it.

38. but the simplicity of the holy Scripture and of the divine word, which goes along with bad, simple, and not adorned nor splendid words, means that many are offended by it; as St. Paul [1 Cor. 2:1, Gal. 4:13] also says, "I did not come to you with splendid words of human wisdom." For it seems to be a bad pipe-box, smeared with clay and pitch 2c.; nevertheless Moses, the boy, lies in it finely alive, and has the true understanding of the divine word, and the king's daughter has mercy on him, and accepts him for her son.

(39) The holy scripture is a thing that is worn out, undecorated and unadorned, so that no one would think that men should believe the divine word, because it does not seem anything, nor is it adorned [Is 53:1]. But faith comes from the divine word, and is given to the divine power alone, and not to the outward adornment, but to the inward inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that one may trust the unformed word of God. After this, it is even more dreadful and abominable when you see that everything seems unformal that the holy Scriptures command and require, than when they teach that one should not be stingy, that one should kill the flesh and the old Adam; whereas reason, the beautiful metze, teaches how one should get money and goods, wisdom, favor and honor.

(40) Now the reed box and Moses lie in the water and float, that is, God's word goes about among the doctrines of men; as was also said above in the first chapter [§ 77] about the water. For God's word goes forth without ceasing among the doctrines of men. Every heretic wants to be considered as if he had God's word for himself.

41 But last of all, the child Moses is found on the edge or shore of the waters, that is, the

2) Binze-----Binse; a wattle plant.  
3) to be mixed in with notes.



Human wisdom or reason, the beautiful maiden walking with her virgins, find the book, the holy scripture, and the beautiful child, Moses, pleases them well, open the book, and because Moses is small and young, reason takes him up. As the children of Israel let themselves be led by Moses to Mount Sinai and say [Ex. 19:8]: "What God speaks to us, that we will do."

(42) But when Moses is forty years old, and comes out to his brethren, and begins to judge, to condemn, and to put to death, then Moses is finished, and there is an end of him; then they will put him to death. That is, when God's word is small and young, it is accepted; but when it grows and is rightly recognized that it punishes us, and reproves our evil and angry life, also shows us our sin, then they become hostile to it. That is, killing Moses. For the word of God kills and reveals sin. The law was given so that sinners would

They should recognize where they are lacking, as St. Paul says: *Per legem cognitio peccati est* [through the law comes knowledge of sin]. So also one sings: "Laws are a mirror delicate, which shows us the sinful kind, hidden in our flesh." People become aware from the law that they are quite dead before God with their good works. Therefore Moses did no harm, unless he had first grown great and old.

43 Therefore it should always be considered that the law's office and nature is to denounce and kill sin; as St. Paul also says: *Virtus peccati lex* (the power of sin is the law). For no one wants to be recognized that he is unjust and criminal, which the law cannot tolerate. This is the reason for the strife, resentment, anger and disagreement between people and the law or the preachers of the law.

## The third chapter.

### Moses was tending the sheep of Jethro his brother-in-law, the priest of Midian.

The third chapter teaches how Moses wandered in the desert when he left Egypt, where he saw a bush with fire, from which God spoke to him and commanded him to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt. So the main part of this third and also the following fourth chapter of Moses' calling is that he should be the duke and commander of the children of Israel and free them from Pharaoh's tyranny. So that we may see what it does when God calls one or when he does not call one.

(2) On the other hand, we also hear how Moses struggles and resists for a long time, and does not want to have the appointment. For Moses quarreled and quarreled with God at the same time, and would not accept this office; God demanded and called him almost a sixth time, but he still resisted and resisted.

3. Moses makes himself too small and low; on the other hand, he sees the matter, namely the execution of the children of Israel from the house of Egypt, so great that it will be impossible for him, and that he is nothing to be counted here, because there was no human help to be seen. And although the tyrannical and wicked king dies in Egypt, who had burdened the children of Israel with joyful services and drowned their children, and who was so hostile to Mosiah; since one had hoped that it would now become better, or, as they say, warmer by one coat, it becomes much worse. For a worse king comes into the regiment than the previous one had been. Moses was no longer at the royal court, but fled from Egypt and lived in Midian for forty years in exile. Therefore Moses does not want to go to his profession; he does not want to leave, whether God promised him that he would give him word and mouth for it. [He drives and tempts God.

He is angry with Moses and says, "Do not upset me; be afraid of my wrath.

(4) This, of the calling of Moses, keep well; for no one shall intrude into a public office without God's calling. And know this for the sake of the new spirits that infiltrate and creep in, since God has not called them nor sent them to do so; they want to be preachers and teach the people without requirement and calling [Jer. 23:21]. Moses had long ago wished in his spirit for the salvation of his brothers from the house of Egypt, as he had enough spirit and effort when he killed the Egyptian. As if he should say: Methinks I should help you. And God does not punish it; as Stephen praises such murder in the stories of the apostles [Cap. 7, 25.] and says: "They did not hear it." Nor does he want to attack such execution from Egypt; God calls him first and sends him to the children of Israel.

(5) For it is not enough to boast of the Spirit; neither will God have it that men believe those who pretend and say, Believe my Spirit. Item, who say: The spirit drives me, the spirit calls **me**. Otherwise we would all be standing in the same heap, and no one would hear the other.

(6) But where God calls and drives to the ministry of preaching, the work goes on and tears through. How God is doing a great work here, which Moses himself despaired of, that he should lead such a great people out of such a mighty kingdom, and said: What am I against such a king? I am truly a fine, handsome, adorned fellow. But there is no harm. Moses, says God, be bold, pray and be confident, I will make Pharaoh stubborn, and he will shut himself up; but I will do the more signs with you, so that you may be sure that I have called you to the work.

007 For whosoever shall begin a new thing, let him not bring with him this glory: the Spirit hath put it into his heart. If he brings this defiance and glory with him, then only beat it out. For so shall one do first, saying, If the Holy Spirit will use me for an arnte (be it what it may),

and if God wants me to start it, and I have it in mind, He will give it so that the signs will follow, that He will confirm the sending and lifting by heavenly signs.

8 For this is decreed, that the Spirit shall not blow out or provoke any man's heart, except he confirm it first with signs; outward evidence he must bring with him. This is the inward calling.

The other calling is also divine, but it happens through men. The first is by God alone, without any means; and this calling must have outward signs and testimonies. The other calling must not have any signs; as, I would never preach here in Wittenberg if I were not forced to do so by God and required to do so by the Elector of Saxony. It is the same with another. For if people want to force me and press me, and I can do it, or I cannot do it at all, that is desired of me, then I do as much as I can. There it drives through people, and so also God's commandment stands there, that the Holy Spirit also touches me and says [3 Mos. 19, 18.): You shall love your neighbor as yourself. No man shall live to himself alone, but shall also serve his neighbor. This commandment is laid upon all, upon me and upon you. If the same commandment takes hold of me and is held against me, no defense will help unless I want to defend myself until I fall from God's grace.

(10) This calling is now confirmed by men, and yet also by God; therefore remember, and serve your neighbor therein, lest others come plodding across the field, and intrude into offices into which they have not been called, nor asked nor solicited. As if I wanted to go to Leipzig and preach there in the castle, and say, "The spirit drives me, I must preach; that is wrong.

(11) If he does not give you a seal and a sign, refrain from doing so, 1) and remain in the common way, that one asks the other from time to time. As, in this place here,

1) Eislebensche: dichs ---- dich deß.

723  
This is the preaching stand of all of us, and we all come together; but whoever is not chosen to preach here stands aside and does not preach. Who, then, is calling the spirits of the mob to break this order?

(12) Now these two professions are thus done. One who is badly done by God, and who claims this, do not believe that he is doing signs for you; or do not believe that he is bringing you signs first, that he is called by the Holy Spirit. For there are many such sneaks and preachers today who say that they are called by God, but they point to God or to the people who have called them. Yes, they can creep up behind people and wash so long that they are chosen and called afterwards; people can soon be persuaded with words. But they are thieves, murderers and wolves [John 10:1]. Now therefore they lack that it should be asked, If ye be of the Holy Ghost, shew signs. Or, if ye boast that ye are called of men, present it, and prove it, as is right and according to the scriptures. For God did not want to send the apostles into the world, unless they had been confirmed with signs beforehand.

(13) The other profession, which is done by man, is confirmed beforehand by the command of God on Mount Sinai [Deut. 19:18, Deut. 6:5]: "Love God and your neighbor as yourself. If this commandment drives you, you need no sign, for God has commanded it beforehand, and I must do it. Now people take this commandment and hold it up to me; this saying has been confirmed to me by Moses and by God in heaven, if I follow it. So I preach without any signs, and yet it is the calling of God; for it comes from the commandment of love, and is compelled by God. So also many prophets and Levites were called, whose natural office was to preach, just as our Doctores Theologiä are made and ordained for this purpose. Well, these were not allowed to be called, because they were prophets and preached without signs, because they did it from their natural office.

14 But this is my glory and my defiance, that I know that I do right, and by the gift of God I have done right.

I am called to do this by love. That is my glory. I do not boast of my spirit, for there I could not do a part of my ministry, even if I knew that I should convert the whole world, but there lies God's word and command. And if it goes according to God's word, then it is right; but if it goes according to my spirit, then it soon lies in the ashes of all that I began with. So they force me into it and make me preach, even though I would have liked to stay outside the preaching ministry. I have also boasted of this, since a long time ago the pope wanted to know the reasons for my profession.

(15) This is the profession of a public office among Christians. But if one were to come among the multitude, where there were no Christians, he would do as the apostles did, and not wait for the profession. If one said, "There are no Christians here; I will preach and teach them about Christianity," and a crowd gathered and chose me as their bishop, then I would have a profession.

(16) Moses here is eighty years old, and at forty years of age has a great spirit, and is an excellent man; yet he refuses to hold public office, and will not go up until he hears his God's displeasure, though he had excellent, glorious promise that God would be with him. For where God's word is confirmed, there is His commandment, and there the signs are also confirmed. God does no sign where it is not highly necessary. Christ did not want to do a sign for the Jews according to their head and favor [Matth. 12, 39], but where it was necessary, he could do miracles and wonders. Otherwise it would be a miracle, as Herod also wanted signs from Christ [Luc. 23, 8. 9.]. We could also perform signs, but there is no need, for our teaching has been confirmed beforehand and is no longer a new teaching.

17 This is the first part of this third chapter, about the calling of Moses to lead the great people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt against the will of the mighty king Pharaoh. And have heard of two kinds of calling; one that happens without means from God, when the Holy Spirit calls and gives into the heart. Do not believe him, they

then give you a sign that God has commanded them such a ministry, since no one knows about it but He alone. And whom God has called, to him he also gives a sign, as he does Mosi here. After that, there is the other profession, where one is called by the common commandment, namely, that one should serve people. In this calling one also has God's word, and there is no need for a sign that the gospel and the law are right. For both teachings were confirmed by signs many years ago and have also been accepted by the world, so that one can shut the world's mouth; for everyone knows that such teaching is right, and one must be satisfied with it.

**V. 1 Moses was tending the sheep of Jethro his brother-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he drove the sheep into the wilderness and came to the mountain of God, Horeb.**

18 Horeb and Sina is a mountain in Arabia; and Egypt is toward the west, but the promised land 1) is toward the east, and Arabia Petraea abutted thereon. The Edomites or Ishmaelites lived there, although the Scriptures call them by other names. Moses was a servant there and was forty years old. He came from a royal court camp, where he was held in high esteem, but he would rather be poor with his brothers with his high spirit than live in great honor in the king's court. Before, he was the king's son; here he is a servant for forty years, tending sheep. That is a great leap, coming from a great king's hall and court to a shepherd's house.

019 Midian was a priest, and a righteous man. For those countries were better Christians than we are; they did not fool themselves with the statutes of men, as we do. Midian was Abraham's son, born of Keturah, Abraham's third wife [Gen. 25:2], and there it was not lacking, they learned much from Abraham, how he walked in his house. They all knew God rightly, and the right way of God.

The people learned to serve, as well as the Ishmaelites. But this, on the other hand, is the defect that faith does not follow all who know and have God's word. "For faith is not of all" [2 Thess. 3:2]. Where faith has fallen, hypocrisy certainly remains, since reason and the divine word are baked together, so that a cake may be made of it; just as in the papacy they have mixed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, baptism and the divine word with the statutes of men.

020 Now Midian was not such a heathen as worshipped idols, but he taught the right God, though he invented a peculiar way, which we now call idolatry; as reason always does. So Laban was also righteous, and yet after that he was torn away to idolatry [Gen. 31, 30]. So Moses stayed with the Gentiles and preached to them as Joseph preached in Egypt [Gen. 39:9].

**V. 2. 3. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a fiery flame out of the bush, and he saw that the bush was burning with fire, and yet was not consumed, and said: I will go and see this great vision, why the bush is not burned.**

Here is a question: whether God or an angel spoke to Moses? For Apost. 7, 30. Stephen also says that for more than forty years the angel of the Lord appeared in the wilderness on Mount Sinai in a flame of fire of the bush. For some say that Moses saw the divine being himself here. Now it is written that the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses and spoke to him from the bush. Moses did not see God here. Therefore also Lucas and Stephanus say that the law was given by the angels 2c. God makes these princes of heaven preachers, so that it comes to us through the hand of angels; but we Christians have heard the Lord Himself. Christ, the Son of God, who is above all angels, preached to us with his mouth, and began to spread the gospel in the world, and then commanded his apostles to preach it. He has reserved the gospel in his humanity for him to preach, and the law through his apostles.

1) In the Eisleben edition: "the promised land". Thus the points of the compass are indicated straight opposite. The error will undoubtedly be found with the scribe.

the angels [Gal. 3, 19]. Therefore one should always understand that God speaks through angels.

(22) There is an angel in this bush, which bringeth unto Moses the word of God, and speaketh as God: and Moses also heareth the word of God, whether it proceedeth out of a bush, or through a stone. The word is to be looked at, and not at the person. For God now takes an angel, soon Peter or Magdalene, or even a donkey, as happened with Balaam [Num. 22, 28, 30], through whom He speaks His word. Therefore it is rightly said: "God spoke with Moses", although it is not always reported that he spoke through the angels. For when God speaks His word for Himself, He speaks it so that we may all be blessed in a moment. If he spoke verbally, we would immediately melt and perish before the great glory; but if he does not speak bodily, he uses creatures for this purpose, whoever these creatures may be.

So God spoke here through an angel. In the 19th chapter of Matthew, v. 5, it is written that God said: "Man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife", since Adam said it [Gen. 2, 24]. But God's speaking and Adam's speaking are the same. For it is spoken from God and in God, therefore God has spoken it.

**When the Lord saw that he was going to see, God called to him from the bush and said, "Moses, Moses! He answered, Here I go. And he said, Come not near, put off thy shoes from off thy feet: for the place where thou art standing is a holy land.**

(24) So God does here with Moses, as He always does with His saints, that He first destroys one before He raises him up. God breaks and tears down everything before he builds it; he throws it to the ground before he raises it up again; he kills before he brings it to life. The devil even reverses such things. But Moses is frightened, becomes stupid, and all his presumption falls away. But these things must be done for the sake of his outward profession, in honor of the place that was holy.

(25) Whence is it holy? It is called holy not because it is anointed with oil and greased, but because God reveals Himself there to the multitudes and speaks with him. God's word is there, so the people who live there must also be holy. Even though there are ungodly wretches there, the place is blessed. And therefore the people will be blessed, and the ears and eyes blessed, who hear and see the divine word; as the Lord Christ says [Luc. 10:23, 24]. For where the word of God comes, holy things are heard and seen; for the word is holy and makes holy people. Therefore, where the word resounds, there is a holy place.

(26) Therefore do not miss, as if you should not humble yourself, but go with complete fear. For there is not a bush or a fire, like other bushes and fires, but there is something new, namely God's word, which God wants to honor. And with trembling and fear one must go to it, and not respect it as a human word. Then he strikes Moses down, because God is present here with His angels and with His word. Then man must say: Lord, I am nothing; and soon his courage falls. When God touches a man's heart, his feathers soon fall out so that he does not fly high; just as Moses here no longer wants to look into the bush, for he is struck with fear.

27 Then God came and comforted Moses again. For he will begin the redemption of the children of Israel at Mount Horeb, and will make Moses captain of that work; speak of it to Moses. He will then give his law in this place and make his own kingdom and people out of the children of Israel. Therefore, because God's word and law is here, the place must be holy.

The patriarch Jacob also calls Bethel a holy place, because he saw there in a dream the ladder that reached from heaven to earth, and God was standing on top of the ladder, and the angels were ascending from heaven to earth [Gen. 28:12]. God was talking to him, heaven was open. In the same way Jerusalem is called a holy city [Matth. 27, 53.]

The temple, the law, the prophets' teachings and the promise of Christ. Just as all our churches are holy because the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered in them.

29 Here it should also be noted that God is very rich and superfluous with words in this text, and that He speaks a great deal to Moses. For I have said it many times before, and still say it, that it is a precious and delicious thing when one hears God's word. And one should go through all the lands to be worthy to hear one letter of God's word: rather, one should lift up one's hands, open house and yard, so that God may speak to us as much as he does here to Moses.

(30) But that the bush is full of fire and does not burn, and that Moses must take off his shoes, (2c) what that is, we will save for another time. But it is so that Moses would come humbled before God, knowing his worthlessness, and become a man other than the instrument through which God would accomplish great things. That is why he saw the bush burning and was frightened, and crawled into a different skin.

**V. 6. And he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses covered his face, for he feared to look upon GOD.**

God boasts here that this is his name forever, so he should be called, and whoever does not want to have this God, lacks the right God. The Lord Christ introduces this text against the Sadducees, Matthew chapter 22, v. 32, Marc. 12, 26, Luc. 20, 37] and interprets this text finely about the resurrection of the dead. For they thought that there was a God, but 1) no other life after this life, nor an angel nor a spirit, and understood the law of Moses only according to its outward essence, as the Jews did not see it differently. But the Lord Christ says [Matth. 22, 29] to the Sadducees: "You are mistaken and do not understand the Scriptures, nor the power of God"; you do not know what the resurrection of the dead is.

But here it is shown that God says: "I am a God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. From this Christ concludes that there is another life after this life. And that the resurrection of the dead is understood in this text, he thus proves that God is a God of the living and not of the dead; for that which is nothing, item, dissolved and dissolved, has no God. If a God is to be, he must be someone's God, from whom flows all goodness toward those in whom he is.

(33) And all the heathen have also done good to God; therefore one has devised this god, and another that god, for no other cause than that, when misfortune befalls them, they may find counsel and help here. Thus the pagans have made many idols, for it is naturally implanted in us that God is such a thing, so help all those who call upon him. The pagans did not lack that God is something that helps; this light is still in nature, otherwise people would not say: Help me. They must have a knowledge of God. But there is a lack of it, and here reason is blind, and causes idolatry, that it attributes the divinity to other things, which are not God, and does not recognize the right God.

Nature knows that God is the one who helps, but she does not know who that God is. Therefore, it dreams that this one will be God, and so it will be with the divine being. The Lord Christ was on earth, doing God's work and speaking God's word; yet the Jews themselves could not recognize with their reason that he was God, whom they saw before their eyes with his miraculous works [John 10:33], but said: God is He who created all things, helps all, and does all good things 2c.; but that this God should be, He is not. For when it comes to interpretation, God is soon absent. It is well known that there is a God, but who this God is, the whole world is blind.

Now, that I make it clear: We monks have preached highly of GOD and how one should serve GOD, namely, that this is GOD who sits high in heaven and created everything, and sent his son into the world 2c. Then

1) Eisleben's: or.

One said: I will serve this God, do this and that, and vow poverty, chastity and obedience. This work will please him. So they interpret God and say what His will is. So when I suggest to God how I want to serve Him, it is done, and I have lacked the right of God. For God is not so minded as I think, but what God gives and means, that shall be done. So he wants to be struck, and not by my discretion. For this reason, he lets all of these who have interpreted God altogether remain absent, mistaken and blind.

There is a common knowledge of God (as Rom. 1, 19. ff. and Cap. 2, 1. ff. are said) that has remained in the world. But when it comes to the meeting, they all lack God. Therefore, no one has the right to interpret or to name God, except as He names Himself, interprets Himself and proposes His work. Since his interpreting lasts, there it is, otherwise we all lack. So now it is better to refrain from all services where one is not certain that God's word is there, and where God does not interpret Himself. For the fact that a nun says that she is Christ's bride is nothing, for she is the devil's bride, because she takes things before her out of her own devotion and conceit, and points her thing to God's work. But therefore it is rightly said: God, who created heaven and earth, says: He who believes in Christ shall have eternal life, and his sins shall be forgiven and he shall be saved. That is where we meet GOD. For I did not make the interpretation (as, believe in Christ). For I would have said of myself: I will pray, fast, torture myself and call upon the saints until I am saved. Such interpretation is to call our Lord God as I wish, which means nothing.

(37) God is always known to be such a thing as helps all, but no one can name him unless he signs himself and puts a mark on himself, saying, "By name, sign, or work, you shall meet me and know me. But if I give God a name, and put a mark upon him, I have missed his mark; for God hath put his name and mark upon us in Christ. Christ shall be his name. Whoever attaches himself to Christ through faith, and is baptized, has

God is found. But if you do anything else, you are lacking God. As if you wanted to say: Dear Lord God, who sits in heaven among the angels, I will come to you and serve you and build a monastery, put on a monk's cap, go on pilgrimage, do this and that 2c. Hereby I interpret him, and call him without his command and word. There I have missed.

(38) Thus the article of the resurrection of the dead is also indicated here, for God says: "I am a God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. If then he is a God of Abraham, Abraham must live. If he is also the God of Isaac, then Isaac must live. Therefore, everything that is called Abraham must remain, not only the soul, but also the whole man with body and soul, who had Saram, the old Rachel, 1) as his wife; the same physical man who fathered a son with Sarah. Accordingly, the man Isaac must also live. These are strong, excellent words, that Isaac, Abraham, Jacob should live again and rise again, not only with the body, but the whole man with body and soul.

(39) How then can this be? for Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, are dead, rotten, and decayed, and there seemeth nothing in them? To this Christ answers, saying, that his word is true; and the text of the holy scriptures lieth not, that they which are dead must live. For though they are dead, yet are they alive: for in death they also live. For to our Lord God they are all alive, but to us men they are only withdrawn from sight. Nevertheless they are still alive, and that is still behind them, so that on the last day they will be brought forth again and shown to us. But they live in God, and what lives before Him is a prepared life; if it is a matter of a moment, we too will live again. Therefore St. Paul speaks [1 Cor. 15, 54.] from the prophet Hosea 2) [Cap. 13, 14.]: let death be swallowed up in victory 2c. [Is. 25, 8. 1 Cor. 15, 55.)

40 The patriarchs died because of it,

1) This is probably the name given to Sarah because she, like Rachel (XXX) [Gen. 29:31], was barren.

2) Instead of "Hosea" should probably be read "Isaiah", because the words as they are written here are 1 Cor. 15, 55. drawn from Isaiah.

that their mortal body is only changed. There is only one change. God is now working on the mortal body in death so that it will become as bright and beautiful again as the sun is in the sky. There is no death in the sight of our Lord God, and in the sight of our fleshly eyes dying is only a moving away. For as it is with our birth, so it is also with our death. What were you and I a hundred years ago? Nor did God create and make us later. So he can bring forth again the body, flesh and blood of those who died a hundred years ago. For all things live before him, as those who are yet to be born, and as those who have been.

41 So he decides that there is a resurrection of the dead. For Abraham, Isaac, Jacob have not died, but are alive. Are they buried? Yes, they are gone; but it is only to be a change, since the dead are taken away from our sight, and God now makes them different, for they shall live before Him.

**V. 7-10 And the Lord said: I have seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry against them which they do wrong; and I have known their sorrow, and am come down to deliver them out of the hand of Egypt, and to bring them out of that land unto a good and far country, unto a land flowing with milk and honey, unto the place of the Cananites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore, because the cry of the children of Israel is come before me, and I have seen their fear also, how they feared the Egyptians; now therefore go, I will send thee unto Pharaoh, and thou shalt bring my people the children of Israel unto Egypt.**

This is the calling of Moses, when God fetches him in the desert and behind the sheep in Midian, and sets him as lord or duke over his people, just as He takes Saul from the donkeys and sets him as king over Israel [1 Sam. 9, 2. ff], even as He finds David behind the lambs and anoints and confirms him as king in Saul's place [1 Sam. 16, 11. ff]. For God knows well how to find His own, whom He wants to use for great offices; they must not run and run for it, or practice much.

and attacks, God sees them Himself and expels them into His divine calling.

(43) Learn also from this text how God has an eye on the misery, distress, affliction, affliction or cross of His saints, looks upon it, hears their cries, sighs and prayers, and wants to save them. For he mourns over the affliction, anguish and heartache of his own, when they are in distress; he has a fatherly compassion and mercy on them, and will help them out of it, as the 103rd Psalm, v. 13, also says: "As a father has mercy on children, so the Lord will have mercy on those who fear him." So another Psalm [Ps. 56, 9.] says: "God count all the fleeing of His own, and gather their tears into His sack" 2c. For here He finally helps His people out of the tyranny of Pharaoh, and brings them into the promised land, which He had promised to their grandfathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God is true in His promises; He has promised help to the children of Israel, and He is now putting it into practice. Now, how does Moses stand against this divine calling?

**V. 11. 12. And Moses said unto GOD, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt? He said: I will be with thee; and this shall be a sign unto thee, that I have sent thee: When you have brought my people out of Egypt, you will sacrifice to God on this mountain.**

44 God has done a strange miracle and wonder here, that he appears to Moshe in a fiery bush, and yet the bush is not scorched nor burned, so that he assures Moshe that he wants to be with him, and that his profession is a divine profession. Therefore he gives him a promise and says: he will be with him. For where there is a divine, proper profession, there is also God's promise that happiness and blessing shall be with the same profession. God also wants to be there with His help, so that those who have to endure all kinds of dangers and obstacles in their profession may be comforted and rejoice in the divine grace and help.

45. when God sent Jeremiah the prophet [Jer. 1:6-10] to the city of Jerusalem, and he apologized for being young and not being able to preach, God also gave him the like.



Promise and said, "You shall not say I am too young, but you shall go wherever I send you and preach what I command you. Fear them not, for I am with thee, and will save thee. I put my words in your mouth. I set thee this day over nations and kingdoms, to pluck up, and to break down, and to destroy, and to build, and to plant."

(46) How then doth Moses stand against this calling? He is reluctant to go up; first he looks at himself and says, "Who am I that I should be the captain and duke of the children of Israel? He confesses his weakness and inability, saying that he is a shepherd or a shepherd who can hardly defend sheep before the wolf; how then can he protect the children of Israel from the angry tyrant Pharaoh? He has no armor, no spear, no sword, no horsemen, no chariots to deliver them from Egypt.

Therefore Moses resists. As we shall hear more later, he says to God, "What shall I say about you? Who are you? After this he reproves even more, saying, "They will not believe me," and complains greatly about the hardness or stubbornness of the people; item, he says, "He does not have a good language; therefore is the fault of his person, of our Lord God, of the king, and of the Jewish people. At last, when he sees that God will be ungracious to him, he says [4:13], "Send whom thou wilt," and leave me unsworn. [He] does not want to leave.

(48) All this is written for our teaching and comfort, that no one should enter into a matter concerning God unless he is called to do so. For he who intrudes himself, and has no sign or word from God that God wants him, will do little good.

**V. 13. 14. Moses said to GOD: Behold, when I come to the children of Israel, and speak to them: The GOD of your fathers has sent me to you, and they will say to me: What is his name? What shall I say to them? And God said unto Moses, I will be who I will be. And said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: I will be he that sent me unto you.**

49 Finally Moses said, "Lord, how can I tell the children of Israel that you have sent me to them? He is supposed to tell God what his name is, and he cannot do it; even if he dared, he would be foolish. Therefore God comes forth and interprets His name Himself, and is a strange name of God. He interprets himself and says: "I will be who I will be". So my name is called. This is a blind thing, that he says: I am who I am, or will be. Why does he have this name? I have said before that no one could give him this name if one is to interpret God; for there we lack God. He advances with the word above all creatures who are not God, nor can give eternal life; for there is none else who works eternally but God alone; who says here: "I am." No one else can say this, for everything passes away.

(50) All our life is a travelling, loose possession. I can say, I am passing away; but I cannot say, I am living, I am not passing away or wavering, I am and remain forever. With what title does God tear our hearts and eyes from all creatures, and show it to Himself alone. For God wants to say here: Nothing remains on earth but I alone. I alone have the essence; whoever clings to other things goes away. Today man is strong, tomorrow he is sick; today I am honored, tomorrow I am disgraced; today young, tomorrow old; today rich, tomorrow poor. Therefore here says God: I am the God in whom you should cling, and trust no other creature. This is the first commandment; whoever thus leads and interprets it, interprets it rightly.

But reason speaks thus: I am attached to this work, because I have read so many masses, lived so long in the monastery, fasted, prayed and led such a hard order, so I take something temporal and transitory, so that we should comfort ourselves, and that we become deathly pale through poverty and are painted. Usually, however, we think that God looks upon us when we are well. And herewith the noble, precious name of God must be put to my work; [I] cling to perishable things, and forsake Him who is imperishable and eternal. For this reason, God wants me to be merely

That I may not trust in my merits, honor, good works, princes, or authorities, or any other name, but hold only to him who is eternal, and who says here, If thou holdest to me, thou shalt not want.

Who could have interpreted him in this way if he had not declared himself to be so, saying, "One must cling to me through faith. If one is stuck in reason, one does not come to God, unless I bring him a heap of good works, crown him, and say: Lord, this and that I have done. This means, then, to give God another name, and to appropriate God's name to creatures, and to defy creatures, since we should defy Him. This is how one should interpret God's name.

53. further he says to Moses: I will give you an outward sign, so that you may meet me: "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" 2c., to be thought of, spoken of and preached 2c. How then has he been Abraham's GOOD? He gave him the sign, the circumcision, and so Abraham believed GOD; he gave him an outward instruction how to find him. And this is told only to the Jews, and not to the Gentiles. Abraham has the testimony in the holy Scriptures [Gen. 15, 6. Rom. 4, 3. Gal. 3, 6. Jac. 2, 23.] that he believed God and was justified by faith; therefore God is the God of Abraham. Isaac followed this faith and also wore the circumcision on his body as a sign. So Isaac also had GOD for his GOD, and so GOD became GOD through the faith of Abraham. For he believed that in his seed all generations on earth should be blessed [1 Mof. 22, 18.]. Therefore Abraham became the son of GOD by faith [Jn. 1, 12. 1, and GOD became his father. Therefore he speaks here: If thou wilt interpret, teach, and preach me aright, propose no work, but as I became Abraham's GOOD, so am I still called, and will be thy GOOD also. If then thou shalt make another bridge unto me, thou shalt fail. For if he be Abraham's God, then shall I also have Abraham's word, preaching, doctrine, religion, faith, and signs, or come not to God.

54. the Jews say: We believe in God, who created heaven and earth, 2c., and believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But this is done by name alone, and we paint God with letters, and go about with Mosiah's laws and good works. This is far from the truth. For this is my name, says God here, even before Moses was born; but you want to mend your ways to me with Moses' good works and earn heaven.

55] Now he does not say here, "I am the God of Moses or of the Levites, but I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"; thus, with this name he cancels all the laws and works of Moses, and remains alone in saying that no one can attain to God, nor can anyone come to him, nor recognize him, but he considers him to be the God in whom Abraham also believed. God was Abraham's God without the law, and before the law was given; but so he became Abraham's God, believing that God would help the world through his seed. You must also come to believe, and then have the outward sign attached to it. Thus God will be preached and called in the world, and this shall be said of Him forever [Rom. 1:16]. Whoever seeks God otherwise is lacking. So his name shall remain and be preached forever.

Now, here a game will be played. The word of God and faith have remained, and through the word and faith alone one comes to God; but where now? We do not call God a God of Abraham, nor are we circumcised, nor do we keep what Abraham kept, but we come to Christ and keep to baptism; and yet it is said here, "This shall be my name forever? So we Gentiles must become Jews, and be circumcised, and forsake our baptism. The Jews know well that eternity here is not a time that never ends; as it is also said: Children and children's children, which is also not a time that never ends, but is spoken of a temporal course, of the time that passes here on earth.

There is a difference between the gospel preached in the world and the gospel promised before [Rom. 1:2 ff]. A thing that has been promised and a thing that has been put into practice are two different things. Faith and eternal life are also two different things. I have eternal life in promise, and not in essence; now I have it in darkness, and see it not, but believe it; hereafter I shall feel it [1 Cor. 13:12, 1 John 3:2]. The gospel has now rung out into the world, and has been proclaimed everywhere; but in this word, "In thy seed shall be blessed," 2c., there alone has it been promised. He saith, In this hour shall the gospel go; and it goeth. Again also: It shall come, it shall come, that one shall preach of the blessing and benediction as far as the world is; the blessed seed shall come from you, Abraham, so that it is called Christ [Gal. 3, 29.]. But Christ had not yet come at that time, but was promised alone, just as the gospel was promised.

(58) Now the Jews, of Abraham's seed, are bound by this text, that they believe in the God of Abraha, who made the promise to Abraha. But they lack that they do not want to believe that God made the promise to Abraha, that He performed it, and that He accomplished it. But God says, "I am to be taken and kept in the promise made to Abraha. Now this is not valid any longer, because the promise lasts; after that, when the promise is fulfilled, then it must be over. Therefore, one must not believe now that the gospel and Christ are promised, but that everything has now happened and been fulfilled, and that God is truly Abraham's God, and that this promise, which was made to Abraham, has now been fulfilled. I wanted to jump back and say that Christ had not come.

59) So it is played on Christ, when he comes, he shall bring forth the name, as Abraham was promised [2 Cor. 5:19]. So it is on Christ alone; as if he should say: I am a God who promised Abraham the future Christ with his gospel. Whoever wants to have me must now recognize me as such a God,

as he who promised Abraham Christ and his gospel. If he has promised Christ and the gospel, then it must come; and when it comes, then God is called the one who gives and keeps what he promises, and who joins himself to us so that he will be God and give what he promises. Therefore, all His promises must be fulfilled, and when the promise is fulfilled, then it is finished [2 Cor. 1:20]. Therefore, after Christ's birth no more time runs; one does not say there: Child, child child, so one shall grasp me 2c. It cannot last longer than until the promise comes and is fulfilled.

60 Thus God points us to Himself and to His word, indicating that no one can meet God except by His word, and that the word cannot be grasped except by faith. Therefore, no word, way, or work should be put before God, except how He tells me how to believe; thus all the works of Moses and our good works are extinguished. And then we know who GOD is, and can interpret him. For here he says: I am called, who it is that I am, and who I shall be. By what? You have my word, and you have the sign of Abraha; hang on to it. When the promise is fulfilled, you will have another word and another sign.

So this text contains many beautiful, glorious teachings, such as faith in God, item, about the kingdom of Christ, and about the resurrection of the dead. After that, some miraculous signs will come in the fourth chapter, of the rod becoming a serpent, and of the hands that he puts into his bosom and becomes leprous 2c. And if we look at these miraculous signs according to history, then by them God wants to accustom Moses to become bold and daring, to approach the matter of the execution of the children of Israel from Egypt with confidence. As if God should say: Moses, you have a terrible work before you, but take hold of it. It seems impossible now that you should attack and overthrow the mighty king Pharaoh, but dare it briefly and confidently. The serpent has a terrible face and is poisonous; but seize it by the tail. The hand is leprous; but only dare at my word, and it shall be established.

## Allegoria or spiritual interpretation of the third chapter.

In the third chapter we heard how Moses was tending the sheep and he saw a fiery bush from which God appeared to him and commanded that he should lead the people of Israel out of Egypt; also how Moses resisted and pretended that he had a difficult language and tongue, that he could not speak well 2c. This is the third chapter.

63) But that the bush burns and yet is not consumed by fire, this is what has been attributed to the Virgin Mary throughout the world, that her virginity has been kept and preserved. Thus, when one plunders into the holy scripture, one draws the holy scripture elsewhere by human reason. If one puts secret interpretation on works or persons, it is wrong and unjust. Otherwise, one can praise Mary, but it is not necessary to take off Christ's feathers and put them on Mary, or to take off Christ's garment and put it on the Virgin Mary.

64 But the Lord Christ is the same bush. For he is the right angel, sent by God from heaven, as it is written to the Romans in the fifteenth chapter, v. 8: "Christ is the apostle of the Jews, that he might fulfill the promises made to the patriarchs. He is an apostle, that is, the right arch and supreme messenger sent into the world. This Lord Christ is shown to the must, that is, to all those who were under the law. For Moses bears the image and figure of the law, and signifies the law's office; and the people who are under the law are Moses, for he was to give the law, and the people to execute it. But that Christ burns, and is not corrupted, is pointed to the Godhead; and not unjustly.

But I do not want to go too high, but this time I want to make a point that is even closer, namely, that this means Christ, the true man, who appears in the same form as other men; just as the bronze serpent [Deut. 21:9], erected in the desert by Moses, had the form and likeness of other serpents, but there was no poison. As also told to the Romans in chapter 8, v. 3.

Christ has the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin"; and to Philipians, chapter 2, vv. 6-8. Christ preached on earth in the flesh, as I and you, that his flesh and mine cannot be separated. However, since all our flesh is poisoned, and he also has our flesh, therefore it is such a likeness, and has the flesh, sin and poison, yet there is no sin and poison in his person, so he is born in a flesh that is sinful, yet in him there is no sin; that is, Christ is truly born of the flesh. So the bush here is full of fire, that it burns, and yet is not consumed. Neither does it move Moses, as if to say, If there is fire, it must consume, for that is its nature. Moses looks at the burning and consuming; there is the flesh that burns, and seems like other sinful flesh, and yet there is no sin. Christ is the green bush without all sin, and yet he came in our likeness like the flesh, and feels the very flesh in his body that we have, yet without sin.

(66) This is the first sight 1) and the first comfort, that we have such an angel or messenger, who is without all sin, and yet like our flesh and blood. We are the fiery bush, so should burn, are vain fire and poison; but he remains unburned. Therefore he has taken our fire to himself, but he is not consumed or burned up because of it, but we are consumed because of it. So he got Christ in view, who is like other men, and sin does not harm him, but he helps us.

67 Thus the allegory should be drawn to the true man Christ, and not to the Godhead, unless the Scriptures make it necessary. For the sacred Scriptures most of all and primarily urge that Christ alone be known to be God and man. For that he is God, he has for himself, and does not help me, and therefore he is not my Christ or Savior; but that he is also truly man, that is valid for me.

He has worked so much on it, that I suck it and get it. He gives it to us and makes it a treasure and food, which is turned to us; there he presents himself as a savior, mediator and helper, gives us help and medicine. And to speak recently, he wants us to use him for our benefit.

So he shall appear to Moses as a savior, that our sin may be put out of him, and that he may be roasted on the cross as if he were full of sin, and yet is without all sin. Moses and Christ must meet and appear to each other, but Moses marvels at this. For this is the joyful message and the comforting knowledge that Christ takes our sin out of Himself, and yet the sins do not harm Him.

This spiritual interpretation strengthens our faith, so that we may know Christ rightly and well. For if I interpret it in the same way as Mariam and her virginity, I am not improved at all; for her virginity is a gift, bestowed upon her and her property. But this allegory should remain in common use, and everyone should gain understanding and improvement from it, namely, that Moses sees Christ, the Savior, for the first time, who takes sin upon himself; and yet they do not harm him. This is to show that Christ is nowhere depicted and described as suffering and dying for us, but only in the law and in Moses. As the Lord Christ himself testifies in the Evangelist Luke [Cap. 24, 44] that Moses, the Psalms and the prophets prophesied of his suffering, death and resurrection. Moses gloriously described Christ as becoming man and taking away sin, and by his death and resurrection entering his eternal kingdom and saving us from sins, death, the devil and hell. This is Moses' prophecy and prophecy as found in the first book of Moses and Levitico.

The first book and word of God, in which we recognize Christ, is Mosi's book. Thus, Christ appears to Mosi only in the fiery bush; as if to say: With this image or figure, I show that whoever recognizes Christ-

If anyone wants to know who he is, he will first find it in Moses that he will come from Abraham's seed and redeem the world, take sin upon himself and kill it, and yet this green bush will remain unconsumed and unscorched; sins cannot suppress and destroy it. Thus, in this figure, the persecution, cross, suffering and death of the Lord Christ are included, as well as his entire kingdom, and the good things and benefits we receive from him, all of which are written in the Law of Moses.

(72) But this preaching is so strange and strange that even the saints do not soon believe it: Moses himself must marvel at the glorious, great goods and riches that have been given to us through Christ. Therefore he wants to go to the fiery bush and see how he will not be burned. But God tells him, "Take off your shoes, for the place is holy." From the bush it is made holy. One must first confess and put away sin and make oneself clean before coming to GOD [Isa. 1:16, 17]. Our Lord God does not deal with sinners [Ps. 5, 5], we are to come to Him pure and holy, so that we may be set free. Our good works, which we have in us, that is, those who keep the law and want to come to where Christ is, do not make any difference. For God's law and man's law (where they are understood to mean that one wants to establish it with good works and come to God) do one as well as the other, that is, nothing is established with it unless one sees that the law is spiritual. For it is said here: Moses, do not come near, because you are holy and pure; you people of Israel come out of presumption, as if you were holy, and [you] think that Christ comes to you out of your merit and good works.

73 Therefore shoes are not called sin or good works here, but the doctrine of works, as is also said to the Ephesians in chapter 6, v. 15, and in the Song of Solomon, chap. 7, 1, it is written that the bride walks in blue shoes; that is, the gospel or God's Word is a shoe in which consciences are to walk, and this because of the causes, that one may have a supply and preparation from it, that one may walk securely with the

Conscience. But these shoes of Moses are made of skins and hides or leather, that is, they are doctrines taken and drawn from God's Word, and yet make people carnal. So I also became a cobbler in the ministry, and made my life a pair of shoes, and put on the doctrine, thinking that if I did this or that work, I would be blessed.

74. But God says, "Take off your shoes, for this place is holy," that is, you will make a sinner rather than a saint. St. Paul and others also wanted to take off the shoes of this people, but those who were converted had their shoes taken off. We are not justified by the law [Gal. 2:16]. We must take off these shoes and go barefoot, so that it may be known that your good works are of no use to you if you want to go to this fiery bush, but you

You must learn that everything is over and lost with you. Just as Moses did not deserve to have the bush appear to him, but rather unawares; and Moses did not put on his shoes for this reason. Grace and the Lord Christ come to us before we think of them or ask for them. Therefore we must cast off all presumption of the law, of the doctrine of men, and of good works, and venture freshly upon Christ, as upon our Saviour.

The fire is his torture and suffering, since he is roasted on the cross, and yet not completely consumed. It seems as if he is no more, and as if he is finished and has become powder. But he rises from the dead and comes as a mighty king. Whoever is to come to this must take off his shoes. For the apostles themselves did not deserve to hear the gospel preached from this bush.

# Another sermon by D. M. Luther on the text Ex. 3, 1-6,

## when Moses saw the fiery bush 2c.

Gethan at Wittenberg in the parish church, on Easter Tuesday, afternoon, April 3, 1526.\*)

1. since you, dear friends, have heard enough of the two days from the New and Old Testaments, how our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and what he accomplished with his resurrection, namely, that he crushed the head of the serpent, the devil, redeemed from the curse, and as a righteous God and man brought rich blessings upon all men, that they might have righteousness, forgiveness of sin, life and blessedness, conquest of death, hell and the devil, that they might have

We may say with a believing heart: Christ's death and resurrection is my righteousness, by which I am made righteous, as St. Paul says to the Romans in chapter 4, v. 25: "Christ was given for our sins and raised for our righteousness," but since we are still celebrating the joyful Easter feast today, let us take before us from St. Moses, as written in his other book in chapter 3, this text, which reads thus:

\*)This time determination results with certainty from the affiliation of this sermon with the two sermons on Genesis 3 and 22, which we have included in this volume Col. 650 and 662, because the first paragraph of this sermon gives a short recapitulation of what Luther had spoken about on Easter Monday. In addition, in Poach's index in the Zwickau Rathsschulbibliothek, the date we set for this sermon is given, the content of which is labeled thus: „Lauras ^uidus rosurrsoitio "i^rukio:it:0. Finally, the date is also confirmed by ji 14 of this sermon. The proof where this sermon was first printed is found in this volume Eol. 650.

**Moses was tending the sheep of lethro his brother-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he drove the sheep into the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, Horeb. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a fiery flame out of the bush, and he saw that the bush burned with fire, and yet was not consumed. And he said: I will go and see this vision, why the bush does not burn. And when the LORD saw that he went to see, God called unto him out of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he answered, Here am I. And he said, Come not near, put off thy shoes from off thy feet: for the place where thou art standing is a holy land. And he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses covered his face, because he feared to look upon God.**

This is the text from Moses. Now, dear friends, these words of St. Moses were drawn by the Fathers of the Church to the tender, pure, chaste, immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of Christ. As they also sang in the Church: *Rubum, quem viderat Moses*, that it should mean the virginity of Mary. Just as the bush burns and is not consumed, so also the Mother of Christ gave birth to her dear Son, without the spoiling of her virginity.

Although it is a good opinion or interpretation (for we must let this article be true and remain true, that Mary was a pure virgin before the birth, in the birth, and after the birth, and remains a pure virgin forever), this opinion or interpretation is too weak here, and does not hold the sting, because the Holy Spirit wants to model something higher. For there are the clear and bright words: I am the God of your father, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which words cannot be applied to Mary. For Mary is not God, therefore she cannot be the bush, but God Himself is the bush, which burns and is not consumed, remains wholly and delicately green in the midst of the fire.

(4) Therefore we cannot do better than this, because we abide by the words of Christ, that Moses wrote of him; as he then said

Joh. 5, 46. says: "If you believed Mosi, then 1) you also believed me, because he wrote about me." For it is Christ alone to whom Moses and all prophets point [Matth. 11, 13. Apost. 10, 43.]. Therefore this fiery and burning bush is a figure of Christ, what kind of person he will be, and how he shall have two natures in one person, and how he shall suffer, die and rise again from death. This is what we should look for here, what Moses teaches, and what we should also believe and learn if we want to be saved otherwise.

Now, the first piece. What kind of person should Christ be, and what kind of two natures should he have in one person? There we hear it in the text: "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This is one nature, that he is eternal, almighty God, like the Father and the Holy Spirit, of the same nature, substance and essence, but a different person than the Father and the Holy Spirit. As the prophet Micah (who lived 760 years before the birth of Christ) also teaches, when he says Cap. 5, 1: "And you Bethlehem Ephrata, who are small compared to the thousands in Judah, out of you shall come the one who is Lord in Israel." Yes, what kind of a HErr is it? Thus saith the prophet, "Which goeth forth from the beginning and from everlasting."

(6) Then the prophet clearly describes that Christ has another exit than at Bethlehem, namely, from the fatherly heart of God, before all creatures were and had their beginning. For before all creatures were and were created, nothing was but God. This Son, who is to come forth in Bethlehem, that is, to be born, says Micah, was from eternity before all creatures had their beginning; so the Son in Bethlehem must be the eternal, almighty God. Now this is the first, divine nature that Christ has, that he is true, eternal and almighty God, like the Father and the Holy Spirit, who spoke with Moses out of the burning bush; as was said yesterday 2) enough.

7. the other nature is human nature, that he is a fine, green, lovely bush,

1) Erlanger: gläubet.

2) In the second sermon on Easter Monday, Col. 662 ff.

as Isaiah also calls it [Cap. 11, 1], a fine, lovely, green rod or fresh branch from the old trunk or root of Jesse. As the Lord Christ himself is called, when he was led to death, when he says [Luc. 23, 31.] to the women who weep over him, "If this be done in green wood, what shall be done in dry?" For Christ alone is the green wood or the green bush, that is, a right, pure, holy man. But all men, no man excepted, are conceived in sins, are born, and are unto death, and are eternally damned: therefore are they dry wood, or sticks, which serve for fire only, and nowhere else.

But the conception of Christ is pure and holy. For there the Holy Spirit comes and works from the pure drops of blood of the pure Virgin Mary, so that God or God's Son becomes a true, right man; therefore his birth is also pure and holy. For where the conception is pure and holy, the birth is also pure and holy. For this reason he alone is the green bush, for in him no sin has been found, as all men otherwise have. Now this is the other nature that man has, that he is truly man, as I am, but without all sin.

(9) These are the two natures that are in this one person of Christ, that he is true God and man at the same time, and the two natures are so united with each other that none can be separated from the other, but [they] must remain together. Just as body and soul are united in one person, and there is only one person and one human being, so also here, in the person of Christ, the divine and human natures, that is, God and man, must remain together in one person, undivided. This is a high doctrine, of which no Jew, Turk or the Pope knows nothing, only Moses and the prophets, and the Christians. And now this is said of the person and both natures, that Christ is more real, true, eternal, almighty God and man, than the dear green bush or little tree, pure, lovely, without all blemishes and sin.

10 But now we will hear how the Lord Christ is to fare. Moses tells us how the bush burns and is not consumed.

however much and mightily the flames burn around. There now means Christ's suffering and resurrection; for "to burn" in the Scripture means to suffer. So now this God, who is a green bush, that is, a right, pure, true man, born of the virgin, shall suffer and die.

This is also the cause of his incarnation. For if God had not become man, He could not suffer or die. For "God is a spirit" [John 4:24] that cannot suffer or die. But if God is to suffer and die, He must become man. But because God becomes man, he suffers and dies in this person of Christ, who is both God and man, and God does not remain apart from this person of Christ, as some heretics and enthusiasts separate and separate the Godhead from humanity, and say that the humanity of Christ alone suffered and redeemed us; this is false. For mankind alone has suffered, since the divine nature cannot suffer or die, but has not only redeemed us, but also the Godhead, that is, the Son of God, as St. Paul says to the Romans in the eighth chapter, v. 32, "that God also did not spare His only Son, but gave Him up for us all.

(12) Therefore not only Mary's Son, according to mankind, as the papists and some enthusiasts deceive, redeemed us, died for us and was crucified, but the whole Christ, who is God and man, redeemed us, and was crucified, died and rose again according to the flesh; in the first epistle of Peter in the third chapter, v. 18. For the wounds which they inflicted on Christ's hands and feet, they did not inflict on Mary's Son alone, but on the Son of God, or God Himself; neither did they crucify and martyre the flesh of the Son of Man alone, but the Son of God and God Himself were murdered and strangled, for God and Man are One Person. Therefore, the GOt crucified and died became man; not the separated GOt, but the united GOt with humanity; not according to the Godhead, but according to the human nature He assumed. As St. Paul also says [1 Cor. 2, 8]: *Dominum glorie crucifixerunt.*



For of the separate God, it is both false that Christ is God and that God died. Both, I say, are false. For God is not man; therefore he cannot die. Therefore, we say and speak it of God, who is both God and man in One Person, as of Jesus Christ; just as the dear Fathers, as Maxentius and Fulgentius, say: *Nos dicimus Deum natum, passum, crucifixum, mortuum, propter unitatem et conjunctionem duarum naturarum in Christo*. But this cannot be understood or heard by our papists and enthusiasts.

14 Therefore they divide and separate the person of Christ. But this need not be. For we honor and worship not only the bad, mere humanity in Christ, as the heretics blame us, but the Godhead and humanity, that is, God and man at the same time, as the right Creator of heaven and earth, united in one person. As the Concilium of Ephesus, 1095 years ago against the heretic Nestorium, also concludes and states: *Propter assumptum veneror assumptum, et propter invisibilem adoro visibilem*. This is quite learned and said.

15 The ancient teacher of the Church, John Damascenus, says: *"Caro secundum sui naturam non est adorabilis; adoratur autem in incarnato Dei verbo, non propter se ipsam, sed propter conjunctum ipsi secundum hypostasin Deum verbum. Et non dicimus, quod carnem adoramus nudam, sed carnem Dei, id est, incarnatum Deum. This is truly a beautiful, mighty saying, which we should well keep and remember at this perilous time. For the two natures in Christ want to be unseparated and undivided. However, our heretic Sacramentarians can not direct themselves into this, but we Christians must teach and learn it. For that would have been a bad redemption, indeed, no redemption at all, which would have saved us against sin, death, the devil and*

1) "1095" put by us instead of "1115" in the editions. 1) The Concil at Ephesus took place in the year 431. Since this sermon was preached on Easter Tuesday 1526, "1095" must be read. The copyist has made the number LIOXV out of MXOV. Exactly the same oversight (110 [OX] instead of 90 sXO) is found twice in the old edition of Walch on the last page of the 9th volume, where we had to make the same change.

Hell would not have protected much, if only the man Christ, and not at the same time God, or God's Son, had been united in this person, crucified and died. We will say more about this another time, with God's help, and these days are not very busy.

(16) What is this, that the bush is not consumed or burned up, but grows green in the midst of the fire and remains whole? This is it: though Christ die and suffer, he shall not abide in death, but shall rise again, and be green, and come to life. Why is this? Because he is not a bad man, but truly God. If he had been a bad man, as we are, he would have been much too weak for death and the devil; but because he is God, and God is life [John 1:4], life 2) cannot die according to its eternal divine nature. For even though it dies in the flesh, it cannot remain in death. For life must remain life; as also the church sings: *Vita in ligno moritur*. Therefore this God, who is man, must rise again from death, become green and alive, so that he may bring forgiveness of sin, righteousness, life and blessedness to all who believe in him. This means then: *Infernus ex morsu despoliatur*, hell has bared its teeth at this Christ, who is life, and has lost its power over it.

17 For the Christ is most beautifully restored in the midst of suffering, and enters into his glory, as he himself says [Luc. 24:26], that is, he rises from death, becomes Lord of heaven, earth and hell, so that all creatures in heaven, hell and earth must lie under his feet and be subject to him, and be recognized as one Lord [Phil. 2:9, 10].

18) Now this is the right figure or meaning of this burning bush that Moses sees, that the God who is Abraham's, Isaac's and Jacob's God shall become man, suffer, die and rise from death, and bring righteousness, forgiveness of sins, life and blessedness to all believers, as Christianity sang: *"So holy is the day that no man can fill it with praise, alone..."*.

2) Thus taken over by us from the old edition of Walch. Erlanger: and life can.

the holy Son of God, who broke hell and bound the wicked devil in it, so that the Lord redeemed Christendom, which was God Himself, Kyrieleis". There is the whole fruit of Christ's resurrection, as that he broke hell, bound the devil, and took away his power, and redeemed his dear Christianity. But who was it? God, God Himself, or God's Son. This is delicious, lovely, comforting and well-sung, if only we would consider it.

(19) But how is Moshe now? As he wants to go and see how this bush burns and is not consumed, God says to Moses, "Do not come near, remove your shoes, for the place where you are standing is a holy land. What will become of it? Is God so great in the land, and in the shoes? Is not one place as holy as another? What do the shoes do to it? Yes, the bad place of the land or the shoes do not do it; but this is what God wants, that where the teaching goes and is preached that God became man, died and rose again, there is the holy land, and the Christian church, and the true chosen people, where God is and dwells, as Christ says John 14:23. Moses must close the eyes that Adam opened too wide in paradise, take off the old Adam and the old shoes and take them off, close the eyes of reason and open the eyes of the heart.

This doctrine of Jesus Christ must be grasped by faith through the Word alone, for it is too high for the old Adam and human reason, and God has placed it in the Word alone, where it can be grasped, and not otherwise. Therefore the Jews, the Turks and the Pope, because they let go of the word of Christ and look elsewhere, and speculate and speak of Christ according to human reason, they go further and further from Christ, and become fools about it, blaspheming and mocking the dear Lord Christ. This is what happens when one lets go of the word of this man.

21 Therefore we must look to the word alone and say, "Here is my simple article of faith: I believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord, who was born, suffered, died, was buried, and is like unto God.

who is risen from the dead. I did not invent this, but God wrote and preached it to me through the Holy Spirit. I want to dwell on it, because I hear how God, or God's Son, became man, died and rose again. If I cannot understand or comprehend it, I will not believe it.

22) But how it happened that God died, and yet is not God the Father, or God the Holy Spirit, but God the Son, the other Person in the Godhead, who died and rose again, and yet are not three Gods, but One Almighty God, but three distinct Persons in the eternal, omnipotent Divine Being, let us save this until that life, when we shall see it face to face in the mirror of the holy Trinity or Godhead. Here, however, we want to believe and trust in the word in a bad, right and simple way; we cannot take it any further.

(23) Moses had to take off his shoes, the old Adam or man, and cover his eyes or face, and through the Word alone, with firm faith and trust, look at and grasp this Christ, His suffering, death and resurrection, with the eyes of the heart. If we do this, as Moses did, we will also come to God. For without this God, who died and rose again, no man, no matter how holy, how pious, or how full of good works he may be, will fear, shun, or dare to come to God.

(24) For God the Father cannot suffer anyone to go or come to Him, unless He brings with Him His beloved Son Christ. Just as the Son himself, John speaks in the fourteenth chapter, v. 6: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me, Me, Me." Here all saints and all their merits are completely excluded, that nothing is valid before the Father, except Christ.

(25) Therefore the Jews, the Turks and the Pope are damned, who despise this Son of God with His suffering, death and resurrection, and intend to come to God by another way than through the dead saints, damned indulgences, masses of souls, lousy monk's caps and plates, and other fictitious humanities.

works that God has not commanded or commanded. For through this Son and His word alone shall one seek and find Him. But blessed are they all for ever, who in the beloved Son of God, who justified us by his death and resurrection (as Moses and the prophets did), with steadfast faith in his word, persevere and abide in the heart.

26 Joseph in Egypt, as it is written in the first book of Moses at the one and fortieth chapter, was also a figure of Christ. For Joseph was sold by his own brothers, then lied to by the harlot, Potiphar's wife, when he would not follow her, so that he was thrown into prison. After that, when Joseph has been in prison for a long time, God comes and brings him to such honors that he must become lord and prince over all Egypt.

(27) So it was with Christ our Lord, who was also sold by his brethren, that is, by the flesh and blood of Abraham, the Jews. After that, since he does not want to fornicate with the Jewish synagogue and help to confirm and praise their ungodly, devilish teachings in Jerusalem, they become angry, capture and kill him, and think that it is now all over with him. But before three days are up, God brings him to such honors that he is rewarded by the

The one who enters into his glory after death, rises from death, becomes a Lord over heaven, earth, hell, and all creatures; all of which must be under his feet, and recognize and consider him a Lord.

(28) With this we will have concluded the joyful, lovely Easter feast. But pray with all your heart that God, the Father of our dear Lord Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Spirit, will keep us all in such faith and knowledge. If he does not, then it is lost with us. Even if we cry out daily with our mouths: I believe, believe, it is still only a whisper. For St. Paul says in the other epistle to the Thessalonians in the third chapter, v. 2: "Faith is not for everyone. Therefore let us cry out with the father of the possessed man [Marc. 9, 24]: "O dear Lord, I believe, but help my unbelief"; and let us say with the dear apostles from the bottom of our hearts [Luc. 17, 5]: "O Lord, strengthen our faith." If we do this, God will strengthen, increase and give it to us; otherwise not.

(29) Then we, as the dear children of God, must and should obediently live by the ten commandments of God, so that people may see our good works and praise our Father in heaven, as Christ says in Matthew, chapter 5, v. 16, amen.

## The fourth chapter.

v. 1-9. Moses answered and said, Behold, they will not believe me, nor hear my voice, but will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee. And the LORD said unto him, What is it that thou hast in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it from thee unto the earth. And he cast it from him, and it became a serpent: and Moses fled before it. But the LORD said unto him, Stretch forth thine hand, and catch it by the tail. So he stretched out his hand and held it, and it became a rod in his hand. Therefore they shall believe that the LORD hath appeared unto thee, the

The God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. And the LORD said unto him, Put thine hand into thy bosom: and he put it into his bosom, and drew it out; and, behold, it was leprous as snow. And he said, Put it again into thy bosom: and he put it again into thy bosom, and drew it out: behold, it was again as other flesh. Now if they will not believe thee, nor hear the things which thou sayest by one sign, yet will they believe when thou sayest of the other sign. But if they will not believe these two signs, nor hear thy voice, they shall believe thee.

**Take the water from the river and pour it on the dry land, and the same water that you took from the river will become blood on the dry land.**

We have heard so far in the three chapters of the other book of Moses how God called Moses to a great, glorious work in which he was to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and to overthrow the mighty, powerful king in Egypt. We have also heard of God's promise and promise that He would be with Moses, help him, so that he could carry out this great work. But Moses refused to accept and carry out such a ministry and work.

Now God goes on in this fourth chapter and gives Most three different signs or miracles, by which he and also the children of Israel may notice his divine presence. First, a rod or staff that he throws out of his hand to the earth, which becomes a serpent. Second, that he put his hand into his bosom, and it became leprous, like snow; but when he put it back into his bosom, and drew it out again, it became like other flesh. Thirdly, "If they will not believe these two signs, nor hear your voice," says God, "take the water out of the river and pour it on the dry land, and the same water that you took out of the river will become blood on the dry land.

(3) Moses did these signs to confirm his profession, so that he might confidently continue in his office and calling, and not doubt that God was with him, teaching and speaking with his mouth what Moses should do and say, item, so that the children of Israel would also be assured and assured by these miracles that Moses should be the man specially appointed by God to deliver them from Egypt. Otherwise, Moses had for himself the fiery bush and God's promise, so that he could be comforted in his profession. But these three miraculous signs were to happen for the sake of the children of Israel, so that they would believe that the time of their salvation was also at hand. But what the staff or shillelagh, the leprous hand and the water are, we will hear in the allegory.

**(v. 10-12) And Moses said unto the LORD, O my LORD, I have not been well discoursed since the time that thou spakest unto thy servant: for I am slow of speech, and slow of tongue. And the LORD said unto him, Who made man's mouth? or who made him dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Have I not done it, the Lord? Now therefore go. I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.**

Now we are in history and want to see how much effort it takes before a man trusts God and accepts His word, especially if it is something high and great, as here, in this chapter, since God humbles and humiliates Himself so much, and so kindly entices and drives people until they believe. Moses nevertheless sticks to his last excuse, because he cannot do otherwise, and has looked for another excuse or hole, since he wants to go out, so that he will not obey God. For he says: "Even though I do everything, I cannot speak. He freely confesses that he is not a talker. The Jews interpret it as a lisp; but I believe that Moses had a difficult speech and tongue, that he stammered and stuttered, and spoke a word two or three times, and yet did not get it out right. He had this infirmity, and that he did not lisp.

5 So the Jews say that he put fiery coals in his mouth to burn his tongue, and that is why he lisped. But the text says that he stuttered. These are Jewish tales. It is the last exodus or evasion, by which Moses wants to leave this office. But God answers him rightly, is not yet angry, and says: "Who made man's mouth? or who made the mute or the deaf, the seeing or the blind? Have I not done it?" If God were as wise as we are, He would have begun all things better than they have happened otherwise.

(6) For here He takes for this great and heavy work one who cannot speak well, as Moses himself confesses; nor does God say to him, "Go and execute it well.

Which is just as if I said to a blind man that he should see, and to a lame man that he should walk, and to a dumb man that he should speak. Could not God find another to use for this work? But it is written that we should learn how God is minded. He does not respect what is valid in the eyes of the world; He rejects and rejects what others take to Himself; what others love and cherish, He throws away; and what the devil does not like, He accepts. He gives a right answer to Mosi and says: You are clever and a fine fellow; they are stingers, 1) as if he should say: Do you think that I do not know that you stammer, and as if I do not hear it? So it seems to us. For we are always mastering God in His works, just as if we were the very first to see the flaws, shortcomings and infirmities, but God did not see them. What does it matter, God wants to say, if you are deaf, blind or dumb? How then, if I call you and command you, can I not make you see, hear and speak? Who is the one who talks to you? It is not Kunz the cobbler, but he who gives eyes and face to the blind, ears and hearing to the deaf, and can make the unreasonable eloquent; in turn, he makes the great talkers mute. And thou wouldest set a goal and a measure before me, thou that canst not speak, seeing I have chosen thee because thou canst not speak? If thou couldst speak, then thou shouldst exalt thyself. So that they may see that I am the man who does this and not you, I am using you, the stammerer, for this work. For if one were so skilled as Gabriel and all the angels, and God did not call him, he would accomplish nothing. God makes the eloquent and the mute. Again, if one is unspeaking, and God calls him, he brings it forth as he pleases, so that the world may see that it is not we who do it, but God who does it.

(7) For this reason he has shown his supreme wisdom here, so that this stammerer, Moses, will become such an excellent man who persuades all kings. One might say: "Attack it wisely, dear Lord!

God. Yes, he answers, I am the Master; have I not done it? Is not Moses caught with his tongue, that he stammers and stutters? But what he should speak, that he has from me. If I do not want him to, he becomes dumb; if I want him to, he must speak again. We do not look at this, and do not think that God is so close, and should doubt that God has made me a mouth; but think that speech is innate to us. But there is no one on earth who could speak a word if it were not for God. We throw it to the wind, and think that we have it purely plump.

8 Now Moses is captivated by God and decided on all sides. For God says to him: Do you fear the king? Are you so afraid? If the impossibility of believing frightens you, you have the miraculous signs; if you cannot speak, I will speak in you. So Moses can go no further, for he sees that God does not accept his apology; therefore he says, "You have determined that I should be hanged; for you will give me strength, powers and all ability yourself. Nor does he say: I do not want to do it; and he says nothing more than: "My Lord, send whom you want to send"; as if he should say: Send another whom you want, I am satisfied; only do not send me.

(9) And when Moses, of his own mind and will, would cast away this profession, the LORD was very wroth with Moses, and said:

**V.14-17. Do I not know that Aaron your brother, of the tribe of Levi, is eloquent? And, behold, he shall go out to meet thee, and when he seeth thee, he shall rejoice with his heart. You shall speak to him, and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and his mouth, and teach you what you shall do. And he shall speak to the people for you; he shall be your mouth, and you shall be his God. And take this rod in thine hand, that thou mayest do signs.**

10 Then Moses had to leave. Before, God was kind to him, but here he is angry. And when God is angry, one must stay. So Moses has a noble profession, so that we may see how God so whimsically leads out his work with

1) Sticherlinge is probably as much as pointed speeches.

The people, since no one sees to it, must not even think of it themselves. For here this stammerer and poor beggar must perform what otherwise four kings would not be able to do. And so Moses is caught, that he says to God: I will yield to you. God has dealt with Moses in so many words that it is sheer sin and shame.

11. God says to him, "You shall be his God, and he shall be your mouth." How does Moses come to these honors? GOD says to him, "You have the words, you shall tell Aaron how to preach, and Aaron shall conform to your speeches, that he speak no longer, further, nor shorter, than you prescribe for him, and as you have received it from GOD.

Here the question arises: why is Moses called Aaron's God? In the Holy Scriptures Christians, and especially authorities, princes, judges, are often called gods, as in the 82nd Psalm, v. 6: "I have said that you are gods and children of the Most High"; and in the 21st chapter of the other book of Moses, v. 5. 6, it is said: "If a thing come to pass, that a purchased servant have taken a wife, and begotten children, and will not be freed, let his lord bring him before the gods. A man who has the word of God is called God, and those who hear it and accept it from him are Aaron; and the mouth that gives it to them is their god.

(13) This is written for the sake of all those who speak and speak the word of God. For Moses is not God alone, but they also are gods who have the word of God. For we are God's children [John 1:12, Romans 8:15], and those who have God's word and believe God have God's spirit and power, divine truth, wisdom, heart, mind and courage, and all that God is. If he has all these things that are God's, he must also have God's name. For this reason, such a man has been made a partaker of all the goods of God, and also of the divine name, as St. Peter also says in his [second] epistle [Cap. 1, 4]. For as God is Lord of all things, so they also who are Christians are called wise, righteous, and living 2c. Just as a father communicates to his son and bequeaths to him Na

As the father is called, so the son also has a name. The son receives and inherits the father's name and property; so are all the gods called who have God's word.

The Latin text has wanted to be wise, and thus given these words: Tu eris ei in his, quae ad Deum pertinent. But it means thus: You, Moses, shall be Aaron's God, I set you as God over Aaronem. For Moses guides God's word. He who despises Moses despises God, for he guides God's word. As the Lord Christ [Luc. 10, 16.] also says, "He who hears you hears me." God cannot speak otherwise, for He wants to speak through people, through me and you. And even if he speaks through a stone or wooden pillar, it is still God's word. If it is despised, then God Himself is despised, and whoever despises Moses in God's place, who guides God's word and is God's witness, despises God Himself. Thus, God rules His Christians, thus He praises and honors them. Now this is the calling of Moshi. And he goes there. He was not led on hung chariots, because he was not rich. You have heard what he commanded and what he said to the king.

**(vv. 18-26) And Moses went, and returned unto Jethro his brother in law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, that I may return unto my brethren which are in Egypt, and see if they be yet alive. Jethro said unto him, Go in peace. The LORD also said to him in Midian, "Go and return to Egypt, for the people who sought your life are dead. So Moses took his wife and his sons, and carried them on an ass, and returned into the land of Egypt, and took the rod of God in his hand. And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, when thou comest again into Egypt, that thou do all the wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put under thine hand. But I will harden his heart, and he shall not leave the people. And thou shalt say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son: and I command thee to let my son go, that he may serve me. If you refuse, 1) I will send your firstborn son to Israel.**

1) In the original: the.

**Strangle his son. And when he was come to the inn, the LORD met him, and would have killed him. Then Zipora took a stone, and cut off her son's foreskin, and touched his feet, saying, Thou art a bridegroom of blood unto me. Then he departed from him. And she said, Blood bridegroom, for the circumcision's sake.**

015 Now there is a little piece of it: When Moses departed from his brother Jethro the priest in Midian, he went into Egypt, having the staff to make signs, and to say to the king, Let my people go; I command thee, that thou let my firstborn son Israel go. How is your poor man on the way? A new history falls into place. For while Moses was going to Egypt, he met with an accident or death, so that he was taken ill quickly and suddenly, and his wife, Ziporah, thought he would die, as the text says, though not explicitly. And this was the cause that Moses, of the tribe of Abrahah, had not circumcised his son.

016 And when his wife perceived that this was the cause of her husband's death, that the son was not circumcised, she took a sharp stone for a knife, and circumcised the son, and being wroth and angry, as women are wont to be, said, Thou art a bridegroom of blood unto me; as if she should say, It cost blood that thou wast my husband, and I am thy wife, therefore blood must be shed. Therefore she calls him a blood bridegroom, because of the circumcision of her child, which was a disgrace among the Gentiles.

Why does Moses describe this jiggery-pokery? Why does the Holy Spirit mix this foolish, mad thing with such great, important and high trades? Was Moses drunk in any way? You have heard that Abraham is the first patriarch who was ordered to circumcise the infants. This was a shameful, disgraceful, foolish and nonsensical commandment before reason, that they should circumcise themselves, and in the place that one may not like to name and hear. But Abraham is obedient to God, and allows himself to be circumcised, whether it be

is a shameful and disgraceful thing. But it happened because God wanted to break our mind and turn human wisdom into foolishness. Because of this, the Jews have heard much scorn and ridicule from the Gentiles. They mocked and scoffed at them and considered circumcision a foolish thing. Therefore, many did not want to tolerate or suffer the evil gossip and did not allow themselves to be circumcised.

(18) Just as among us Christians there are many who cannot bear the blasphemy of the world, since we are called sects and heretics, and would rather abandon Christianity over it. Moses' wife did the same; since he was a guest with her in a foreign country, he would have liked to have his son circumcised, but he could not; his wife did not want her son to be circumcised, but rather she wanted him to live as a Gentile; she did not want this click and stain. For circumcision was a disgrace among the Gentiles. There Moses must suffer what is to be suffered, and take the child uncircumcised with him. But on the way God attacked Moses and wanted to kill him, because he followed the stubbornness of the woman and did not have his son circumcised. And the woman was wroth, and would rather that her son were put to death than that her husband were put to death, saying, It cost me nothing but blood that thou shouldst be my husband. [So she was ashamed that she would not go away, but returned home with the children; as it is written in chapter 18, v. 1 ff., that Jethro, Moses' brother-in-law, heard what God had done through Moses; therefore he took Ziporam, Moses' wife, who had gone back, and his two sons, and came to Moses in the wilderness. But that she circumcises the child here, she does it only to save Moses.

(19) Now why is this written? When our Lord God wants to lead his cause out, he does it in such a way that the world becomes fools about it, and that it cannot be believed, and neither I nor you can think that it should go out. For we are always thinking that God will make it as we want it, and if it does not go out, then it will go out.

So let it be wrong and unjust; we cannot break ourselves in it. I also often think that I know much, but it is not true. And many spirits still boast of this today, but it is in vain. God has called Moses with mighty signs and excellent words so far, that he could not do more, will also be in his mouth; nevertheless, when he wants to start things, God wants to kill him. This is just as if God would have me kill the emperor, and before I came to Prata, 1) to the village, God would kill me. Isn't that a foolish start?

20 Thus he calls Moses to do a good work, and yet he wants to kill him first. God did the same with Abraham [Gen. 22:1]. He gave him the promise that his seed would multiply like the sand on the seashore; then Abraham was quite sure that his son Isaac would live long and have many children. But not long after, God told Abraham to sacrifice and slay this son Isaac. How can you put these two things together? When reason looks at this, it says, "Let God be mad; the devil speaks thus, and not God; for let God be true and keep His promises. And what is commanded in this way is not a small, bad thing, that is, to have property, honor, and friends taken away, and sometimes the body as well. This could still be done, but when God gives us his word and promise and takes it away again, this is a great thing.

Twenty-one: It is not a small trial, but one that affects even the highest and most learned spirits, who think that all is well with them and walk safely through it, as they think. But God soon makes them fools and they have to flee. God makes them bold, that He may be feared by them, and that they may know that one should not depart from His word; and yet He tempts His own so high that they must often depart. Mosi's senses were as if he had to die, and he thought, "Where are the words that God spoke to me before? Item: Where are the miraculous signs, which I have

1) Prata or Pratau, also Brate, is the next village near Wittenberg, beyond the Elbe.

to have received? Still it must remain firm that he would be the man who should deliver such, and would have to rise again from the dead before this Moses. Therefore he must conclude: God promised me that I should lead His people out of Egypt: if I now die, then I must come out of the grave again, and yet come to life again. For before God would lie, a hundred Moses would have to come forth instead of this one.

(22) This torment comes to Moshe in the time of death, so that he thinks, "I am to die, yet I have God's word and His sacraments that I may live. God puts Moshe in this predicament, that he must die and live again in a moment. Who can grasp this? But one should always stand on the first promise, and look to the first command of God, even if a thousand deaths come after that, one should still say: death to me, death to me, God does not deny me, I will live.

23 And this was done so that Moses would become a paragon of a Christian man, who would actually know that God could not lie, and that the first words of God would become effective in him, and he would be made a hero and a strong man in faith and full of the spirit.

24 Thus God deals with us when he wants to bring his word to power in us, which nevertheless hurts us. So whoever can trust and rely on the first promise and word of our Lord God, good for him! For what follows, he can let go as it goes. He has promised us eternal life and His grace. If now such thoughts occurred to us and came into our minds: Do you hear that you are to die and be damned? Then shall I go to his first promise, and by his word and work penetrate and fight against God's word and work. For the word and work that follows is to try our faith, whether we will hold fast to it.

25 For to Abraham God promised Isaac, and so many offspring and children,

2)' Eislebensche: to the first.



than sand on the sea; nor does he say to him [Gen. 22:2], Kill my son and slaughter him 2c. This is contrary to the first promise. But it is a tentation, since God wants to test whether Abraham will also hold fast to his word in faith. So Moses is also sure that he should overthrow the king in Egypt and lead the people of Israel out; this should and must certainly happen. Now God is trying Moses whether he will keep his word or not. His wife could not resist, therefore she gladly went back. For she remembers: "Oh, I hoped to have become a great wife, to have experienced joy, honor and glory in my husband's married state; now it is vain death and misery, [I] go with him out of my fatherland into misery. O roll yourself back to your father in Midian.

So Moses is tested and tried with this little piece, so that he would become firm in the faith. And this is also the reason that this text was described by the Holy Spirit. It is indeed inconsistent and strange enough that God should deal with us in this way, but we must be accustomed to it. For God does it so that we alone may look into His hand.

27 So Moses went with Aaron, and did all the signs before the people which God commanded him. And the children of Israel believed, though they were weak, and were glad, and thanked God that their salvation should now begin.

### **Allegoria or spiritual interpretation of the fourth chapter.**

In the fourth chapter, Mosi is commanded to lead the people out, and he is assured of this beforehand with the vision of the fiery bush, which we have said signifies the Lord Christ. Now, when he has the bush, that is, this Lord Christ with him, the law is fulfilled. The law and the Lord Christ must come together.

29 There follow further other figures. Moses is said to have miraculous signs so that people will believe him; he has a staff in his hand, which he throws away and it becomes a snake. Item, his hand becomes leprous, and the water becomes blood. These are three miraculous signs,

by which he is to persuade the people and assure them that they believe him.

30 I do not know whether I will hit it or not with these allegories. For I have said before that it is not a noble art to lead everything on secret interpretation; therefore I would like to have resisted with it the shameful interpretations of Origen, Hieronymi and others, which are put into the heart and conscience by the good works, so that on the other hand all sermons would be confirmed by the divine, certain word. If this cannot be done, it is much better to leave the allegories in place. For Origen and other allegories are unrhymed and pagan.

The fact that he throws away the staff is to be understood from the preaching office, if one does not have God's word in the fist, so that it does not go in the swing; then such teaching is not different, but like a horrible poison, which has a snake with it. Moses himself must flee from it. So it is between the law and the human heart when people do not have God's grace and the Holy Spirit to keep the law. Then the law is a death and a snake. I then have no heart, desire nor lust for the law, it does not please me, and the harder it is insisted on and the more it is preached, the more hostile I become to it [Rom. 7, 23]. For my heart is much differently minded; the more one drives the law, the less one creates. The heart says, Oh, that the law were not given, Thou shalt not commit adultery, then would I be free, and go to and fro, and commit my adultery. If the law were gone, Thou shalt not steal, how I would be covetous, how I would be usurious.

32 But when the law comes, as the rod from the fist, it terrifies, for it says: Stipendium peccati mors [Rom. 6:23.] Now Moses also comes into the gospel, that one may hear not only the law according to the Scriptures, but also the gospel; and when the gospel also meets, one is made merry again. The heart must at first be afraid and flee away; but if the gospel also meets rightly, it becomes pleasant to him. For it comforts the sinner and proclaims forgiveness of sin, as Christ said to the gout-broken man [Matt. 9:2]:

"My son, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven."  
The leprous hand means the hypocritical life one leads in the world. For leprosy is false doctrine and humanity. When men do not believe rightly, and are either led to eternal life by their powers and abilities, or are directed to their own good works by the laws of God and man, the hand is leprous; and with men Moses should deal. But when the leprosy is healed, and the hand is put back into the bosom, it becomes clean again; that is, when the law is first misunderstood, that the Holy Spirit comes and preaches it rightly, namely, that we are not able to do anything and sin.

and that we must be helped through Christ alone, then we will become pure and holy.  
(34) That water also becomes blood is the doctrine of men and the law, for they kill and bleed. Since the law does nothing but strangle and murder. This has been well proven by our teaching of human statutes in the monasteries, which has been no different than the water of Egypt, which has become blood, since the innocent consciences are murdered by it. For the more one is caught in it, the more one dies. With this, Moses wants to indicate that pure, righteous doctrine is necessary among the people of God, so that the conscience does not build or trust in any other doctrine or work, but only in Christ. These are the four chapters.

## The fifth chapter.

Then Moses and Aaron went in and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Let my people go, that they may prosper in the wilderness. Pharaoh answered, Who is the LORD, whose voice I must hear, and let Israel go? I know nothing of the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.  
So far we have heard how God ordained Moses to be the captain and ruler to lead His people out of Egypt, and confirmed him with words, promises and miraculous signs, that he was equipped and armed as a duke. Now we will hear how he will go to Pharaoh the king, and how he will take up his office of salvation, and what he will do therein, and how it will go on with him.  
**V. 3-9. They said: The Hebrew God has called us, let us now go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest pestilence or the sword befall us. Then the king of Egypt said to them: Why do you (Moses and Aaron) cause this people to leave their work in order? Go to your service. And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people are already too many in the land, and ye will yet call them to be celebrated from their**

**Services. That day Pharaoh gave orders to the people's governors and their officials, saying: You shall no longer gather straw from the people and give it to them to make bricks as before; let them go themselves and gather straw together. And the number of bricks which they have made hitherto ye shall lay up for them, and not diminish. For they go idle, therefore they cry out, saying: We will go and sacrifice to our God. Press the people with work, that they may labor, and not turn back to such words.**  
Now the redemption begins. But you have heard above [Cap. 1, § 52 ff.] that in the holy Scriptures, or in these histories, one should pay special attention to God's word and pay diligent attention to it, as to the most important main thing, to which one must pay much more attention than to good works. Although the good works done by men have a much greater appearance and open people's mouths more than the divine word, which is simple, bad and right [Ezek 1:12].  
This is the nature of the divine word, and this is how it works. When it wants to begin to show its power and authority, it will

weakened before. For the power of our Lord God must first become weakness before the world, and His wisdom must be foolishness, as St. Paul laments in the first epistle to the Corinthians, v. 21, 25. Although God's foolishness is the greatest wisdom above all the wisdom of the earth, and God's weakness in making Himself weak is stronger than all men, and God's poverty is far more precious than all the riches of the world. But it takes faith and a special man who understands that the divine word is so.

The apostle St. Paul is very bold in ascribing to our Lord God that He is weak, sick and poor, and that His word is also so in the world. God speaks of great things, as, save, redeem, make blessed, and help from all sins 2c. They are great, mighty words; but when it is to come to pass and to meet, it is as if it were the ripening that should fall over a year.

(5) So it is here also, when Moses saith unto Pharaoh, Let this people go; and soon shall this word fall into ashes and dung. For Pharaoh saith, Who is the LORD? I do not know of any Lord, I will not let the people of Israel go"; and he sets more oppressors over them, is very angry, and orders other officials, who press them harder than before, are now much more severely afflicted.

After that the tyrant Pharaoh continues, lays himself at Moses' neck, scolds Moses and considers him a rebel and a mutineer. 1) So Moses comes into great danger, gets a rough felt 2) and a dry chapter, because he says: You are idle, have nothing to do, the people is much, burden them still with more glad services. And the people are in great distress and labor; but Pharaoh only makes a mockery of it. He thinks to suppress the divine word, and makes it weak, and considers it foolishness; this must be his posturing 3) and laughter. So, Moses, who has God's word for him with his own, must go over it for a fool of Pharaoh and his own,

yes, also probably be respected elsewhere in the world, and does nothing.

007 About this they themselves are divided, the people and Moses, because the people say, If ye had made us work as before; now we stink before the Egyptians. You have put the sword into their hands so that they may strike us. Is this saving and redeeming? You make us suffer more, that we may be the more afflicted; you set the light on fire, and put it out. And he, Moses, also says: Dear Lord God, why do you call me to do something, and then pull off your hand and leave me in it? As then follows in this chapter further in the text:

**V.22. 23. And Moses came again to the Lord, and said, Lord, why doest thou so evil to this people? Why hast thou sent me hither? Because, since I went in to Pharaoh to speak to him in thy name, he hath afflicted the people more severely, and thou hast not delivered thy people.**

(8) The prophet Jeremiah also laments and says to God [Cap. 20:7], "You have deceived and seduced me. How should God deceive you? He says [Jer. 1:18], "I will be a brazen forehead and an iron wall to you," and yet he has the prophet Jeremiah thrown into prison.

9 But this is God's way, that He guides His word wonderfully, and even if He attacks His work, it can be seen as if nothing would come of it, yes, the counterplay happens. But why does God do this? Because he wants to accomplish his work all the more wonderfully, and the divine word should show and prove its power and might all the more in weakness.

(10) For through foolishness he makes wisdom, through sickness he makes strength and health, through nothing he makes everything, Isa. 63:1. Then the opponents of the divine word are much stronger and wiser and become hopeful. But God remembers thus: "Wait, I will set you right, that you may begin. And when they are at their strongest, God breaks in and strikes down the world and all his enemies' strength, wisdom, art and everything.

1) Mutineer - instigator of mutiny.  
2) Felt - Reference.  
3) Buffoonery - farce.

(11) This is written for our comfort, so that we may learn to hold fast to God's word in our professions and offices, and renounce ourselves, but place our hope and trust in God. For our sake, God allows His word to become foolishness and weak, and yet still breaks through; just as this redemption had to follow with the children of Israel, even though it could not be seen as such, and even though it is difficult and impossible. For thus God says in the end of this fifth chapter:

**Cap. 6, i. Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for by a strong hand he must let them go, by a strong hand he must drive them from his land.**

(12) Thus all Christians are also God's weakness and foolishness, but God makes them strong and wise again; as is also said in the prophet Joel in the third chapter, v. 15: "The weak esteem himself strong. St. Peter, the layman and poor fisherman, attaches himself to all the holy, learned and wise people in the world, yes, even to the whole Roman Empire; although it is of little account that St. Peter should master the Roman Empire with the preaching of the Gospel. And one might have said, "Oh, if God were wise, He would not foolishly attack it. But St. Peter was (just as Moses is here) God's weakness and foolishness, and had to stretch out his head and his life. Nevertheless, he drowned the Roman Empire with the Gospel.

(13) For this is the nature of the divine word, so that we may well learn that when Pharaoh is proud, thundering, raging and angry, God and his word turn out to be weak, feeble and sick, as if it were lying on the ground. But it becomes strong again, pulls through and overcomes everything; just as it will follow that the children of Israel will be led through the Red Sea and Pharaoh will be drowned in it.

14 The other part of this chapter is about the devil's nature and character, of which Christ also says in the Gospel of Matthew in the twelfth chapter, v. 29: "If the strong-armed man keeps his palace, it is his own.

satisfied" 2c. [The devil can well suffer that one lets his kingdom go and stay, and he may keep the consciences and souls captive. But when God's word comes, and his kingdom is stormed and attacked, he becomes mad and unreasonable, and cannot bear it; and if he were patient about it, he would gain, accomplish and create much more than thus. But he does not do this; as soon as one touches him a little, it hurts him and he does not want to suffer it. We see this in the Gospel histories [Matth. 8, 32. Marc. 9, 26.], when the Lord Christ casts out the devil, he foams, sprays around and makes strange gestures, he trembles and tears around as if he were senseless and foolish; thus he does not like to leave. And as he does in men, so he does in his kingdom and in his whole body.

The pope is also attacked, his indulgences, pilgrimages, masses, invocations of saints and other lies are revealed and disgraced. See how his kingdom rages and rages here (for the devil must go forth); see how the pope blasphemes, defiles, maligns and condemns us, and how he spouts and curses.

(16) So it is here also in this chapter, when God's word and promise comes to help the people of Israel, that this people is kept harder than ever before. For Pharaoh also takes the straw from the people of Israel. Nevertheless, the harder he holds the people, the less he wins. For God's word is God's power and authority against the devil's power and authority [Rom. 1, 16. 2 Cor. 12, 9P Therefore it is in vain that the devil thus bars, pulls and resists, and thus keeps hostile. For in this way the devil himself helps the people of Israel to be loosed, as happened to Pharaoh, who, over his tyranny and raging, lost his life and possessions and was drowned in the Red Sea. Who could believe this alone, that the harder the devil compels us in deathly troubles, and the like in other matters, the more surely God is there with us, and the more stiffly He holds over us.

## The sixth chapter.

**V. 2-5. And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD, and appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, to be their Almighty God: but my name, O LORD, have I not made known unto them. I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, where they were strangers. And I have heard the lamentation of the children of Israel, which have afflicted the Egyptians with their groaning; and I have remembered my covenant.**

In this chapter God repeats His promise that He would bring the children of Israel out of Egypt and give them the Promised Land, wanting to strengthen the faith of Moses and the children of Israel with this new promise, so that they would not doubt their redemption. But these words were preached to them in vain 2c.

2. the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit take great care when they speak of the benefits God wants to show us, that they first take away all glory and merit, and point out to us that everything God does and works in us, He does because He has had His pleasure and joy in it, and He has ordained it from eternity.

(3) So that Moses here, and God's word, may also be weakened and made foolish, it is foolish and lowly. God preaches here that he appeared to Abrahah, Isaac and Jacob, and remembers the covenant that he promised them, as giving the promised land, and says: "For the sake of this covenant this shall happen to you, and not for the sake of your sighing, crying and complaining, so that they have nothing to defend themselves against.

(4) For no lamentation shall not be full and sufficient, and good works and suffering shall not be counted, but go beforehand in the word of God. Therefore God says here: Because I have promised you this land, and you are the seed to whom this land is promised.

is for the sake of this promise, I see this lamentation. For this time, wherein ye are thus martyred and afflicted, giveth me cause to remember your lamentations; so compose them, that they may not boast a hair's breadth of any merit. For the children of Israel also had few good works and righteousness and godliness of their own: the people were full of unbelief, impatience, murmuring, and Moses full of weakness and disobedience. But what was given to them, that it might be done by His eternal goodness, for the sake of His truth and promise, that they might give thanks to God for His grace and mercy, and that they might not say that they were the people whom God had to look upon for the sake of some work. Therefore, God says here: Behold, I will save you, not because of your yellow hair, but because I promised it four hundred years before to your fathers, and so determined that I would do it; that you may know that it was given to you by grace, and delivered and promised to your fathers by grace.

**V. 3. But my name, O Lord, I have not made known to them.**

Now let us look at the words. The Jews speak that the name of God is called Tetragrammaton ADONAI, that one must

let remain. He says: I have appeared to them so that I am their God. Therefore they recognized God and knew how to speak of God, that He was almighty, true, merciful and gracious. God often appeared to them, spoke to them and performed great miracles for them. And in this way they knew him better than we do. Why then does he say that they did not know him? We must interpret the name of God in this way, that it was not preached and proclaimed so brightly and clearly as it was in the time of the Lord Christ, the beloved apostles, and for a while afterward, because at that time the name of God had no great cry in the world, so that it was known everywhere. I, says

I have appeared to them, but I have had no name among them, that is, the patriarchs have not been the ones to lead the preaching and the crying of me, as now you, Moses, and the children of Israel should do, so that my name would be known in the whole world. But now the redemption of the children of Israel is to be set in motion, and the promises are to be fulfilled, and the whole nation of Israel is to be helped, since before he only helped individual persons, as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

(6) So we interpret it and get through it; whoever knows better, we grant him. Moses had a ministry; the ministry is spoken of here. Otherwise Abraham also preached the name of God in his house [Gen. 12:8, 13:4], but he did not have such a command to preach the name of God as Moses did, or as we do, or as St. Paul, the dear apostles, and the Lord Christ did. Isa. 41:25 says, "He shall preach my name"; thus br makes his name known and known to the patriarchs.

(7) But there is much lame talk here from the Jews about the miracles of this name Adonai, which we will now let pass. But Moses wants to say: Now you should take up and preach this name of God, and do excellent, beautiful, lovely sermons about it. But this is also weak, it is not valid before the people; they do not believe because of the hard work and great hardship. However, God has compassion on them and gives them credit for it, perseveres, continues to preach, does not let up.

**V. 9 Moses told the children of Israel this, but they did not hear him because of groaning and fear and hard work.**

8) Moses, having been strengthened by God's word and promise, is obedient to God, preaching again to the children of Israel about salvation, exhorting them to faith, patience in the cross, and that they should follow God's calling.

(9) But here we see the disobedience and unbelief of the children of Israel. For, since they do not want to proceed with salvation soon, they throw the sackcloth at God's door, no longer want to believe His words, nor do they want to believe any of His words.

Allow consolation. For when things go badly for us, flesh and blood do not think that it should once again become good, but thinks that now we must perish, so that a downpour and thunderstorm is soon followed by sunshine and bright, beautiful weather [Tob. 3, 23]. Thus, after a long cross and tribulation, God also helps again, and helps much more gloriously, the more severe the suffering has been.

**V. 14-20. These are the heads of the house of their fathers. The children of Reuben, the first son of Israel, are these: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, Charmi. These are the families of Reuben. The children of Simeon are these: Jemuel, Jamim, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Saul the son of the Cananean woman. These are Simeon's families. These are the names of the children of Levi in their families: Gershon, Kohath, Merari. But Levi was an hundred and seven and thirty years old. The children of Gershon are these: Libui and Shimei, in their families. The children of Kohath are these: Amram, Jezear, Hebron, and Uzziel. And Kahath was an hundred and three and thirty years old. The children of Merari are these: Maheli and Musi. These are these families of Levi, in their friendships. And Amram took Jochebed his wife, and she bare him Aaron and Moses. But Amram was an hundred and seven and thirty years old 2c.**

(10) Now the following is described in two leaves, which another would have understood in two words, and Moses' and Aaron's genealogies and genealogies are told. For if Moses is to become a teacher and a duke to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt, it is necessary to know who he is and from what tribe he was born, so that his arrival may be known; and for the sake of the third tribe, as Levi, from which Moses and Aaron come, the two tribes, as Reuben and Simeon, must also be named beforehand. For these two, Reuben and Simeon, were older than Levi. Moses is also the son of Leah, the poor little ash, for Levi is of Jacob, and the son of Leah. Now Levi has again a son, as Kahath [Gen. 46, 11.], then Kahath's son is Amram, who was Mosi's father. This is Mosi's lineage. All three of these, Levi, Kohath and Amram, are

died in Egypt, and have all lived in Egypt. Thus Jochebed was Mosi's mother. And above [Cap. 2, 1] it is said that a man of the tribe of Levi took a wife as his wife; there Jochebed is called Levi's daughter. But I rather believe that she was Gershon's or Merari's sister, and Amram's wife, that she belonged to him in the other member and was of his blood. Jezear is Amram's brother; as Elizabeth is Zachariah's wife, who is also Aaron's daughter [Luc. 1, 5]. But Aaron's wife is also called Eliseba, of the tribe of Judah; for these two families intermarried. If the daughters had goods, they did not have to intermarry; but if they did not have goods, they could intermarry out of the family and into another family.

**V. 26, 27: This is Aaron and Moses, to whom the Lord said, "Bring the children of Israel out of Egypt with their army. They are the ones who spoke to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt, namely Moses and Aaron.**

(11) Out of the tribe of Levi great men are born, as Moses and Aaron also came out of it. And Moses is described here as a commander and captain of the people of Israel, that he came from this tribe, and that God spoke to him in this way and that.

**V. 28-30. And the LORD spake that day unto Moses in the land of Egypt, saying: I am the LORD, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I speak unto thee. And he answered before the LORD, Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips: how then will Pharaoh hear me?**

12 God again repeats His command and commandment to Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt; He wants to make him confident and courageous by His word in this work and calling. But Moses again shows his disobedience and weakness, excuses himself, does not want to leave, fears the skin. In this we see an example of the frailty and weakness of the saints, how they also let the dog limp, how sin is always stirring in them, and because of this they have to ask for forgiveness daily.

# The seventh chapter.

I. We have heard in the fifth and sixth chapters of this book how God the Lord strengthens and comforts these two, Moses and Aaron, so that they accept the office of speaking to Pharaoh and leading the people of Israel out of Egypt, and gives them miraculous signs, such as that the rod becomes a serpent, and the water in Egypt becomes blood, and the leprous hand becomes clean again. All this happened so that they would be brave and bold to attack this mighty, great work and not think that it was done by their power, but that it was God's own work, since he wanted to be present with them. Also, through these miracles that Moses performed in Egypt, it became known to everyone that Moses was sent by God, and that the execution of the people of Israel from Egypt was done by God's command and assistance, and not out of recklessness or recklessness.

in a cheeky and rebellious way. These miracles led and pointed everyone to God, as the founder, originator and beginner of this execution, that he wanted to redeem his people from the house of Egypt.

For this reason God often has His saints and instruments perform miracles or wonders in the church, so that He may receive honor, praise and glory from them. As God says in this chapter [v. 5]: "The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out my hand over Egypt and lead the children of Israel away from them. The miracles are to serve that we recognize the true God. Just as the miracles that the Lord Christ performed revealed His glory, so that people believed in Him [John 2:11]. For they were divine miracles, as Nicodemus confesses [Joh. 3, 2].

he says, "Master, we know that you have come a teacher from GOD, for no one can do the signs that you do unless GOD is with him."

Item 3: Through the miracles of the saints of God, the true Christian doctrine is confirmed. The apostles perform great miracles in the New Testament, as Peter did in Acts 3:8. 3, 8. heals the lame in the name and power of the Lord Christ. This convinces us that the doctrine of Christ is true, for it is not only taught in words by the apostles, but Christ also confirms it with miracles [Marc. 16, 17], which are not done by human strength.

Finally, through miracles the true worship of God Himself is established, assured and confirmed. As, through Eliä and other prophets' miracles, the people are assured and confirmed in the right worship, and led away from the idolatrous, Baalite worship.

Now, in the seventh chapter, we hear how Pharaoh becomes more stiff-necked and obstinate, answering them that he will not let the people go, but he weighs them down even more with labor and brick-laying, so that the people of Israel also begin to cry out against Moses.

**The LORD said unto Moses, Behold, I have set thee a god over Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: but Aaron thy brother shall speak before Pharaoh, that he let the children of Israel out of his land.**

With these words it is shown how wonderfully God leads His things, when He wants to put them into work and carry them out, so that our faith is fed and nourished to trust Him and to believe firmly that He can lead it out [Matth. 4, 4. 5 Mos. 8, 3]. For God speaks to Moses here that he should be a god over Pharaoh, and Aaron should be Moses' prophet. The Latin text has shied away from speaking this way; but it is written there. And so that you will not be offended by it, when such a way of speaking falls into disuse, we want to deal with it a little bit. For there are more such sharp pieces to come.

7. your love has often heard that among all the works of God, so God with us and all

The most glorious and greatest work is his word, by which all things are sanctified and named after God. Just as the church is usually called a place of worship, not that God is there, but that God's word is heard and preached there. And even if it were preached under a green lime tree or a willow tree, the same place would still be called God's dwelling and place, for God's Word reigns there [1 Tim. 4:5]. Not that we have consecrated the place, or adorned it, or beautifully painted it, as our bishops do their idolatrous churches, and smear them with their oil and other belongings, but from the divine word, which I do not bring there, but it comes there from divine order. Where this is, there is also his house, and there God wants to be honored. For God's word not only makes the place holy and God's place and house; it also makes gods out of people.

(8) And this is also the reason (as indicated before [Cap. 3, § 25 ff.]) that the Lord says to Moses, when he wanted to go to the fiery bush: "Take off your shoes, because this place is holy", because God's word has been there, God has spoken there. Therefore those who have the word of God, and it is given to them to do the word of God, are called gods. Therefore, the Lord Christ Himself introduces a saying from the 82nd Psalm, v. 6, John 10:34-36, and concludes against the Jews: "You say that I blaspheme God, because I said that I am the Son of God; yet the Scriptures call gods those who hear the Word of God and to whom the Word of God is spoken"; how much more am I the Son of God, who am sent to you by the Father? Therefore, he who speaks the word of God must also be God and belong to God.

9. God is our Father; therefore, as He is Father, so are we sons. Thus the Holy Scripture gives a name to the saints who have God's word, so that they also inherit God's name. Therefore also in the [first] epistle of John [Cap. 3, 1. 2.] we are called sons of God; and just as we are heirs of all the goods of God, so also we have the divine name, that we reign over



Death, the devil, and all calamities, and be partakers of his goods; but by faith. From this we have the comforting, excellent title that we are called gods.

(10) Such is the power and authority of the divine Word, and thus the Scriptures highly esteem the Christians. Notice that it is such a great thing to have God's word pure and righteous, that God himself calls one "God"; as in this place Moses Pharaonis should be God, for he had God's word over Pharaonem. So are and shall also be called all Christians who truly believe in Christ. For this is being God's son, if we have God's word and stick to it. Therefore, Christians cannot be praised enough for this honor we have, nor can we understand it enough [Ps. 139:6]. But by faith it is tasted a little [Ps. 34:9], and in the next life we shall see it. Therefore we should love and honor the divine word, and not despise it as if it were a word of man, on which nothing would be done [Ezek. 12:22]. For all good things come from God. So let us open our eyes and see what we receive and have when we have God's word.

(11) If the word of God is not with us, we are in the kingdom of the devil, and are young devils and children of the devil. Thus says the Lord Christ [Matth. 16, 23.] also to Petro, when he recanted that he should not go into Judea: Do not hinder me, devil. But he who has the word of God is a young god. He who does not have the word of God, but has the devil's mind and word, that is, false doctrine and error, these are all young devils.

(12) Thus the Scripture speaks powerfully, praising, honoring and glorifying the divine Word, for from it we boast that we are sons of God. And down in the 21st chapter of this book, v. 6, Moses calls the judges "gods," that is, those who sit in God's stead, having Moshi's law in their hand, and judge according to the divine word, ruling not according to reason but according to God's word; as God has ordered such people for this purpose. (13) Therefore it is unusual speech and language that it is said here: I will set you as God over other people.

But one must get used to such a way of the holy scripture, so that we learn who is called God. It is said: Above Pharaoh I will set you as God. This is a consolation. For before God made Moses to fall, and Pharaoh to be a scorn and a mockery, and the children of Israel to be made worse, and Moses to stand naked and despondent. He told Moses that the people of Israel should go out of Egypt, and he, Moses, should carry it out. But the more Moses says this, and says that he will carry it out, the more bitter and furious Pharaoh becomes, and the more despondent Moses becomes. But when Moses thus becomes weak, God comes and comforts him, saying, "You shall be Pharaoh's God," and do with him as you will. But this shall be done by my word which I give thee. By this word you shall have dominion over him, and he shall fight and resist as much as he pleases; yet you shall do with him as you please.

14 Thus it is with him who has the word of God and is the Son of God, who has authority over all things. For a Christian is such a mighty man that all creatures must be obedient to him; though this does not appear, yet in truth it is so. What on earth is more powerful than death, more terrifying than sin, and more bitter than an evil conscience? [Nevertheless a Christian says that he is master over them all. But we turn a deaf ear, gape and open our mouths to the miracles of the apostles, when the Lord Christ says: "The signs that I do, a Christian who believes in me will also do, and will do even greater works than I do. As if to say, It is a great work that I should make the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak; but he will do them also, and much more than these.

(15) Tell me, is it not a great thing that I, a poor sack of maggots, should strike a cliff against death, and defy the devil, and put to flight the tyranny of all princes, and rule over consciences, and over all things? If I make a man straight and healthy, it is a miraculous sign, even if I make him see; but he must die, and leave all this. But God

Word shows, and says: I will give you such power, which is not to be found elsewhere.

(16) Therefore, if a man is clothed with the word of God, and has the word of God, he, as a Christian, can make the blind see and the lame walk; for the word of God is in him, and he is the Son of God, and we do by God's gifts and grace what God does by Himself; that is another thing. So it is a great thing that a Christian should eat death and the devil; item, when his head is torn off, that he should think that death is nothing but a sleep, and that he will soon get his head back.

17. above all this, we are also called kings in the holy scriptures [Ps. 68, 13. 30.]; not that we have a sword and a high crown full of emeralds and other precious stones as big as this church pillar, but because we can defy death, the devil and hell, so that they do not have to harm us [Rom. 8, 1. 1 Cor. 15, 55.]. This crown should be very fitting for one.

018 Thus saith God unto Moses, Go, and despair not; I will not forsake my word which I have spoken: Lead out my people, and I will stand by thee. Though it be a little delayed, yet thou hast the word of God; thou shalt smite them, and deal with them as any god.

So Moses is not a lord over Pharaoh, over death and the devil according to his person, but according to his office, as he also proves with his signs. God has given us this treasure and power that we Christians should be such lords. But we reject it and despise it. Our deeds and good deeds do not bring us there, so the devil always leads us into deeds, so we do not get them, because only through God's word do we become gods.

20 Moses did not become a god by his deeds; indeed, the Lord says to him, "Moses, you are fallen and despondent, but I will make you a god. It comes freely from God's command, and he will have it without works, which shall stand before God. Works are against men, and shall serve men, who are satisfied therewith; but God is not satisfied therewith, he wills faith and its

Have word. God wants to have something higher, and says: Preach my word to me, which is worth as much as I am; what shall I do with your grindy, scabby, shabby and stinking works?

**And Aaron your brother shall be your prophet.**

(21) A prophet is called one who has his understanding from God without means, to whom the Holy Spirit puts the word in his mouth. For he is the source, and they have no other master than GOD [1 Cor. 14:1, 2]. No one can make a prophet by human preaching and teaching [2 Pet. 1, 21.], and even though it is God's word, and I preach the word in the purest way, I do not make a prophet; I can make a wise man and a man of understanding. In the third and twentieth chapters of Matthew, v. 34, wise men are called who draw doctrine from the prophets, for God speaks through men and not without means. But prophets are those who have the teaching of God without any means. So it is said here, "Aaron shall be your prophet." Just as I, God, also make prophets without any means when I speak to them; so you are God, and Aaron is the prophet, for he shall learn from you without means, as you have learned from me.

22 Therefore Moses is God's prophet, and Aaron is Moses' prophet. But I would rather be God's prophet than Moses', for where God is not, there is evil. And this emblazonment, or this power and authority, we have from God's word against good works, that one should condemn and reject them, if one wants to act with them before God. People cannot do without good works, or they would even have to perish. For God has arranged it so that these are sick, and that often an eye in the human body, or the hand, or the mouth is infirm, and needs help and counsel. So the mad whore, reason, plunders here and wants to bring it up before God, cut off the hands and tongue, gouge out the eyes, and thereby earn something; but it counts for nothing before God, only faith.

23. This is the prophecy that God says, "I will indicate to you what you shall say to Pharaoh. You shall be his god." GOD is

nor about him, he also speaks through us, but we do not see him. Therefore, St. Paul also says [2 Cor. 5, 20], we carry Christ's message, we are His mouth messengers, whom we entreat the world to reconcile with God; this is our advertisement, 1) that we say: "Let yourselves be reconciled to God." GOD, who sits in heaven, has commanded us to conduct the word thus, just as Aaron conducted Mosiah's word.

**V. 3. But I will harden Pharaoh's heart.**

24. Mosi is given the command or instruction, namely, "Aaron shall be your mouth, and you shall be his God." But what finally follows this? How does Pharaoh stand and hold himself against this divine message and advertisement? Not otherwise, because as it is also said here, he will neither see nor hear, neither yield nor 2) obey. Therefore, out of righteous judgment, God decrees that Pharaoh's heart is hardened and remains hardened. He will not listen to Moses nor grant this request and miraculous sign.

(25) There is a deep hole here, where one should preach much; but I do it unwillingly, for the sake of the shameful, forward nature, which always has a desire to know something strange and new, which I then gladly avoid where I can. To this vice God is very hostile, and He can ill suffer it if one wants to boast, defy and be seen apart from the holy Scriptures, if we create the thought that we know the holy Scriptures very well, and give glory to man, and not to God; go into the thought that we have God's word, are God's children and gods. But if we make a strut out of it, God will let the devil enter, take away his word, and make a devil out of God.

(26) I have seen many of them, and those who are still alive today, when they see something that we did not teach before, they taste it as sugar and pretend: O this was not taught before. Our Lord God is also hostile to this, and such a one falls from one thought into another thought, until his head is torn off, and he falls to the ground and perishes. One gapes at it, like

1) Advertising - Message.  
2) Eisleben's: or.

that one may always know something strange and new; for the old is the manna, or the daily bread. But is it not strange and unheard of that we have, yet 3) it is meat that one is weary of eating. Then God will also give only questions, as He gave in the high schools, when the world was overwhelmed with books, and the consciences were well tormented and troubled therein. This time will come again. This is the reason why I do not like to do such things; for the forward devil and our flesh do not cease in this piece.

(27) I will let anyone play with allegories and act as he pleases, but you must take care not to abandon the main theme, but to practice and exercise it. For we have the devil for an enemy, who does not rest; he soon snatches away the main thing, and gives you strange questions, so that you ponder and rummage. Therefore, cut it down and draw the Bible to Christ, and do not follow the questions. For the Bible and God draw near to Christ, how he alone makes us blessed. Others have strange thoughts, and lead themselves away from Christ, wanting something new. But the holy Scripture does not want to know about anything else, nor does it want to present us with anything but Christ. And whoever thus leads the Scriptures, or is thus led to Christ by the Scriptures, remains well and walks on the right path.

**V.3-5. But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and I will do many signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh will not hear you. That I may prove my hand in Egypt, and bring my army, my people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt, through great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out mine hand upon Egypt, and bring the children of Israel away from them.**

(28) Here it is asked: How is it that God will harden the heart of Pharaoh, why did he send the signs? Moses will later always write thus: Pharaoh did not hear him 2c., as then

3) "is" is taken by us from the old edition of Walch. The meaning is: Although what we teach is not something strange, it is a wholesome food of which one is tired.

God had thus spoken. And on this saying it follows, as God tells him beforehand. It came to pass just as he had said and promised, says Moses. But St. Paul interpreted this point to the Romans in the 9th, v. 17, 18th, and 11th chapters, v. 7-10, and the following chapter in the Exodus, and reason is very surprised about it, and wants to ponder inside, and seek God, which is what it has to deal with. Then one question comes after another, and when it enters, it thinks: Is God hardened, and is the guilt different from his? But these are frivolous spirits.

(29) Thus shall one begin, that he may speak: I will begin from the lowest, and know the grace of God and His word. And when we come into God's word, that same word shall be comforting and sweet to us. As this has been the highest comfort and defiance for Mosi, and he can take and draw no greater courage than that God has hardened Pharaoh. Another would not have drawn comfort. Moses stood in the trap, that he led God's word, that cost him life and limb, and that he carried out the people, that cost him his honor. Now it is a great work that a man should not take into his mind. But this backstop does the best, it will lead God out.

(30) Just as we now have many foolish princes against the gospel, who murmur and grumble, as Pharaoh did here. So we are weak against them, and our defiance, courage, and throbbing is that it will go as God wills; their necks and ours are in his hands, and we have the advantage that it is God's word that we have; then, when they purr and murmur, we stand the firmer.

Just as St. Paul complains to Timothy that he did not have a good day, he says [2 Ep 2:9, 10]: "I must suffer and bear all pain for the sake of the faithful, so that they may attain faith. And this arrogant title, that he suffers for the faith of the elect, is also used by St. Paul to Colossians [Cap. 1, 24], which he wrote before his end. He had to recognize many a fool and a knave. This one used him and was his adversary;

That one has accepted his preaching, yet he has remained a false brother; that he says [Gal. 2:4 ff] that he was not allowed to trust anyone, but now he rejoices and boasts about the faith of the elect. As if to say, "Let us take comfort in these things, though some fall and fall away [Matt. 12:14, Luc. 6:11, Phil. 3:18, 19], yet some will stand firm. For those who are to have faith have it, as he says to Timothy. Demas and the Galatians fell away [2 Tim. 4, 10], so they were angry, and it made St. Paul afraid that he would rather have died. He also laments [2 Tim. 3:1-8] that in the last days there will be terrible disruptions, because there will be people who think highly of themselves, who are stingy, proud, hopeful, blasphemers and abusers; who have a veneer of godly conduct, but deny its power: they learn forever and never come to the knowledge of the truth. And naming Mosi's adversaries, says, "In like manner as Jannes and Jambres resisted Mosi, so do these also resist the truth."

But let it go, God's reason stands firm, and He has a seal, which means: "God knows His own" [2 Tim. 2:19]. Now it will still go as God wills. New prophets will come, I and others will then have died, so the lamentation will be made. There is gone; let run what runs there. God is thus playing his game; what remains is what shall remain. A man could not give comfort to this multitude; but God wants to say here: My Moses, be content, it will go as I want it to go, hold fast, I want to harden Pharaoh's heart; you know that I want to do it, you have God's word, item, the children of Israel also; what will not go, that will stay behind.

This does not belong to the idle spirits who fall with questions. God did not speak this way with Adam, Eve and Abraham; therefore, it should be considered where the Scriptures require it. In Moses there are no more proud or arrogant speeches than here. For since the people of Israel are in the greatest distress, and Pharaoh is with

If Moses is driven by cruel force and tyranny, he shall have no other comfort than to let it go as God wills. We must also sing this little song: *Mitte vadere, sicut vadit, quia vult vadere, ut vadit.* The wrathful princes, the false prophets and the rotten spirits are hardened, God has thus willed it. Why does God do so? If we want to place our will in his will, then there is no other God, nor does he have any other will; he also has no other kingdom above him, his will is supreme, and if the same will goes, I also want it to go, so let it go.

(34) Now another question is: Why did God call Moses to preach, since God Himself said, "Pharaoh will not hear you? Is it not a foolish thing for one to say to another, Preach to Pharaoh, and know that he will not hear you; I will harden him? I would throw the keys at someone's feet and say, "Preach yourself. But this is the answer: We are commanded to preach, but not commanded to make people justified and devout. Let all preachers and Christians be confident, and let each one follow his calling and do it faithfully. Most is commanded the word of God alone, and is not commanded to preach Pharaoh softly or hard. The word is commanded to him, that is God's will, and that is what he is to lead, even if no one wants to hear him. It is for his comfort, so that he will not be frightened if no one wants to follow him and be obedient. If I should think that my word and my preaching are despised, I should stop preaching. But you go on, Moses, you preach; if you are despised, let me be commanded to do so. One should only see that God wills it so, and will have it preached so.

(35) I say this, therefore, that you may beware, and not go too high in questions, but let yourself go down, and come to know Christ, and see every man to his profession and to his thing, which God hath commanded him, and be not troubled with questions. You are not commanded to inquire such things; you have not yet taken off your shoes, you come too early, you let this happen to you.

You stand by what you should know, and do not pay attention to what you should know and ask. Moses does not ask God here, nor is he concerned why God has hardened Pharaoh's heart; he does not dispute with God here because of this.

(36) Nevertheless, the fact that God wants to harden him is not without cause. For God will perform many miraculous signs when Moses is to lead the children of Israel. In the ninth chapter [v. 16] it is said: "I will harden you, that I may prove my power in you, and that my honor and glory may be known to the world. There they serve that death, the devil and the angry princes make God's honor high. - If the mad princes did not rage in this way, and death and sins did not weigh down the conscience in this way, but went along peacefully, then the power of faith and the divine word would not be recognized by anyone. But while the devil and the princes rage, faith shines and shines, and the divine word comforts me and makes me courageous, and the conscience experiences that there is an emphasis and power in your divine word. That a poor heart, flesh and blood should have the courage and joy to defy and despise the raging princes, the devil and death; as can be seen in the holy martyrs, also in the virgins, St. Agnes and Agatha: such would never happen if the world and the devil did not so powerfully lay down against the Christians.

(37) "Obstinate" does not only mean to despair, as we say, but also to be princes who rely on their power, on the land and on the people, and who gain courage as if they wanted to eat God. This courage, this certainty and boldness is called hardening or obduracy. God lets a poor little group of Christians go along, which they soon intend to "subdue". For what are Moses and Aaron to be counted against us? We want to eat it all in one gruel, the Egyptians think, it is a small group. So they boast as if all power were theirs [Ps. 73, 6-9], their courage grows, that they are as puffed up as the hop sacks. This great courage is called obduracy. Although it is not only the goods and riches that make them so, but also their inner courage, so that they think, "We want to eat them," or even "We want to eat them.

sink. They will have a great following, and nothing will be between you and the adversaries but God's word. On your side will be poverty, on theirs wealth; on your side weakness, on theirs power and strength; and shall fall upon you with all splendor, and yet lack. With this I will show the power of my divine word in the midst of persecution, in the midst of death, in the midst of sin, and in the midst of the devil's wrath.

**V. 10-12 Then Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and did as the LORD commanded them. And Aaron cast his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh called for the wise men and the black kiin tigers. And the Egyptian magicians did likewise with their conjuration, and cast every man his staff from him, and became serpents.**

(38) Here we see that the devil, through his servants and instruments, or false prophets, can also perform miracles. For the sorcerers also make serpents out of their staffs; item, that the rivers of water in Egypt become blood; that they bring frogs out of the water. The Scriptures also remind and warn of this. As Deut. 13, 1. ff. it is reported that false prophets can also perform miracles. And the Lord Christ Matth. 24, 24. says: "Many false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders. Item, Paul 2 Thess. 2, 9. 10. says: The future of the Antichrist will happen according to the work of Satan, with all kinds of lying powers, signs and wonders, and with all kinds of seduction to unrighteousness.

These are the devil's miracles; for the sorcerers perform such miracles out of God's decree by the devil's power and effect, so that they hinder Moses' miracles, which were divine miracles, and blind and harden Pharaoh, so that he does not accept the divine truth, but remains stuck in error, and lies down against God and His people with his raging and fury. The two sorcerers in the stories of the apostles, Elymas and Simon [Apost. 8, 9-11. 13, 8.], also perform miracles. Item [Cap. 16, 16.], the maiden who has a spirit of divination. But they do it by the power of the devil, by God's decree. Thus

1 Sam. 28, 11-14. The soothsayer brings out of the grave a ghost that was similar to the prophet Samuel in shape and clothes by the devil's blinding and deception. Therefore St. Paul [2 Thess. 2, 10.] calls the devil's signs and wonders also lying powers and seduction. For the king Saul was quite deceived by the devil's deceit, so that he did not know otherwise that it was the deceased Samuel, when it was not Samuel who rested in the Lord, but a ghost of the devil, which Saul was punished by God for having otherwise despised Samuel's teachings in his life and having thrown them to the wind.

**And Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.**

40. The devil is put to shame with his miracles by God's miracles. For when God's fingers or miracles and the devil's deceitfulness collide, the devil is driven in with his miracles by God's miracles. For when God's miracles and the devil's deceitfulness collide, the devil with his miracles is put to shame by the word of God.

**19-21 And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch forth thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon her brooks, and upon her rivers, and upon her lakes, and upon all her marshes, that they may become blood, and be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone. And Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded them, and took up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river before Pharaoh and his servants; and all the waters that were in the river were turned into blood. And the fishes of the river died, and the river stank, that the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. 2c.**

(41) So the first sign was that God made the land of Egypt full of blood, so that all the waters that were there, when the pools of the rivers were, flowed with blood. This was a terrible sign by which God wanted to drive them to His obedience, to provoke and entice them to repentance. How then God

He has his plagues and punishments come upon the wicked, not to destroy and destroy them, but to help them, just as a father beats his child, not to put it to death as an executioner or baton twirler, but by the shilling 1) of its wickedness, naughtiness and mischievousness, and the child becomes righteous. For the rod takes away the foolishness from the heart of the child [Proverbs 22:15]. Nevertheless, it is taken in the wind; for Pharaoh saw that his sorcerers did such signs.

Forty-two: This plague lasted seven days, so that it would not be thought to be an accident, but would be considered a miracle. And Pharaoh had to look for other waters; for they looked for waters beside the rivers, because there were no rivers before. Is not this a hardness, that men should be so hard and obdurate, that such a sign is visibly and tangibly presented, and the human heart should still say: No, it is nothing? But it so happens that God's plagues and blows do little for the wicked; the longer they remain, the worse they become, and they are like the stubborn horses, the more you beat them, the less you can drive them away, but only give way behind them. As Isaiah also says about this and says [Cap. 1, 5. Jer. 5, 3.] (which we may let be said to us as a warning): This people has not turned to the one who struck them.

Here Moses and everyone had to learn that it does not help how much one preaches or how glorious one has God's word, if God does not cooperate and turn the heart, so that it lets the word enter and grasps it. For He must give the flourishing to that which is planted, set and watered [1 Cor. 3:6, 7]. God is the one who hardens, and if he hardens, no one can soften. Again, if he softens something, no one can harden it 2c.

Heaven is too high and hell is too low. When God shines with His word, the sun, moon and stars rise brightly in the sky, and shine above all measures, above all teachings of the law, above all good works, and bring us such light that we may not remain in darkness, as we have now. Again, if God sinks his word, he puts us so deep into hell that there is no end to it. Just as we have also become fools in the temple, because we have been involved in foolish works; what we have touched has been darkness and gloom, and we have always sunk into it. So it is either too highly enlightened, or too deeply sunk; therefore it has no measure. So that he indicates that it could not otherwise be that such miraculous signs should not move the human heart, but it is God's work and miracle that thus hardens and hardens a heart.

(45) Now we have the first sign, that all the waters of Egypt are turned to blood, and yet there is none that turneth back.

1) Shilling - Ruthe, penalty.

# The eighth chapter.

1-7 The LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, `This is what the LORD says: Let my people serve me. If thou refuse, behold, I will plague all thy border with frogs, and the river shall swarm with frogs. They shall crawl up and come into thy house, and into thy chamber, and into thy bed, and into the houses of thy servants, and into thy people, and into thy ovens, and into thy pools. And the frogs shall

Upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants, creep. And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the rivers, and over the streams, and over the lakes, and let frogs come up upon the land of Egypt. So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and frogs came up and covered Egypt. Then the magicians also did so with their conjuration, and caused frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt.

(1) Here we have the other miraculous sign, namely, that all the rivers and lakes in Egypt become full of frogs. For now three or four plagues follow one after the other, by which God wanted to provoke the Egyptians to repentance and correction of their sinful life, also to His fear, because all these should have been punishments of sins. First we had blood, followed by frogs, then lice, and finally evil worms. And in this chapter three plagues are described, but it is always indicated next to them why these plagues were not strong enough.

2. Moses leads God's word and the miraculous signs that follow the word. This should move you. If I had a preacher who spoke God's word, and in addition to that he gave signs so that people would see them and not want to turn away from them, would that not be evil? This happens here both: The word and the miraculous signs are there; and yet Moses creates nothing, he must have patience, and both goes back, he must not be heard, even despised.

3 But God comforted Moses by saying, "Do not be troubled by this, for it is I who hardened Pharaoh. So if God would command me his word, and give me power to do miraculous signs, and yet say that I should not do anything with them, should it not make me vain to be a preacher? And yet it must come to pass in this way. And let us still wonder how it comes about that people act and rage against the gospel in this way! It is a great sign and miracle of God that some still accept the gospel. But the fact that the world is full of sects and sectarian spirits is not to be wondered at; the world should even be hardened. For it is flesh and blood. If the gospel goes to your heart, thank God, for it is a great grace when God's word goes to your heart.

**V. 8-14 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, "Ask the LORD for me to take the frogs from me and from my people, and I will let the people sacrifice to the LORD. And Moses said, Have thou the honor, and tell me when I shall pray for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, that the frogs may be taken from me.**

**Frogs will be driven away from you and from your house, and will remain alone in the stream. He said, To morrow. And he said, As thou hast said, that thou mayest know that there is none like the LORD our God, so shall the frogs be taken from thee, and from thy house, and from thy servants, and from thy people, and shall be left alone in the river. So Moses and Aaron went from Pharaoh, and Moses cried unto the LORD for the frogs, as he had promised Pharaoh. And the LORD did as Moses had said, and the frogs died in the houses, in the courts, and in the fields. And they heaped them together, here a heap, and there a heap; and the land stank of them.**

Pharaoh was not a bad man, he had his princes, councillors and nobles, who caused a lot of trouble; item his magicians or philosophers and wise people. Egypt was a beautiful, glorious kingdom. Moses, on the other hand, was a poor beggar who came from the desert. And what are Moses and Aaron compared to the wise and mighty men of Egypt? Pharaoh still humbles himself against them, which is astonishing; in addition, he humbles himself so much that he wants to pray to God for him; he pretends to be very pious.

5 Moses accepts it as if Pharaoh were converted. For he oppresses and poses as if he fears the God that Moses preaches; he shows himself as if he recognizes the miraculous signs and accepts the word of God. And yet he is a bad boy, has in mind that he would like to kill all the children of Israel, even though he speaks kindly to Moses and Aaron, seeks their intercession, as if he were afraid of God, and as if he wanted to become pious. But he is not serious, he is a deadly enemy to them: if he could drown Moses and Aaron in a spoon, he would not take a rick to it. The eighth and twentieth Psalm, v. 3, also says: "The wicked and evil-doers speak kindly to their neighbor, but have evil in their hearts." This is the kind and nature of all hypocrites, which we must come to know. But our Lord God also knows it strangely, which is why the world errs. His purpose is to bind us to his word.

6. i have said above many times, and i say it



nor that one must separate from one another the lives of the saints and the word of God that they lead; as one otherwise separates heaven from earth. One cannot preach enough of this. I am speaking now of the good works of the holy people, as St. Peter's and Mary's, not of the work of the Lord Christ and the angels. For the devil can do nothing else but teach good works. And when we are dead, you will see how he will rage and rage against the gospel. Which neither you nor the preachers will see, even if they are wise. He always brings in works. Separate then works, or life, from words, lest ye be deceived from the word of God unto good works: for there is one lost. Therefore you say: I will not have works, except such works as are in the word of God. So shalt thou do unto him. For we are bound by the words that God speaks, which are to lead us to God. Work and profession must be, but the word of God must be more certain for us.

7 Christ hath done many works, such as I do not do. He walked on the sea [Matth. 14, 25], and made the blind see [Matth. 9, 29. Joh. 9, 6. 7]; but he did not command me to do the same. So he also left many things that he did not call me, as he did not take a wife. John the Baptist did not eat flesh, but honey [Marc. 1, 6]. Christ did not plow, nor did he ever do any trade. If any man said, What he hath left, we shall leave also: how shall that be? I would not give a farthing for it, even for the works of Christ. I will not follow, except the word be there. For I will sing with the 119th Psalm, v. 105: *Eloquia tua lucerna mea* ["your word is the lamp of my foot"]. Our Lord God is to speak and teach, but I am to do; that is, I am to do and keep good works, but he is the Master, he is to do through me.

(8) Moses has works here that are like what others do. If I raised a dead man to confirm the divine word, and another came and did the same, what would it be? Beaten to the ground. We do not want to do signs or anything else.

But here he has it both ways, and does it; and yet it is beaten down. For they have said, He cometh, and hath the word, and will do signs: but ours also have, and can do them. Thus it came to pass that Pharaoh was hardened, though he pretended to be righteous; but it is that no man should trust another, whether he be righteous or seem righteous.

(9) For the wicked are put to shame, and the desperate wicked often weep, and want to be pious, but it is only a pretense and not a seriousness; as Pharaoh often pretends, but the heart is far from it. For when the punishment is present, he is pious; when it is past, he goes on as before; he does not mend his ways because of his heart, but it is a forced devotion; just as we become pious in time of pestilence and theurge. But God wants the heart.

(10) I exhort you to keep the word of God pure, that I may lead you up without work. I know well what will be necessary. That you should do it for God, [for this] he will not let you bring it into your fist and preach it: 1) For by this I become the Son of God, not that I do this and leave that, but that Christ is my Lord.

(11) The devil is also hostile to the divine word, that he tries in all sorts of ways to find another hole. He does not mean the outward works and the fruits of the flesh, as fornication, theft, usury, though they are; but which the Holy Spirit recognizes and judges as fruits, as if his doing and preaching were directed upward to Christ. Without your work and deeds you become a Christian man. There you will be directed to Christ. There you will find figs and grapes. But they say, If thou shalt not do this or that, thou shalt be damned; and then they set before thee the holy scriptures. Then thou canst not save thyself from it,

1) Here the relation, as it seems to us, is completely senseless, therefore we have changed it. The Eisleben offers: "I know well what you want to do for God. Let (sic) him not bring it into your fist and preach it: These and these things shall you do? For" 2c. The meaning is: God does not let you preach that you should do works, so that you make a god out of them. For 2c.

You are trapped, because God's name is in your way, and you hear that Christ did it. How do you feel when you hear Christ called God? Then you are frightened.

12 Here know that Christ is presented to you in two ways. First, that he makes you the son of God, as he made Blösen God over Pharaoh. Now this is by his word, in that he proposes no work for thee to do, but he will be thine, and thou shalt be his; by his death and bloodshed he will make thee blessed.

No false apostle will preach this: No one can call Jesus Christ Lord except by the Holy Spirit [1 Cor. 12:3]. That Christ is our treasure, that is our seal. Know thou therefore first of all, that by Christ, without thy works, thou shalt come by his goodness. Oh how the devil is so hostile to preaching, and looks so askance at it, and will overthrow many of them who now think they have the gospel, the main preaching. He, Satan, wants to steal this sermon.

(14) It is not enough to say, Christ does it, therefore do it; but Christ is thine, and thou art his. This knot breaks the neck of Satan, so that the angels say in the cradle nights: "To you Christ the Savior is born", to you he is given [Luc. 2, 11.]. These words destroy and take away the devil's kingdom. Other works than iconoclasm, and others, do not harm the devil. Therefore you must first have Christ as your treasure and as the main sermon. Then you must follow his works, if you have his word. Then the highest and new commandment, namely, love, which he will not have you do before you have a new spirit, that is, you have his word and believe it. Then thou shalt not hear of him, how thou shalt break in twain an arm or a leg of a graven image, as the devil-may-care spirits preach.

**V. 16-19 And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thy rod, and smite the dust of the earth, that there may be lice throughout all the land of Egypt. So they did. And Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff, and smote the dust of the earth; and there were lice upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the land of Egypt.**

**Dust of the land became lice all over Egypt. The magicians also did so with their conjurations, that they might bring out lice; but they could not; and the lice were both on men and beasts. Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God. But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and hearkened not unto them: as the LORD had said.**

(15) This is the third plague that comes upon the kingdom of Egypt, to punish it with lice, if the Egyptians will become more devout and turn to God.

Moses must suffer for the sake of these signs, so that his appointment does not take place; for these magicians can also do works and imitate some of the signs, except for the third sign, where they are to make lice. There the lice are such delicious animals that the devil cannot imitate them with his tools, these Egyptian magicians or black artists; there he carries and raises the tail and the head in vain. Otherwise the magicians can imitate everything, but they cannot imitate lice. What a mockery it is to this proud spirit!

Whether they were mosquitoes or bugs is not known; the Hebrews call them lice, which stuck to people and cattle, as lice are wont to do. These little creatures, as I have said, cannot imitate them, most to their comfort, lest they be put to shame. As St. Paul [2 Tim. 3, 8. 9.] also says: Jambres and others resisted Mosi; just as the false heretics are now rebelling against the truth; but they will not lead it out, but their foolishness will be revealed. They confess here that it is God's finger and power, and are disgraced by it.

(18) But why did he not do it in the first sign, but he puts them to shame in the third sign? Know, then, that God is giving the sects and the mobs a little time, so that they may have a continuance. For if we succeeded soon and subdued them, we would not have cause to call upon God. Therefore, the wicked must increase and deceive others with their false teachings, as St. Paul [1 Cor. 11:19] also says: "Error must come, so that the elect may be proven right.

would." God causes their poison to fall among some, and to be assumed to have an appearance of wanting to suppress our thing all; but in its time they fall, and many have fallen to error in their time; but later they will not lead it out. For a time they increase, green and flourish; but after that they fall to the ground. Above the lice they must become ashamed. God gives them one or two signs, but they cannot perform the third sign.

19 Therefore, notice diligently and well that Satan cannot perform all kinds of miracles and wonders; just as here, out of the devil's deceit, the devil's artists Mosi perform some miracles, but not all, since they do not bring out lice with their conjuring. For although his power is great, it is not infinite, immeasurable, as God's power and might, but it has a goal and measure. Many things are impossible for the devil. He cannot bring the dead back to life, as Christ raised Lazarus from death [Joh. 11, 43. f.]. Nor can he make old, dead, barren women fertile 2c. The devil cannot do righteous miracles and wonders, but they are deceitful miracles.

20 But why does God forbid the devil and his scales to perform miracles? He wants to test and prove the godly by the miracles of false prophets, as it is written in the fifth book of Moses on the thirteenth, v. 1 ff: "If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a miracle, and the sign or miracle comes, of which he has told you, saying, 'Let us follow other gods whom you do not know and serve them,' you shall not obey the words of such a prophet or dreamer. For the Lord your God is trying you, that he may know whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul." That is why such miracles happen to Christians as a warning.

21. secondly, God inflicts this punishment on the world because of the contempt and disrespect of the divine word, as St. Paul testifies in 2 Thess. 2, 9-12, when he says: "The future of the Antichrist will be according to the work of Satan, with all sorts of

with lying powers, signs and wonders, with all kinds of seduction to unrighteousness, among those who will be lost, because they have not accepted the love of the truth, so that they would be saved. Therefore God will send them strong errors, that they may believe the lie, that all may be judged 1) who do not believe the truth, but delight in unrighteousness."

22. But they say that it is the finger of God in the third sign. They were truly learned men, that they thus speak of the finger of God. The prophets have also seen it. But what kind of speech is this, does God have fingers? The 19th Psalm, v. 2, says: "You have made the heavens, the work of your fingers." So, by the finger of God, the Lord Christ cast out devils. The finger of God is the Holy Spirit, so God Himself interprets it. For Matthew 2) [Cap. 12, 28.] says: "By the Spirit of GOD." Lucas [Cap. 11, 20.] calls it, "By the finger of GOD." Now if they themselves call it thus, it is right, and I have not interpreted it thus. But just as a man does everything with his fingers, and when they are cut off, nothing can be grasped, done, or made, so also the Holy Spirit is God's finger, which gives gifts and presents to men's hearts and directs everything, and God does everything through the Holy Spirit, that he may be the one who directs it.

23. So they should say: Until now we have also done signs; but there we can do nothing, all here is God's finger, Moses makes lice, with our great shame. They must confess that their signs are not from God's finger [Wis. 1:8]. They say: O! the man has the spirit, is full of the spirit, has God's finger; our spirit has only a semblance, it cannot penetrate, like Moses' spirit. That is, the Holy Spirit is the one who does everything.

(24) So also, if God preaches as much as He preaches and preaches through the law, or promises through the gospel, it does not work, it is nothing; it is like an arm without hand and finger. But if the Hei-

1) Eisleben's: thus.

2) In the Eisleben one it says here (erroneously) "Lucas" and in the following place "Matthäus".

The Holy Spirit comes and gives it into the heart, that is, when not only the mouth preaches but also the Holy Spirit gives into the heart, then man does everything.

025 Of this also we see here, that though Pharaoh see his masters become ashamed, yet he turneth not away, but waxeth more and more obstinate and vexed; as Solomon saith also Proverbs, chapter eighteen, v. 3: "When the wicked reigneth, there cometh contempt and reproach with scorn." They turn their backs on it all. So do ours; they think it is a transition, that it will be different 2c.

**V.20. 21. And the LORD said unto Moses, Arise in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, behold, he shall go unto the waters, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people, that they may serve me. If not, behold, I will bring all kinds of vermin upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and upon thy house; and all the houses of Egypt, and the field, and all that is therein, shall be filled with vermin. 2c.**

(26) This is the fourth plague, all kinds of evil worms and harmful animals, that is, all kinds of flies; so some have translated it. But our German is better, Ungeziefer. This plague is also to drive the Egyptians to repentance and correction, and to let the children of Israel go out of Egypt.

(27) Now such plagues came over Egypt alone, and not over the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel dwelt, which is a special miracle, and God wanted to prove His omnipotence and glory, that He was the God of Israel and spared His people, but could punish the Egyptians, as His people's enemies and adversaries, so that they alone honored, praised and glorified Him as the true, truthful God. Just as he would have brought all miracles and plagues upon Egypt so that the power of his strength and glory would be seen in the Egyptians and his name would be praised throughout the world. The Egyptians were to see by these plagues that he alone was God.

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## The ninth chapter.

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(1) In the eighth and last chapter we have seven plagues that came upon the land of Egypt. First, that the rivers of water became full of blood; then, how God sent over the land frogs, lice, worms, pestilence, glands or sores on the people, and hail; and have said that Moses almost added to all the plagues that Pharaoh's heart was hardened and hardened the longer. If he only gained a little air, then he began again to tyrannize. It happened to him as it is said in a common proverb: "When the sick man recovered, he never got worse. But when he was afflicted again, he pretended to be pious and deceived Moses ten times with words, and he did not take it seriously.

**V. 1-5. The LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD GOD of the Hebrews, "Let Pharaoh go in.**

**my people, that they may serve me. If you refuse and continue to endure them, behold, the hand of the LORD will be upon your cattle in the field, upon horses, upon donkeys, upon camels, upon oxen, upon sheep, with an almost severe pestilence. And the LORD will do a special thing between the cattle of the children of Israel and the cattle of the Egyptians, that nothing shall die of all that the children of Israel have. And the LORD appointed a time, saying, To morrow the LORD shall do this thing in the earth. 2c.**

This is the fifth plague, when the pestilence comes among the cattle. God has ordained this punishment to be inflicted on the wicked, Deut. 28:21, and the pestilence was to be a sermon of repentance to them, so that they would be deterred from sinning by this punishment. As David's kingdom, land and people were also afflicted with pestilence for three days, when David had counted and mustered his people.

[2 Sam. 24, 15], and God punishes David's tyranny with pestilence; as He punishes Pharaoh's tyranny with pestilence here.

**V. 6, 7: And the LORD did so in the morning, and all the cattle of Egypt died; but not one of the cattle of the children of Israel died. Pharaoh sent for them, and behold, not one of the cattle of Israel died. But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not let the people go.**

This is also a miracle that God makes a difference between the Egyptians and the Israelites, and this plague does not come upon the children of Israel, which otherwise goes upon the Egyptians, but as the holy scripture [Ps. 34, 22. ff.] says: The misfortune befalls the wicked alone. Therefore God protects and saves his faithful. Just as the children of Israel were free from other plagues with which God afflicted the Egyptians; in their land of Goshen, where the children of Israel dwelt within, there was no hail, there was no darkness, but light, and no firstborn was strangled. So God takes care of His Christians, so that even if land dies or other accidents happen in general, they do not have to harm them.

**Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Take your fists full of soot from the furnace. And Moses sprinkled it toward heaven before Pharaoh, and it dusted all the land of Egypt; and there arose swarms and glands, both of men and of cattle, throughout all the land of Egypt.**

This is now the sixth plague and punishment of God, that men and cattle get sores and glands in their bodies; which plague God also inflicts on all the wicked, Deut. 28:21, 27; so one plague and punishment after another goes on forever, as one bulge and wave of water drives another, until the end comes and Pharaoh is drowned with all Egypt in the Red Sea. And so God gives the wicked time and space for repentance and correction, and for his conversion, as St. Paul says in Rom. 2, 4: "The longsuffering of God admonishes us to repentance" 2c.

**V. 22 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Lift up your hand to heaven, and let it rain on all Egypt. 2c.**

5. the seventh plague follows on the Egyptians, as hail, with which plague God is also after Pharaoh and his Egyptians, wants to teach them morals, and to make the bad boys saintly. As in the prophet Haggai, Cap. 2, 18, the hail is called a rod and plague of God over the wicked, since God says: "I afflicted you with drought, burnt grain and hail in all your work, yet you did not turn to me, says the LORD" 2c. Further, the text says:

**V. 16 I have raised you up so that my power may appear in you and my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.**

We have often heard that God acts with us in such a way that one must grasp it, that it is a divine work, so that one does not remain proud against Him and think that free will can also do something. For this reason he leads his own down, so that all their wisdom, power, authority and wit may become too short and fall apart, and we must feel it in our work, when the oxen are standing on the hill, that we cannot help ourselves, but must despair and seek help from God alone. Again, God also elevates and exalts our adversaries so much that they become proud and think they have won the game and are standing in their fist. God gives them riches enough; item, wit, attachment, favor, wisdom, understanding and strength, against which they only beat our Lord God by a stone.

7 But God wants to say here: You have pressed my people under you, so that they are even gasping under you, and it seems that I could not help them; yet you shall let my people go, even though you do not intend to do it. Well, I have done it, and given thee this courage and defiance, which thou hast of thy kingdom and of thy wisdom, that thou art puffed up against me. But you do not know what I do. You have in mind that you will have great honor and a glorious name by oppressing my people, but I will be praised by bringing you down and reducing you to ashes.

8 For this reason our God is called a wonderful God, who rescues from sin and death, and from that which was lost, and brings to the ground all that was lost.

something before him, so that it may be said: This God knows how to help everyone. For he comforts and raises up those who despair, and he cannot suffer the hopeful. As St. Peter also says in his [first] epistle [Cap. 5, 5j: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

(9) Such things are not seen at first, why and how God does them, until they are accomplished. Pharaoh and his like, who are puffed up and hopeful, must be awakened, so that God may have something great by which to prove his wisdom and power, and to destroy them. As God still does; when He wanted to preach the Gospel through Christ His Son, John the Baptist and His dear apostles and reveal it to the world, He first pointed to the mighty and powerful empire as the Roman Empire and sent for the wisest and holiest people in Judaism.

(10) There was wit, art, strength, power, riches, and pleasure at the highest, and this could masterfully make the world proud, and when they looked at themselves according to their reason, how mighty they were, and how far their arm reached in the world, they went up in their mind and strutted in such a way that they did not even mention their own name to the city of Rome, because they first grabbed the beret and pulled it off. So they held this name as an idolum; therefore they also decided in the Roman council that it was a god, and they drew all the world's goods to themselves, were magnificent, mighty and rich, and in spite of this they despised God's word, accepted no sermon of repentance, punishment, admonition and warning, and were even obdurate, so that they saw nothing with their seeing eyes and heard nothing with their hearing ears, as Isaiah says, Cap. 6, 10. Now God made Rome like this, she did not exalt herself like this. But afterwards God says, as He did to Pharaoh, "I have given you this defiance, that the whole world may sing and say of it. Against this mighty monarchy, God had St. Peter, the Fisherman, St. Paul and other apostles preach, and hung them on this power of the Romans, just as He hangs Moses on King Egypt. There one would like to say: How is God so foolish? Why does he attack this great regiment with ar

men, miserable people? Reason says: What can a fisherman do? But God leads it through, even if it costs a lot of blood; there were many thousand martyrs who died freshly there, who were cut off as the heads of the cabbage.

(12) But this Roman empire is destroyed, that it is not known where it is now, only that the pope has persuaded us that the Roman emperor has it. But let him go and sit down there; the nest is destroyed, and the birds have flown away. In the same way, the Egyptian kingdom has also gone to the ground and has been swept aside.

13 Thus God honors His word by letting this kingdom perish; just as here He says to Pharaoh, "I will overthrow you, that it may be known that I am the LORD. Then Moses, in great weakness, goes against the great power of Pharaoh, and nevertheless overthrows him in the Red Sea. So foolishly our Lord God attacks him.

(14) Now this is said to us first of all for comfort, light and understanding in God's works, that you should know when you are in distress and anguish that God is the one who awakens it when the devil and death come against you. For thus says God: This devil, who wants to devour you, I have in my fist; his evil will and high courage is in my power and authority. I have thus sent it: You are my poor little worm [Isa. 41, 14.f and have my word in your heart, in which you believe; but I call to the devil to devour you. Then he gloats, and is angry, as if he would swallow you up in one bite; but you, on the other hand, are fainthearted, fearful and terrified; nor, if you gorge yourself on your faith, is God above death, the devil, the world, sin and hell, and above everything, so that the devil could not bend a hair on your head. But as a great fish snatcheth at a little worm that is hooked, and swalloweth it, and is put to shame; so shall the devil and the world, with their tyranny against Christians, be put to shame also.

15. God aroused the devil against Job and incited him 1) provoking the devil himself with

He said to Job, "Do you see my servant Job, how righteous and innocent he lives?" He said, "Here you have him; go and take him; you have everything, his body and his goods, in your hand; have control over the goods and the body; only spare his life. Now the devil goes and takes away all his goods and health, so that Job does not mean anything else but: Now I am dead, and thought that he would devour and eat him. But God has set a goal for him, and says: I am also here, you devil, you shall not devour him. Therefore Job became healthy again, rich and powerful, had children and goods again, and against the will of God the devil could not harm your Job and could not create anything.

16 Thus, even if we are overcome by the wrathful princes for the sake of the gospel, and are afflicted with sickness and death, the world quickly says, "The devil has done this; God is pious, he does not do it. Then God speaks against it: Dear one, do not take this honor away from me, I have truly done it, dear child, so that you may know me, otherwise you would not know me and would not call upon me [Eccl. 3:14]. For need teaches to pray and to call upon God.

(17) Therefore, you shall see, says God, how I can save you from sin, death, the power of the devil and hell, and also from all misfortune; for it is only for this purpose that my name, my honor, power and wisdom may be known. For if I did not send you more than you could overcome with your strength and power, and if I only let you go hungry until you buy food and drink for money and help yourself, then you would never remember me, you would not know my power.

18 If I let you live so that you overcome your enemies yourself, and no more hardship should come under your eyes than you could lead out with your reason and with your strength, then you would recognize yourself and not me, you would forget me, and you would exalt yourself above your wisdom. Therefore I will do so, that I alone may be known and honored, and will send you distress and calamity, in which no angel nor any creature shall help you,

than I alone. And then you will see how I am greater than you and can help more than men.

19 St. Paul to the Romans in the ninth chapter, v. 17, quotes this, that God boasts (and one should let him have this glory) that he sends us sickness and all misfortune and temptation. Although the devil and wicked men do it, yet he boasts that he has their courage and heart in his hand, and uses Satan and ungodly men to oppress and afflict his own; they must be his rods, so that he may prod his children. As is also the case here. Pharaoh is against God and God's enemy, so God is also his enemy, and he also oppresses and tortures the people of Israel. But God boasts here and says: "You would not have this power and courage if I did not give it to you. Pharaoh must be the ruthlessness of the children of Israel.

(20) Now this question is raised again: Whether God is the one who hardens men and forces them to evil and sin? Why does he condemn people? Reason concludes here: If God wanted to condemn sin, he would not be called to sin, or would not have created the unrighteous and godless. Now, reason always wants to court God, whether he is just and right, wants to measure God according to its laws and thoughts. God should act more carefully and not be so frightened, but do it in such and such a way, and thus present God with a law. But you must leave that out of your head if you want to speak of God, that you do not put a law or measure on God; for he is not a creature, he is immeasurable.

(21) A measure is set for man, I should do so and so; my life is finite, it can be grasped, and has a rule, measure, way and law [Wis. 11:22]. Since you also wanted to act with God in this way, 1) you were lacking God. For what is done with God according to law, measure and purpose does not apply. Reason cannot go higher than to think: God should do it this way and no other way, and soon judges thus,

1) Eislebensche: wolltest.

Says: Is it not good that one should be obdurate? And so she makes a measure for him; she thinks that God is like a man, that one judges of God as of men. So reason does not understand, and yet wants to be wise and judge from God [Matth. 11, 25. Ps. 51, 6.]. But God gives you laws, and takes none from you; he sets a goal for you, and you do not set it for him. Therefore it is not right for you to will it this way and to consider it right and good, but know that He wills it this way and gives it this way; His will is set above all laws. When he says, "I will have it so," it is above all laws, for he is an infinite God, and has power and authority.

22 But if you say, "Yes, I do not understand that it is good that he should be hardened. Yes, dear one, it is evil in your sight; do you think that you are God? God has no measure, law or goal (as I said), so he cannot do against it, he cannot sin against the law, because none is presented to him. Therefore everything he does is good [Gen. 1, 31].

(23) There is another question that flows from this: Does God cause sin? This is what makes me put God in a ring and circle, or in a jar, in which I want to keep him. He has prescribed for me how I should live and serve Him, so I think He should live in the same way. He gives out the law, but he does not take it up again. It belongs to no one but God alone to give law and teaching on how to live and be righteous. But God shall not ordain a law, how he may govern the world or men. You may do as you please, but what God does is right, for His will is not unjust or evil; He has no measure or law for enlightening the one or hardening the other. If I should measure God in this and judge according to my reason, then he is unjust and has much more sin than the devil, yes, he is more terrible and horrible than the devil. For he acts and deals with us violently, torments and tortures us, and has no regard for us.

(24) A man might become foolish about this if he did not take his reason captive and drive out of his head all such thoughts, relying only on the fact that God does not measure anyone or prescribe laws for him.

because God is even *exlex*,<sup>1)</sup> as they say. But one cannot persuade reason, much less can one persuade it, or tear from its eyes the hopeless, cursed brooding and researching in such high, incomprehensible things, since it always says: Quare? Cur? Why? Then the law is there. If God did this or that according to it, then it would be right. But with this measuring one deprives oneself of life, limb and our Lord God, and it is said: "Do it in the name of the devil. But every heart that can say: Dear God, do it as it pleases you, I am satisfied; it cannot go down, but the others must go down.

Therefore, St. Paul says to the Romans in chapter 9, v. 20: "Who are you that is right with God? You are a man, and you want to be right with God; where will you get it? You must have the law if you want to be right with God, namely, you must do so; and because it is not done, you have not complied with the law. How, do you also want to act with God in this way? That is not proper. You may deal with your neighbor in this way, he has the law, he and you should do this, not rob, steal, commit adultery 2c., but God wants to do as he pleases, and must do so, because his will is the law, it cannot be otherwise.

A man is called pious when he acts and lives according to the law. With God it is even reversed; a work is called good because God does it. My work is not good because I do it, but because it is done according to the law of God, in which it is prescribed to me what I should do. I must step out of my mind into something higher, namely into the law of God. God is not pious because He does this work, but because the work is right, good, holy and well-done, for He Himself does it; and thus goodness comes from God, and not from the work. God is the doer, and does not take goodness from works or laws. But we do not take goodness from doing good, 2) and from being respected by men, but that the law may be done right, it must be fulfilled by the Holy Spirit.

1) that is, exempt from the law.

2) spend - accomplish.



Then we also get the name that we are pious.

Our reason sees through a colored, red or blue glass, which it cannot do from the eyes; therefore everything it looks at must also be red, blue or green; it cannot interpret this Pharaoh well, that God drives to evil, and hardens or incites either to good or evil. God does well in this, and not wrong. But he who is driven does wrong, for he has God's commandment before him that he should not do so, and yet the devil drives him so that he acts and does so, and does not live as God would have him. God wants you to have His law for yourself; so the devil tempts you to act against the law. Would you say, 1) Is God's will contrary to itself? That is too high. God's will is there, but how it is done I am not to know.

I am to look down at what God wants me to do. Now He has revealed His will to me through the Law and the Gospel, and taught me what I should do; I should deal with this and not climb up and ask why God is doing this or that? Let such things stand. But when you have come to faith and true understanding, and have experienced the cross, you will understand.

Reason always begins to build on the top of the roof and not on the bottom. As many are found who have never heard Christ preached, they are rough and wild people, torturing 2) and cursing as if they were full of devils, seeking only first why God does this or that, coming up to the light with their shitty feet and blind reason, and measuring God by reason. But we should take before us the way that God gave to St. Paul [1 Tim. 6, 19], and lift up a foundation; the roof will then be found, let God with His secret counsel in peace, and do not climb up to the roof with your reason. He will not have thee so ascend, but cometh unto thee, and hath made thee a ladder, and a way, and a bridge, saying, I descend from heaven unto thee, and am made man.

1) Eislebensche: Wollest.

2) martern curse. "Marter" was a common curse word in those days, especially among the lansquenets.

in the body of the Virgin Mary, lie in the manger in Bethlehem, suffer and die for you; believe in me,- and dare on me, who was crucified for you. Matth. 9, 21. 22,

So I climb up to heaven, and there I will not climb up into the Godhead and ponder. One should preach about the Godhead only once in a year, so that one would know that in matters of blessedness one should start from below, that is, how Christ would come to us, that one would preach how this child, Christ, eats milk and butter, lies at his mother's breasts, and is to be found in Bethlehem, and there learn why Christ would come, what one has in him [Is. 7, 15. 1 Petr. 2, 2.]. If I wanted to say to God: Why do you do this? he answers: I know what is behind it. If we could leave off the hair, the devil would not come in with such and such questions, whether we are provided for salvation or not? Item, how Christ can be God and man? 2c.

Should one not rather preach about faith and love? Yes, they say, I have known this for a long time. But, dear one, do not go into such questions, you deal with the humanity of Christ, there you are sure that God has sent his Son into the flesh; let him be in it, look for him everywhere, he has lowered himself into the body of the Virgin Mary, and presented his humanity to us, there he wants you to know it, to look at it, and to practice it. "He is the way, the truth and the life" 2c. [John 14:6.] Nevertheless let us climb higher, and know how he hath provided this or that, this hardened, that not another. He who is prudent and wise, let him remain on this set course. He comes to us first, and we do not go up to heaven to meet him, but he casts the Son down into the flesh, and causes him to be born; then he leads him, and causes him to be slaughtered and crucified. This is the purpose to which we should look and aim.

32. how the Lord Christ gives a slap to the apostle Philippo, who also had strange thoughts of God, asked where God the heavenly Father was, what he was doing, if he was swallowing swallows in heaven? said [Joh. 14, 8.] to Christ: "Show us the Father, and it will be enough for us." Then the Lord Christ answered

stus and said, "Here is the Father, pointing to himself, saying, "He who sees me sees the Father also. Do you want to climb to God by another way to heaven? He says: Here, brother, "the Father is in me, and I in the Father" [John 14:10]. Keep your eyes fixed on me, through my humanity one comes to the Father, the Father closes himself into one humanity, and through my humanity the Father has presented himself to the whole world. So he attaches him to his humanity, and pulls him around from the erroneous thoughts.

For if I say, Christ, who was sent by the Father, died and redeemed me, a poor, condemned sinner, then I will soon come to the Father. But if I ask, Who told him to do it, know this: He did it gladly, and did it for himself out of pure love, grace, goodness and mercy. Then I find God the Father right, and He is all goodness and love, for we see His goodness in the Son [John 3:16, 16:15]. Therefore let this question go, and do not clamber up why he has done this or that in this way. So I must meet my thoughts that they fall to the ground. For I have another way which I must go and let these thoughts go. As the Lord Christ said to St. Philip, who also looked up there, "Here, Philip, he who sees me sees the Father also" [John 14:9].

(34) Thus the Lord Christ always sets his disciples' minds, hearts and eyes on himself, saying, "If you see me as the heavenly Father has sent me to preach to you, and die for your sake, then you have the heavenly Father's will and good pleasure. If then thou believest this, thou shalt be saved, and shalt not be troubled, but shalt live for ever in this faith. In this faith and with this heart you go, and if a man thus attaches himself and binds himself to the humanity of Christ, in which are all treasures and riches [Col. 2, 3.], then a sweet sermon is found, why God hardened Pharaoh, and how he dealt with the transgression. When I come to the Gospel, I thank God. For I have Christ, who died for me, who is Lord over all, and Father over all.

has given and bestowed him upon me from heaven. Therefore he also has the hearts of all enemies in his hand, I know this, and this also comforts me, that I can strengthen my faith and say: There is no need, Christ and the Father, whom I have, have everything in their fist and power [Rom. 8, 33. 34.].

35 We shall therefore save these sayings until the time of trouble, when we are in prison, and are threatened with the sword; saying, The sword shall not cut, except my heavenly Father have it. So I can use these words for the benefit of my blessedness when I am in suffering and temptation. For otherwise I will be angry with God, I will be blasphemous toward him 2c. I am too green to want to rise above. It is just as if I wanted to give a little child malmsey to drink, which belongs to big, strong people to drink. When I am old and tired of work, and drink malmsey, then it tastes good to me, and strengthens my life, otherwise a child should drink death from it. So God would never have said this saying if Moses had not been in distress, and in such distresses that seem as if they would never have an end. God wants to say: Moses, and you, the people of Israel, hold fast, there is no need, I have made it so.

(36) Therefore reason does not consider the time or the person, but in the time of distress and anguish these sayings were spoken. Thou wilt speak of them when thou sittest at the tavern and in the alehouse; when thou waitest there for thy wine and beer, and let the question of the provision be passed over. You are not yet the person, nor I, who should speak of it; it is too early for that. Say to them: Do you know what Christ is, how he was born, what he has done with his life and death? Ask them again, "Have you ever been in danger of death for the sake of the gospel? He says: No; then answer thou, What then dost thou inquire about that is not profitable to thee, neither is it commanded that thou shouldest know it? And why wilt thou know these great things, who hast never known any cross, affliction, or temptation, nor understood Christ?

(37) Thus I turn away them that ask and want to know much of the dispensation, saying, Lift not up yourselves too high, lest ye break your necks, and leap by leaps; but go ye first to Bethlehem, and seek the young child Christ in the manger, and see how the mother Mary hath dealt with the young child Christ, and how Christ died for you, and when he suffered for you, and what he hath done for you. Let me tell you about these things, and report, whoever you are, and I will answer you about the question of the provision.

38 Therefore, this is the summary of this chapter, that God is not to be measured, judged, or judged in His works, but He is not to be measured, judged, or judged in His works.

He shall measure and judge everything, and his will is his will. Let him do as he pleases. Where there is no law, there is neither sin nor injustice; but where sin and injustice are to be, there must be law first. Reason judges itself and all men according to the law, and also wants to respect God in this way; therefore it is lacking. He who cannot understand this, let him be silent and let others judge. God does not have a law; but as he wills, so it is willed, his will is his guide, measure and weight. I command you to use this saying when trouble comes, so that you may learn to recognize God and defy him, just as Moses did here.

# The tenth chapter.

**And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, whom I have hardened the heart of, and the heart of his servants, that I may perform these signs of mine among them, and that thou mayest shew in the ears of thy children, and of thy children's children, what I have wrought in Egypt, and how I have shewed my signs among them; that ye may know that I am the LORD.**

We have heard at the end of the ninth chapter how this saying is to be understood: "I will harden the heart of Pharaoh," 2c., namely, if we want to speak of God, that we should first of all begin at the bottom, and learn to recognize the way that is presented to us by God, not seek our own way, or make our own way by our own reason; otherwise the hindmost will come first, and the foremost at the back, and gain an unfortunate course [Ex. 33:23]. It did not happen in vain, nor is it a fool's game or a trick, that God let Christ, His Son, come into the flesh to appear to us men and enlighten us [Is. 43, 11. Joh. 12, 47.]. If it had not been highly necessary, he would have remained up in heaven 2c. We are so foolish and foolish that we leave the light, which he lit for us in his flesh.

If we are looking for something else, we become fools about it.

**So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says the LORD God the Hebrew: How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me, to let my people serve me? If thou refuse to leave my people, behold, tomorrow I will send locusts in every place, and they shall cover the land, and the land shall not be seen; and they shall eat up all that is left you, and be delivered from the hail; and they shall eat up all your green trees of the field; and they shall fill thy house, and all thy servants' houses, and all the houses of Egypt, which thy fathers saw not, nor thy fathers' fathers, when they were in the earth, unto this day. And he turned, and went out from Pharaoh. And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, How long shall we be afflicted with this? Let the people go, that they may serve the LORD their God. Do you want to know first that Egypt has perished? Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh, who said to them: Go to him, and serve the LORD your God. But what are they that**

**shall we go? And Moses said, We will go with young and old, with sons and daughters, with flocks and herds: for we have a feast of the LORD. And he said unto them: Awe yea, the LORD be with you. Shall I let you go, and your children with you? See if ye mean no evil? Not so, but go ye men, and serve the LORD: for this also have ye sought. And they were thrust out of Pharaoh 2c.**

In this tenth chapter we see how damish 1) the devil is and how reluctant he is to leave. Pharaoh the king has hitherto rejected all signs, and the more they come, the less he respects them. Although he humbles himself, asks for mercy, and desires that his sin be forgiven him, and is so pious that Moses must ask for him, and confesses that he is a sinner: still, when it comes to the work and the meeting, and it is to be as Moses said, that he lets the children of Israel go out of Egypt, then he says to Moses: Troll you 2c. For God let the devil rule over his heart, and made him do as only the devil pleased.

What God does not govern, the devil governs. When God reigns, He does it so that man becomes joyful and willing to do what pleases God, that is, He gives him the Holy Spirit in the heart. But if he does not pour out or give the Holy Spirit into the heart, the devil reigns, and gives man according to all his will. As St. Paul also says to Timothy [2 Ep. 2, 26] that the wicked are captives of the devil to do according to all his will. He has captured them in such a way that whatever these people do, they do for the service of their god, the devil. For he has captured them and ensnared them to do his will. They go about with desire, love and great earnestness to do what he tells them to do. Therefore God has hardened them and removed his hand and given them to the devil.

4 This is how it is with this king, he pretends to improve himself, but it is hypocrisy and a sham; if the Holy One does it, he will not be able to do it.

1) daemic - stupid, foolish, sleepy, slow, clumsy. - Erlanger: "Danish".

If the Holy Spirit does not do and drive, this hypocrisy will not last long. First he allowed the Jews to go out of Egypt, but he did not keep it for them. Now when the locusts came, he would let only the men go. But Moses saith, They shall go forth all, both men and women, young and old, great and small. Then Pharaoh says: Awe yes, God honor you. What a proud answer the donkey's head gives, says: The Lord be with you. As if he wanted to say: God honor you, God honor you, dear companions, do you want to go out there? Now I see what you have in mind; you could well do it and leave your wife and children here; I would like you to deprive me of it; yes, I would order it for you and give it to you.

5. that is put in the text for the eighth plague, one must call meanwhile thus. Our people call them caterpillars, and they may be somewhat like our locusts, having long feet and hopping, but they may be somewhat larger. They are also called grasshoppers, a little animal that one used to eat, clean and healthy; just as John the Baptist ate grasshoppers [Matth. 3, 4]. It used to eat away everything that grows on the trees and in the field that was green, as our caterpillars still do in our country. But we do not have such locusts now.

(6) Now, just as some countries have their own advantages, so they also have their own plagues. Here they have beer and no wine, for wine is found elsewhere. So they also had this plague with the arphaphagi 2) in Egypt, that the locusts ate up everything, and came in heaps, and swung themselves out of the air, as if a cloud were falling. Not one, two, or three flew along, but fell in with a great swarm, and immediately covered the sun, and made the air dark; fell along like a snow that covers everything. So this bird is not unknown to Egyptians, just as caterpillars are not unknown to us;

2) This word: "Arphaphagel" is perhaps a composite of "Arbe" and "Hargol" [3 Mos. 11, 22].

We know them well, only that often one year more caterpillars come than the other. So this bird was also well known to the Egyptians. But the fact that they come here with such a large number of caterpillars was strange to them and a particular nuisance; nor did they ignore it.

007 These locusts they call death: for Pharaoh saith, Ask the LORD your God, that he take away this death from me. For these locusts did such damage in the land to the fruits, devouring all herbs and plants, that there followed a great famine and hunger; they spoiled and devoured all the fruits of the land, so that the people died of hunger.

This eighth sign or plague with the locusts also goes away, and nothing comes of it, since they should have recognized God's wrath, disgrace and punishment against the disobedient man and refrained from sins. Just as God punishes man's sins with locusts, Deut. 28:38: "You will carry out much seed into the field and gather little, for the locusts will eat it up.

**The Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, so that the land of Egypt may become dark enough to be grasped. And Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven. And there was darkness throughout all the land of Egypt three days, so that no man saw another, nor arose from the place where he was within three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.**

Now the ninth plague follows. There come such thick darknesses that one would like to grasp them, as we Germans use to speak. God has ordained such a plague of darkness for the punishment of all the wicked who disobey God's word, Deut. 28, 29. And all wicked tyrants and heretics are also spiritually blind. Then Pharaoh no longer asks that the plagues cease, but he says straightway, "Let them go away. But when the light comes again into the land, Pharaoh thinks, Alas, ye knaves, it shall be jesting, and saith unto Moses, Troll thee from mine eyes. Moses saith, Yea, I will do as thou hast said, I will no more appear before thine eyes.

Eyes come. I have prayed for you and performed signs before you, but it is of no avail. So we have heard of nine signs or plagues.

010 Now this is a marvelous miracle and wonder of God, that there is light in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel dwell. As otherwise the other plagues that came upon the Egyptians did not come upon the Israelites. For God is present with His people, so they also have God's word, which is the true light. In whichever place it is preached, there is true light; but if the word of God is lost or despised, there is palpable darkness. That is why the 119th Psalm, v. 105, says: "Let your word be a lamp to my feet. And St. Peter in his [second] epistle [Cap. 1, 19] also calls the divine word a light that shines in the darkness.

Now the last plague is still behind. But we have heard so far how God has set up a mirror fencing, and has ordered Pharaoh through Moses that his people should travel for three days, 1) and serve their God. He does not say that they are to leave the land altogether and that he will lead them to another land, as Pharaoh smells this roast. But why does God not say explicitly: "We will leave for a short time and go to another land"? Moses alone says: "We want to go into the desert, God has called us to a feast; and yet the matter is final, that they want to go to another land, and so Moses may soon lie with them. Is it now going to make a monkey play in front of the noses? Or did he not trust in our Lord God? How if he had said that they would go to another country, and had kept silent about the service? How then all these things vexed Pharaoh greatly.

(12) Know that it is not necessary to tell the devil what God has in mind and what He intends to do. It is true that God wanted the people to go into the wilderness for three days, but he did not say why. Nor is it necessary for him to say, "Go into the wilderness for three days, and then go on," or what God wants to do next. Therefore

1) Eisleben's: to be pure.

Moses did not lie here, and even if he had lied, Pharaoh would have been justified. Just as David [1 Sam. 21:2] lied before Abimelech the priest when he demanded the shewblood from him, pretending that he was traveling on the business of King Saul. For Pharaoh rather deceives and lies to Mosiah; and if Moses had lied, it would have been without danger, for he does Pharaoh no harm.

(13) It is not a lie if one pretends otherwise than it is in himself; but if one pretends otherwise than it is, and deceit is there, that is lying. God has often imagined differently, and yet does not lie. Just as parents often act differently towards their children; or if I am angry with my brothers in the monastery because of their sin, and yet I have love in my heart 2c. Thus, the saints of God have often acted differently from what they had in mind, but they have done no harm, but only wanted to promote their own. So Mosi is not concerned with the service of God, but that he should come out of the country, and Pharaoh is not harmed by this.

**v.27-29. But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he would not let them. And Pharaoh said unto him, Depart from me, and take heed that thou come no more before mine eyes. For in the day that thou comest before mine eyes thou shalt surely die. And Moses said, As thou hast said, I will come no more before thine eyes.**

(14) This is the end, and Moses has preached and fulfilled his word; the command given to him by God to preach to Pharaoh the king is over. Now it is necessary for God to work there and help when men can no longer help. The power of Pharaoh is too great and strong, Moses must now say that he can no longer, but: Dear GOtt, you do it. This has been an ugly, annoying, unfunny sermon, with which de^^ should not be done; but it should be done because of

that God would have cause to overthrow Pharaoh and reveal His divine glory in the world.

(15) So let all preachers also do their part, and command the eventum to our Lord GOD. Moses gives it and also commands our Lord GOD into his hand, that Pharaoh bequeaths to him, that he should no longer come before him, pushes him away, yes, he pushes GOD himself and his word away. Now God and Pharaoh run into each other. Moses, he is weak, but GOtt will now become strong.

(16) When the world has been preached to long enough with all diligence and faithfulness, and the word of God ceases, then it is not far to the point that the world will be visited with punishment by God and that the devil will have the upper hand and everything will be destroyed. For when Noah stopped preaching and went into the ark, the flood came [Gen. 7, 10]. Item, when Lot no longer preached to Sodom and Gomorrah, but was carried out by the angels to Zoar, then came fire, brimstone and pitch, and destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah [Gen. 19, 24]. And so it is here in this kingdom of Egypt; when Moses' preaching is ended, and Pharaoh is visited, God will have mercy on him whom he shall have mercy on. For soon after all the first births in Egypt are slain, and Pharaoh must be drowned in the Red Sea with all the crew of the Egyptians.

(17) The same thing happened to the Jewish people. When the prophets, and after them John the Baptist, Christ the Son of God, and the dear apostles no longer preached and visited, the Assyrians, Babylonians, and later the Romans came and threw everything into a heap. For thus saith the Lord Christ [Matt. 10:14, 15], Whosoever receiveth you not, and heareth not your word, depart out of your house, and out of the same city, and beat the dust from off your feet. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the 1) land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that same city."

1) Eislebensche: dem.

# The eleventh chapter.

**V.1-3. And the LORD said unto Moses, I will bring another plague upon Pharaoh and Egypt, and after that he shall send you away, and shall not only send all things away, but shall also send you away. Now therefore say before the people, that every man require of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, vessels of silver and of gold: for the LORD will give grace unto the people in the sight of Egypt. And Moses was a very great man in the land of Egypt before the servants of Pharaoh, and before the people.**

(1) In this chapter God is threatening to inflict another punishment on Pharaoh and the Egyptians, which is to be the tenth and last punishment, namely, that all the firstborn shall be slain. And thus says God: He will make it so that Pharaoh will be glad to send you out and let the people go, yes, he will drive them by force himself, so that they will go out. Now Moses can do no more. For until now Pharaoh has despised Moses' word, preaching and urging, and has not wanted to follow, so God says: "I will do it myself, what you cannot do to Moses; I can do it well [Ps. 12:6]. And now Pharaoh has preached enough, and this chapter belongs to the previous one, since Moses says: "Let it be, I will no longer come before your eyes; but I will leave this for you to do last: If I cease to preach, another shall come after me, and he shall do better, and shall smite all the firstborn; and then shalt thou give me leave.

2 Here one would like to ask whether the saints are also angry? Moses herewith gives the country and the king Pharaoni the valet and the leave that he does not want to ask for the king anymore, but considered him a hardened and hardened man. As St. Paul [Titus 3:10, 11] also commanded, that after one or two admonitions, one should let such a one go, and avoid him, as one who is given over to the devil. Moses also lives according to this here, and speaks thus:

I will also let it go and preach to you no more; soon the tenth plague will come, and all the firstborn will be struck down, and you will be glad that you let me and the people go. So he has renounced all friendship, prayer and support for him, his whole kingdom and his people.

3 And God commanded Moshi and the people of Israel that they should not go forth empty, but that they should borrow every man of his neighbor's vessels of gold and silver, because they had served the Egyptians with great toil and labor many and long years, and had been slain without reward or recompense, and many of their children had been slain; they had been oppressed and constrained.

4 Now God also makes them find favor with the Egyptians. Otherwise someone would say: How is it possible, because the Egyptians are so hostile to the Hebrews, that they should borrow and lend them their silverware? Yes, says God, I will bring it about; I will give the Egyptians favor against the Hebrews, and they will do it gladly.

005 The children of Israel were sojourners in the land; and when they asked of the citizens for silver vessels, and said: Tomorrow we have feast, lend us your silver chains, or silver bowls and cups, they did so, and believed them. Some took pity on them, and perhaps the common man was also favorable to them, saw their misery and need. They will not all have been more wicked than the king and the sovereign with his servants. For it is a synecdoche to say that the people are either wicked or pious, that is, half of them. For this is the custom and manner of the holy scriptures, to speak thus.

(6) So God gave grace to the people to bring the cups and silverware of the Egyptians to themselves for the Paschal feast, and in the evening, when they have taken away the ornaments, they go out and take them all with them. What will they say here? Did they not steal these things and take them unjustly?

that they borrow the silverware from the Egyptians in good faith and trust, and yet they steal it? The text says: God told them to borrow the silverware. For God could have made it possible for the Israelites to take the silverware from the Egyptians by force, but He did not do it, for He wants to lead His people in humility and under the cross. It can be seen and seems as if they did it secretly, but it was still God's command.

Therefore, it is not a sin. For what God calls is right. If I or you had done it, it would be wrong, but because he names it and gives it, it is right and just. For the goods of Egypt are God's. He says, "I have given it to them; if I am commanded to take it from them, it is right; who will judge me to do wrong? But if it were done without my command, it would be wrong. But I do it publicly, and can evidently take it all away; for it is all mine, I do with it as I will [Ps. 50:10.

Ps. 24, 1. ff. 1 Cor. 4, 7.] Therefore, the word of God and the commandment of God are here and have been done.

**And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, I will go out at midnight into the land of Egypt; and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne unto the firstborn of the maid that is behind the mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle 2c.**

8th The last and tenth plague is this, that God smites all the firstborn, from the chief to the maidservant or the least maidservant's son. For in Egypt all served, man and woman were called servants and maidservants; they were poor people who all served. Moses said, "There shall not be a dead man in any house, nor shall there be a dead man in any house.

(9) But before this plague, that the firstborn was slain, Moses describes in the following twelfth chapter the paschal feast which God has appointed for the Israelites.

# The twelfth chapter.

**And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, This moon shall be the first moon with you, and from it ye shall take the moons of the year. Tell all the congregation of Israel, saying, On the tenth day of this moon take every man a sheep, where there is a father of a house, one sheep for each house. And if there be not enough of them in one house for one sheep, then he shall take it, and his neighbor that is next unto his house, until there be so many of them that they may eat up the sheep. But you shall take one such sheep, if there be no defect in it, a male, and a year old; of the lambs and goats you shall take it.**

1. we have acted through the eleven chapters so far, how Moses aligns his ministry before

the king Pharaoh, and have come with the interpretation up to the last plague. Now, in the 12th and 13th chapters, there will follow some laws that God gives before He executes the tenth plague. For for the tenth punishment God is threatening to put to death all the firstborn, from the king's son to the least maid's son. But before this is done, he gives a commandment how the children of Israel are to eat the paschal lamb, as they did the night before, before they go out in the morning. They were to borrow the silverware from their neighbors and wait in Egypt until the firstborn were killed, and then they were to go out and feast. Therefore they knew how they should go out that night, and gives them the commandment of the passover lamb. Because they ate the paschal lamb, God gave them the commandment of the paschal lamb.

1) Eislebensche: yes.



All the firstborn were put to death. So God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt in the month of Abib, that is, in April. 1)

(2) So far we have heard of nine signs that Moses did against Pharaoh, and finally, how God would slay the firstborn. And here Moses teaches two things: first, how to keep the paschal feast; then, how to sacrifice the firstborn. They were to keep the paschal feast because they had gone out of the kingdom of Egypt at that time; but they were to sacrifice the firstborn because God had slain the firstborn of the Egyptians. We will hear more about this in his time.

(3) But lest it be thought as if Moses had given such a law to all men here, we must know that this history is not given to us as an example of discipleship; we must not slay the paschal lamb, nor sacrifice the firstborn. For Moses was not given to us, but only to the Jewish people as a teacher. It is very important that we know this, because if we were to keep Moses in all the commandments, we would also have to be circumcised, and would not be allowed to accept baptism, and would also have to eat the paschal lamb. But you have seen and heard that Moses was not given to the whole world as a teacher, as the Lord Christ was sent to be, but Moses was appointed as a prophet, leader and commander of the people, who were called Abraham's seed, or Abraham's flesh and blood.

For above [Gen. 12:7, 26, 3, 28, 13] ye have heard how God spake unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and promised them that he would give unto their seed the promised land. This story and these words did not go over the whole world, but remained and were only recorded in the cord and tribe of Abraham. Therefore Moses did not allow himself to be driven further, nor to be ordered, but only to this people, as the children of Israel, to whom he told how they should behave toward God and also live on earth toward man, and did all of this by God's command and decree, not by God's command and decree.

longer than until the time promised to Abraha [Gen. 22:18], that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, that is, until the coming of the Lord Christ.

005 This I say, because I would that ye had a sincere, sure, subtle, discerning understanding between Moses and the Lord Christ. Item, even for the sake of the Jews, who want Moses to rule over the whole world, and his laws to be kept by everyone, who do not look at the text correctly, nor consider that Moses was not given to us as a savior, but he has his church, and he is abbot and prior in his monastery.

(6) But the seed that was promised to Abraham (when it was said, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed") was another man than Moses. Of him it is said, And there shall be a seed, that not only thy seed, thy flesh and thy blood, but all that is upon the earth, shall be blessed. As if to say: Your flesh and blood, and this seed, I will rule and keep for my people. But when the right people come, the true seed, there shall go forth such a preaching, that all the Gentiles under thy heaven shall be blessed, that he may be a father to all the believing Gentiles under the sun.

7 Moses concerns us so much that we only look at his prophecies and examples, as how Abraham believed and how he received the promise of Christ, your blessed Seed. He cannot serve me more, nor Moses more, than to set before us examples of faith, and to describe the prophecies of Christ, and to instruct how man should live inwardly and outwardly, spiritually and worldly. Therefore it does not follow that one should pretend: Moses said to be circumcised; item, Abraham was circumcised; item, Noah made a box in which he went before the flood; therefore we should do the same. This is also God's word. Let us look to the promise made by Moses, that in Abraham's seed all the families of the earth would be blessed.

1) Here is in the Eislebenscken edition the remark: Allhie has v. Mart. Luther read through the 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th chapters in the pulpit.

God gave to every age its teacher, but at the same time that this preaching went forth, that all the Gentiles should be blessed by the preaching of the Blessed Seed, he would send and give a doctor, not Moses, but Christ the Lord himself, who was to be Abraham's son and his seed. Then Isaiah, Jeremiah, Moses and other prophets are cut off; they are no longer valid, and Christ alone is to preach; not just in one corner, but in the whole world; for he is to be the Lord of all, and is not to preach for himself alone, but also through his appointed servants.

(9) Therefore Moses alone was given in the tribe of Abrahah; as far as Abraham's flesh and blood go, Mosiah must be obeyed and listened to until the promise made to the patriarch Abraham comes. For this reason he was born long after Abraham, because God promised Abraham the Messiah long before [Gal. 3, 16]. Abraham knew nothing of Moses, the promise was made long before, so that no one would boast that he was such, and Moses himself had to confess that he was not, as he says in the fifth book, chapter 18, v. 18: "God will raise up another prophet for you from among your brethren, and he will put his word in his mouth, and you shall hear him."

(10) After Moses died, there was no one like Moses [Deut. 34:10], because the one who would come from Abraham's seed would be much higher and greater than Moses. Therefore Mosi's seed is not promised to Abrahah; this cannot be denied. For Moses' teaching has not gone over the whole world, but has remained and gone in its circle. Another seed of Abrahah should come, which should go over the whole world, and bless all generations. That is not you, Moses. After that, his sermon should sound different from yours, dear Moses. This is what God prophesied and proclaimed many years before, that the Messiah would preach blessing and grace to all the earth, namely, that through Christ we would be saved; item, that through Christ all things would be accomplished,

and that God's mercy and grace be preached to us through Christ alone.

(11) The first book of Moses is a main saying of Christ, and one sermon from him is more valid than a hundred sermons or sayings in Moses. But God's word is not considered and respected as wonderful as it is. It is one short word, which is said of Christ: "In your seed all generations on earth shall be blessed"; that is, all that will preach of grace will come from the Lord Christ, and will testify to the seed of Abrahah. Moses preached differently, and God spoke to Moses with many words; but there was another Lord than Moses, whom the Jews alone drew to themselves, but this teacher, promised to Abrahah, we Gentiles should also draw to ourselves [John 10:16, 17]. For he preaches blessing, and not the law; for he was to take away the law, death, the devil, and all things. This is given to the Christians.

(12) We have many prophecies of Christ in Moses, which we should draw and take from them, so that we may know how to base our faith on them. The teacher, Moses, gives testimony of Christ, and he is therefore sent by God, and should also be read diligently for this reason. After that, Moses' books contain fine examples of how God led His people through the Word and in faith, and how He still wants to govern and lead us in the same way. Moses is therefore a useful and good teacher.

013 But if any man shall call upon Moses, and say, He giveth circumcision, therefore thou must be circumcised, then thou shalt answer, O thou, John Grobianus, Moses is not my master and teacher, he shall not teach me to be saved by the law; I have much better teacher, even the Lord Christ, which saith [Matt. 11:29], Take grace and mercy from me.

(14) Moses, as a preacher of the law, saith, Do this, do that. For this is the preaching of the law, which shall now come to an end; and if they would hang Moses and his law upon our necks, then we shall surely become enemies to Moses. Therefore let us take Moses as a lawgiver, or else let us keep the law.

to our dear Lord Christ Jesus. Moses is finished, he has done enough with his ministry.

(15) Then I can use Moses' ministry to write beautiful, glorious examples and legends of God's beloved saints, how they heard God's word, had and practiced faith and love and all virtue; all of which is finely found in Moses. But this is much more comforting and lovely, that he sets beautiful sayings of the Lord Christ, how he is our Savior.

(16) These are two reasons why one should read Moses diligently; first, that one finds therein glorious examples of the ancient fathers and patriarchs, who had God's word, and also let their faith and love shine and be seen. Item, one also sees how God punished the wicked and ungodly, as Sodoma and Gomorrah. Secondly, that he also prophesies and prophecies about Christ. In these two pieces Moses shall be my teacher and preacher.

(17) But how he rules the Jews, that they should eat this and drink that, item, what clothes they should wear, how they should dress, that is none of my business. I want to have two parts of Moses, as prophecies of Christ and examples of a godly life, and not laws or commandments. As for the prophecies and examples Moses describes, he still stands; but what he commands and commands to do according to the manner and custom of the law, it is over with Moses and no longer applies, just as it is over with the Jewish people, and also had an end with the priesthood at the time of the Lord Christ.

18 For all this should not last longer than until the other teacher would come, who would bring another teaching; as the other Psalm, v. 7, says: "he should preach of such a way: You are my son, today I have begotten you" 2c. The same teacher is to cross out and lead in the mouth, which otherwise Moses had in the pen. Let us therefore accept Moses as a witness of Christ, and let us follow his examples, so that we may take from them an example and mirror of Christian faith and conduct, and Moses as a lawgiver is of no concern to us.

19 Let us now hear how to do this.

The first thing we hear is how the children of Israel were to eat the paschal lamb, and what examples we have of this. We hear how at this time God instituted the Paschal feast for the children of Israel and commanded them to eat the Paschal lamb in the flesh, and that night He led them out of Egypt into the wilderness and redeemed them from the house of Egypt.

(20) But I have said how Moses should be read and understood, that we should take from it in these things examples of the divine works, how he dealt with his people, and that we should not make a law of it, as if we had now to eat the paschal lamb. For here Mosi's office is seen, that he should govern this people of the children of Israel. But much further goes the word, so Abraha was promised, that in his seed all generations on earth should be blessed; in which word also we are understood. And what is said of Christ in Moses also concerns us; we must accept the blessing, that is, the preaching of the gospel. But we are not to accept the law of Moses any further than that it may set before us examples of life and strengthen our faith, so that just as God dealt with them, so may he also do to us.

**V. 2. This moon shall be the first moon with you.**

The Jews had this fine custom of counting the year by the moons; we do the opposite. They call the new moon when the light comes on, as the peasants and the common man speak of it in the calendar, when the moon comes on, is new, or when it is half, or even full. And the Jews have considered the first moon of the year to be Abib, which with us is April, when all things begin to be new; as, in Lent, when the grass and the trees put forth; and this they call in Hebrew the New Year's Moon. Although there is nothing in it where you start. But they were so connected in the law that they had to begin the year with the moon. So now their first moon and yearday was with March, or when our April begins, after which the new moon begins, at the time when it becomes green, at Lent.

**V. 3. Tell all the congregation of Israel, saying, On the tenth day of this month take every man a sheep, where there is a father of the house, every man a sheep in one house.**

22. they shall count ten days from the new moon, that is, when the first quarter of the moon was gone; in the same month every householder was to take a sheep to a house 2c. The Jews had a house fuller than ours; the men took many wives, and the wives used many maids, and the maids were also married, and the maids' children were with the women's children, so that a house was like a little kingdom of its own, or like a city, in which it teemed and swarmed with children and people; as they still do where they live.

(23) The sheep or lamb should have no change, not that it is only white, but that it is not wounded, not shabby and otherwise defective, nor has a leg broken, but is whole and healthy; which is well translated. So it should also be a little man. The Latin text has erred so much here that they have also made a responsory of it.

024 Neither was the whole congregation to offer one lamb, but every householder, as far as Israel dwelt, was to have his lamb; and when he could not kill it alone, beside his household, he was to take his neighbor to it, that this little paschal lamb might be eaten that night.

25 And should take it from the herd. Where else would they take it? They were hard-pressed to raise any sheep for the paschal lamb in the house, but they had to go to the herd and take the lamb out at the proper time. So on the tenth day they separated it and put it in the house and kept it there for four days. Thus says God: Every man shall kill and sacrifice his sheep, which is one thing. For all that they sacrificed they slaughtered. Therefore in the Hebrew language these words are always used one for the other. As Paul says to the Romans in the twelfth chapter, v. 1: "Sacrifice your bodies, that is, slaughter them.

kill. So Isaac was sacrificed, that is, his life was to be taken, his neck was to be held out, he was to be killed, slaughtered and sacrificed.

Thus God ordained the feast to begin on the evening of the fourteenth day, so that on the fifteenth day of the first moon it would be the right Easter Day. This is the law, therefore it happened without a doubt that the true, righteous, lovely and gracious little paschal lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ, rode into Jerusalem on Palm Day, preached in the temple for four days, then ate the little paschal lamb with his dear disciples; was soon after caught in the Garden of Olives, mocked, scourged, scourged, crowned with thorns, condemned to death, crucified, and killed, and thus was truly sacrificed. This was not done by laying him on an altar and slaughtering him on it, but he was sacrificed on the cross and died on it.

027 So every man in his house was to slay a lamb, (as the neck of a lamb is usually cut off,) and to roast it, as ye shall hear.

28 This eating of the paschal lamb is now due to the Lord Christ, with whom it all coincides so amusingly that it is a miracle. Otherwise it does not concern us much, how the Jews have eaten the paschal lamb. They had to sprinkle the posts with the blood of the lamb, using a little mop, as the prophet David mentions in the 51st Psalm, v. 9, where he says: Sprinkle me, Lord, with mop; and every house had to be thus smeared on the fourteenth day of the same month. After that they had to eat wafers with the roasted lamb and have salts or bitter lactuces with the meat. Item, they had to stand girded, as those who were ready to leave, who wanted to troll and go away for the night, as those who were ready to go out of the country at any hour, or who wanted to be out and travel away.

29. He did not want to prepare such a meal, so that people would eat and drink to their fill, but so that they would be strong and fresh (Rom. 13:13). He did not want to prepare a delicious meal, but it should be a sign and meaning, so that God would practice and keep them in true worship,

so that they would not serve the pagan idols. For it is called the Passover, the paschal lamb, or the paschal day, as it is found in the Evangelist Luke [Cap. 22, 1. f.], the day on which the paschal lamb was sacrificed, that is, the lamb was eaten, which had to be eaten on Easter. The fourteenth day was called the first day of sweet bread.

(30) But why is the paschal lamb called a passage, or a transition, and the feast also called a passage? The name came from the fact that on that night God went through all of Egypt and slew all the firstborn. The murder was done by God in the same night.

(31) Now these are the ceremonies, manners, 1) customs, and practices that were kept about the paschal lamb, that they had to stay at home that night and shut the doors, and not let it be known that they were at home; they had to eat in one house, and not leave anything over, eat it all out or burn it. Item, do not break a leg on him. No stranger, or bought, nor housemate, nor hireling, was not to eat of it. That was the way of the Jews, so they had to eat the Easter lamb. If a guest lay in the inn, or a foreign countryman, who was not a native, he was not allowed to eat, but only the host, his wife, sons, daughters, servants and maids, because God had given it to his people. But whoever was a purchased servant had to be circumcised, and then he could also eat from the paschal lamb.

(32) Thus it was written and ordained, that they should eat the little paschal lamb at home, and that nothing should be left over, and that nothing should be broken. Only the Jews were burdened with this law of theirs, which is none of our business; nor was it to remain forever, but only until Christ came.

(33) This shall be an everlasting way. Eternal the Jews do not call everything that has no end, but eternal they call that lasts for and for.

34) On the fourteenth day at evening they began to eat sweet bread, and to eat until the one and twentieth day of the same moon. So we see that the Easter feast is eight days long.

Days granted, and a whole week stood. But it did not always begin on the Sabbath, but sometimes on Monday, sometimes also on Wednesday, after the moon had risen and run; just as our Christmas Day often falls in this way. Also, when we keep Easter Day, we do not count it from the fourteenth day, because it is often kept over eight days later, as are the Pentecosts. But it is not commanded us, and therefore we are not heathens, though we do not keep it so. For Christians always have Easter Day, and their paschal lamb lasts forever.

(35) Nevertheless it has been kept in the Christian church, as the Jews have left it, even as other customs have been kept more than that women have six weeks after childbirth. However, it is kept so far away that we are not allowed to make a commandment out of it, or that it binds our conscience, or that we have to do it. For we do not keep time as the Jews do, counting by the moon; but when it comes, Easter Day, we celebrate it. However, we always keep it on a Sunday, be it on the moon, be it in the beginning, middle or end, because of which the Jews reproach us. But there is nothing in it. The Jews' feast always begins in the evening, as it is written in Genesis 1:5: "Then the evening and the morning became the first day," and so on. If the day had an end with them, then the following day began. As also with us the following night is the beginning of the following day. The night with the complete day was counted for one day, and the astronomers or (as they are commonly called) stargazers still call this diem naturalem. This has been the festival of the Jews and their custom.

(36) We should understand this history, so that we may see what God had in mind at that time. This law is commanded to them by God, just as the command about unleavened bread, which was also given by our Lord God. After that, Moses went and presented it to them.

37) Now after they began the feast and ate the paschal lamb, God came in the middle of the night, when the sleep was gone.

1) "Weise" is missing in the Erlanger.

The most sweetest and best, and slew all the firstborn in Egypt.

(38) This has been a terrible battle, so miserable in appearance, that God has suddenly delivered in the middle of the night and killed the firstborn, so that there is a great cry and lamentation that one is found dead here and the other dead there. And in one house many firstborn sons will have been found dead, when many members of the household were sitting inside, and they will have thought that the land was full of devils. Well, God did so at that time, he used like a good angel or an evil devil. Just as when a fire rises in our country, everyone is frightened; but what kind of fright should there be when such a plague comes over a whole country, as all the firstborn are slain here?

039 But God hath so afflicted Pharaoh that he cometh out by night, and driveth the children of Israel out of the land. Three days ago he would not let them go out; now he would have given money and goods to be rid of them. Before he kept them, now he himself drives them out of the land; he will not let them stay with him; they must go by night.

40 This was the last plague by which God wanted to redeem the people of Israel, and it was also the cruellest plague; it still did not help that Pharaoh or his people recognized themselves. So now comes the fourteenth chapter, the last one with Pharaoh, and the end, that he remains stubborn, and persecutes the children of Israel, and is overthrown into the Red Sea.

(41) But how does the wicked humble himself? Beware of such, for it often happens that the wicked make themselves so spiritual, and boast as if they were more pious than no saints. Now Pharaoh asks that they be merciful to him and leave his kingdom, whom he could not see before, nor would he suffer. For the Egyptians say: We are all of death; death is in all the land. This plague is not darkness, nor blackness, nor pox, nor glands, but so fierce and severe that they say, "We must all die. This punishment is not good to think about, they do not know where they have been at home, so they have to die.

they say: The sooner the better, the better they get out of the country.

042 So the children of Israel were driven out with haste, and they carried away out of Egypt with them the dough of which they were going to bake bread, wrapped in cloths. They had only begun to eat unleavened bread, and had kneaded dough for half a night, but could not finish it; so the Egyptians drove them out, so that they had to take water and flour and knead a dough, and put the unleavened, raw dough into clothes, coats and skirts. And if the Egyptians are so upset by this that they do not demand the borrowed jewelry from the Jews again, they are brought in.

43. for, as I said, God gave the Jews this favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they gladly borrowed and lent them drinking vessels of gold and silver and jewels, and thus stole their goods from their hosts. This was done justly, for they would have strangled the sons of Israel before, and burdened them with heavy glad tidings, and given no money for them; now God gives them the reward and the beautiful treasure.

44 So six times an hundred thousand men went out of Egypt, without any of the people; item, the women and children. Egypt was rich and large, so the Jews borrowed a lot of goods from them and went to the fields. Where did they have their kitchens? So we have the feast as it was instituted and kept.

This exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt is highly praised in the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, we should learn and know this history well, for the sake of the following texts. For God attributes this deed of mercy to the Jewish people for and for, that they did not recognize and honor Him in it. Therefore, we should also call upon, honor and serve God, who sent his Son to die for us on the cross and to be born, who also commanded us to pray. He also raised up the priesthood, so that he presented this benefit to the Jewish people and preached about it daily. He gave them this same outward work, so that he might be grasped, recognized and apprehended.

46. for God knew well that the spirits of the wicked would come, and that they would be able to resist.

There would be so much devotion that no one would look at another, and that one would want to have this God, who would like a gray cap; another would seek another God, in a black cap, yet God would not be sought by any devotion of his own, but he sets before us a work by which we should come to know him. Therefore, when you say, "I will serve God, to whom I have vowed to fast so many days," you hear that God does not want it, because it is a work that you choose and determine for yourself. But GOD says: I will appoint you a work, by the work you shall know me, namely, you shall honor the GOD who brought the people of Israel shat) out of Egypt.

(47) Although the false prophets used to set up altars under this title, knowing that these signs and works should be done, they deceived the people. Just as we also, who have Christ, preach that he was crucified and is our Savior. But the false teachers, priests and monks say afterwards: "Behold, here in the monastery, in the cap, plates and ropes, there is also Christ. So they take this title and work, and bring it upon themselves. But if they had been true prophets, they should have preached and practiced that the people should honor God, who is not at BethEl nor BethAven, but who led the children of Israel out of Egypt. So also at this time, if I wanted to say that I am doing the work of serving the God who looks upon my virginity, chastity, poverty and obedience, it is wrong and unjust.

(48) They were not in Egypt four hundred and thirty years at all, but from the time Abraham hears the voice of God, Gen 42:1, from the promise, when Abraham was five and seventy years old, until the time Moses is eighty years old. So, if you add these years together, it is true; otherwise they have been only half of these years or a little over in Egypt. Under Pharaoh's tyranny they have not been over a hundred years. So the scripture stands with honor everywhere. On this opinion also St. Stephen speaks in the stories of the

Apostle, when he speaks [Cap. 7, 6.] that they had been four hundred and thirty years in Egypt.

(49) And St. Paul also insinuates this in the epistle to the Galatians [Cap. 3, 11], when he teaches that Moses' law does not make anyone righteous. He proves it thus: "For Abraham promised much earlier than Moses came, that through his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, and all the nations and the world should receive blessing and all goods from him. Therefore the law cannot do it, the law has no help in itself to make one righteous 2c., but from the gospel we get such.

50 Therefore we are to gather it together and compare it, that it is not spoken of the dwelling which they had in Egypt, but from the whole time that the promised seed was promised to Abraham, and after that it was spoken to him that he should go into another country. It is a synecdoche, just as Christ lay in the grave three days and three nights, when he had been in it only one day and two nights; but he took hold of and grasped three days. The first, on which he was crucified, that part and the following night are counted for one day; after that the Saturday (as we call it); starting 1) the following night, in the morning of the third day, he rose; then it is one whole day, and two nights with one part of the day. So here he also takes totum prototum pro parte, and partem pro toto, because they have taken such a time, and so many years.

**Allegoria or spiritual interpretation of this twelfth chapter.**

(51) In the twelfth chapter we heard how the children of Israel ate the paschal lamb, and how God instituted the same feast of Easter to preserve the memory of the miraculous redemption of the children of Israel from Egypt; but how it should also be eaten among Christians is also indicated. We are taught, however, that we believe in God.

1) Eisleben and Erlanger: Angangs.

and that our faith should be such that we know that God is near us in the highest and greatest needs.

Now we still have to deal with the spiritual interpretation and secret interpretation of this chapter and the story told. But I have said before, and still say, that he who seeks and searches for the secret understanding or secret interpretation hidden under a story, must lead it in such a way that it rhymes with faith; for the holy Scriptures are otherwise bright and clear, and no one may carry his dreams here. In the Old Testament, this meant something in the reign of the Lord Christ, as it is testified with clear, explicit words and deeds that it goes to Christ, because it is all about the man. But let us deal with it as much as we can.

First, every householder was to take a lamb for his house and gather as many people as were able to eat it all, or else they were to call their neighbors to do the same. This paschal lamb was clearly described and pictured by St. Paul in 1 Cor. 5:7, 8, and he beautifully emphasizes what it means when he says: "We also have a paschal lamb, which is Christ, sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep Easter, not in the old leaven" 2c. As if St. Paul should say, It is not the Jews' paschal lamb, who have eaten an outward and bodily lamb, but a spiritual one, and it is not seen. For though he was seen of old by the apostles, which did eat and drink with Christ, and walked with him, yet is he not seen now; but is ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of his heavenly Father [John 20:1]. Therefore we now eat the Lord Christ, our true paschal lamb, in the new testament. As St. John the Baptist also says (Joh. 1, 29.): "Behold, this is the Lamb of God, which bareth the sin of the world."

This is a certain interpretation, that one makes a paschal lamb out of Christ, and leads the secret interpretation to him. Such a thing cannot be lacking, as little as Christ can be lacking, especially if this saying of John the Baptist is added to it;.

as there is also St. Paul's testimony here that he interprets the paschal lamb as referring to the Lord Christ and from him<sup>55</sup> The first thing, then, is to take the sheep from the flock. But if there have been many paschal lambs, someone might say, "Do we have as many Christos as there are Christians, just as there must have been as many paschal lambs here as there were houses? Know that there is a physical, external being there, since they could not all dwell in one house; but the same great multitude at that time has now moved into one being, so that even though they are not all in one place now, we must all have at least one paschal lamb. This is the first thing, that Christ should not remain among the Jews alone, but should also be accepted among the Gentiles.

The other is that one should also draw and take the nearest neighbors to eat the paschal lamb 2c. With this he wants (as St. Paul also teaches to the Romans) that Christ may be spread the more. For it is not enough that these or those know Christ, but we are to spread it out and proclaim it to everyone, so that many people may come to this one house, yes, the whole world may be brought to the kingdom of Christ. Perhaps in those days there were many houses in which as many people were found as there had to be at the paschal lamb, so that it could be completely eaten. But here, in the New Testament, it is always lacking, there are never enough Christians [Ps. 12:2] that we should stop inviting guests to this paschal lamb, but we should always go on and preach, and also find ourselves to those to whom Christ has not been preached before, and teach them, who have not known Christ, that they may also be brought to the spiritual kingdom of Christ. Their paschal lamb intake was physical, but ours is spiritual. And God took the same paschal lamb, we did not choose it; this paschal lamb taking is spiritual.

57 Third, take such a sheep that has no defect in it, except that it is limping, one-eyed, skewed, or mangy. That is, Christ is to be recognized and eaten,



to have him alone and to hold him as the one who is without blemish and healthy. For the paschal lamb had to be brought up pure, that is, to have pure doctrine of Christ as it is before God. A little lamb that has no blemish in the sight of men is not inquired about by God, but for this reason it is necessary that we recognize Christ as completely pure, as the innocent, undefiled little lamb that has not committed any sin, as St. Peter speaks of it in his [first] epistle [Cap. 1, 19.] and also as the one to the Hebrews [Cap. 7, 26.], that we have such a bishop who is innocent and holy. For there is no other man on earth who can have this glory and title, that he has no sin [Proverbs 20:6], except the Lord Christ, who has no blemish.

(58) This then is our Christian faith, that we know and confess that all men have faults, are defiled, guilty, and infirm, even Christians; they all have sin: but the Lord Christ is perfect, pure, holy, and righteous. Therefore this also is the cause that we must eat him always. For they that know not Christ, nor cleave unto him, are utterly dead, and are nothing. But those who know and accept him are true, living people [John 6:53, 54]. And these are something, but still they are not entirely pure; they are Christians, but not the Lord Christ Himself. They are something, but still they are not pure in this life. Therefore let no one ascribe or attribute this title to himself, that he may be without blemish, that he may have cause to eat Christ always, while he liveth.

59. fourthly, they shall take a male. This can be taken to mean that Christ was a man. But it is not enough, because it is not based on faith. For a woman is a man as well as a man. But in the holy scripture [Gen. 3, 17. 1 Cor. 11, 3.] it is written that the man is made the head of the woman, and that the woman enjoys all the goods and honor of the man. For husband and wife are one body, that one should take care of the other, and what happens to one should also happen to the other, for they are one thing. So Christ is not to be a person or a man by himself.

without spot or blemish, full of wisdom and righteousness, innocent and holy, which would not save me; for he, and not I, would have enough of it.

(60) Thus the sophists have painted him to be both man and God, counting his legs and arms, and mixing his two natures together in a strange way, which is only a sophistical knowledge of the Lord Christ. For Christ is not called Christ because he has two natures. What is that to me? But he bears this glorious and consoling name from the office and work which he has taken upon himself; the same gives him the name. That he is man and God by nature is his own; but that he has turned his ministry to this end and poured out his love and become my Savior and Redeemer, this is for my comfort and benefit; it is for my sake that he will make his people sinless. In the first chapter of Matthew, v. 21, the angel Gabriel tells us that he is to be called Jesus, not because he is God and man, but because he is to lead the ministry and enter into the work of helping people from sins and death. This makes him a man. We should also consider him to be the head and ruler of Christianity and all godliness. The Lord Christ is the husband of Christianity, and it is his wife; as St. Paul also masterfully emphasizes to the Ephesians in the fifth chapter, vv. 25-27, saying: "Christ loved his church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, and cleanse it with the bath of water in the word, that he might present to him a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and blameless.

61 Thus, if a man loves his wife, she is the most beautiful and dearest to him, if she alone is pious and honest. For love shares all honor with her, and gives her body, goods and everything, the name and title, so that she has what the man has. She sits with him in common goods and honor. And as a woman may speak to her husband, so also a Christian speaks to the Lord Christ. For the woman has all authority in the house, except that the man is the head and lord, or ruler; yet the woman takes all things for herself, and

grasps the good as if it were his own. So a Christian also sets himself against the Lord Christ, only that he, the Lord Christ, is the head, the man and Lord, from whom one has all good and honor, which alone is the difference. For Christ's innocence, life and righteousness are mine, so is the kingdom of heaven and the Holy Spirit also mine, even all things that he has, is able to do and has obtained, these are mine, mine. For the church is his flesh and blood, two shall be one body, they sit in common possession. Thus Christ is to be known, that he is the husband and head of Christendom, and that the church is his housewife and bride.

62. fifth, the lamb shall be one year old. So that it is not too young, it must not be less than one year old, but of a perfect age. So the Lord Christ is also a perfect man, he has perfect authority in heaven and on earth [Matth. 28, 18.], he can rule well, he lacks and is not lacking in anything that belongs to the government.

He is a man who accepts the impossible. Item, he is one year old, which is that he can and will do what he desires. He who eats Christ in this way is worthy of God's attention. He is old enough, that is, strong enough and able. He shall be young, that is, God has pleasure and love for him; he is pleasant and respected, strong and mighty, and he can and will help with pleasure and love. Thus God depicted the Lord Christ with the little paschal lamb.

64. sixthly, from the lambs and goats it shall be taken. The Lord Christ is to be taken from men, for he is also like them, and is to serve and shepherd us. Therefore God says: From the herd or from the flock you shall take the paschal lamb. You shall let it go in the herd, and not raise a special one in the corner. God orders it diligently, so that He may well mix and bake Christ in us, and not separate Him out, so that He may be of the flesh and blood of which we are. Which the epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 2, 16] praises exceedingly: that God does not take the angelic nature, but our flesh.

and blood, Abraham's seed. That is, God did not become an angel, but a man, and such a man, who walked among other men [Apost. 10, 38], like another man, as St. Paul in the epistle to the Philippians in the other chapter, v. 6. 7. He said: "When he was like God, he did not think that he was robbery, but expressed himself as if he were not God, and stood down, humiliated as another man, and was found equal to us in all things. 2c.

This is the right description of Christ. He suffered all the bodily hardships that we suffer; he spoke and laughed as we do; he presented himself as if he were not God, but expressed himself according to divine power and nature; that is, he was as much a man as we are [Heb. 2:14]. Now here we have strength and comfort in Christ, that we may know him to be such a man as we are, and not flee from him, or be afraid of him, for there is no creature more lovely than man. As he who is alone feels. For when he wanders at night, it is not so pleasant to hear a dog or a horse as to hear a man. For one thinks better of a man than of an angel, of whom one would be frightened and horrified, as the examples of Scripture often testify. And although men are sometimes evil and wicked among themselves, yet the right nature and character of man in Christ is that we should have recourse to him in temptations and all troubles, as to him who is able to help. And so Christ is also pictured here, that he is not otherwise compared to a wild animal, but is like a little lamb, which is lovely, has no defect, is so pleasing to God that he does not reject it, which is a male, and takes care of us. Item, which is a year old, which has power and strength.

The seventh was to keep the lamb until the fourteenth day of the month, that is, until the time of the coming of Christ. For thus it is written and ordained of Moses, that Christ should keep the paschal lamb.

was to become a little lamb for us. This has passed away, and the little lamb was kept until the fourteenth day, that is, until the time came for him to appear [Gal. 4:4]. Or the fourteen days may be taken to indicate the desire; the little hour when the soul is in anguish and distress [Isa. 54:8, Ps. 30:6], and desires comfort; that the law goes before, that it presses the conscience to the knowledge of sin; that it thirsts and hungers after the grace of God [Isa. 66:2]. For the Lord Christ tastes no one but a hungry and thirsty soul.

67 For this reason it is postponed for fourteen days, that is, for a short time, so that souls may be led to the knowledge of their sin, misery and infirmity, and lie in the hunger and thirst of grace, so that these fourteen days may be the time of the law, in which we must all be stuck and lie, that is, hunger and thirst. For with desire, lust and love the Lord wants this food to be accepted. This food does not belong to a full soul.

Here also, in and through Christ, all the good works that can be done to merit God's grace are excluded. The fortnight is the time of the law, the knowledge of sin, since the law makes us sinners. Therefore, we should not build on our good works or undertake anything that will stand before God, but we should have this little lamb alone. It reads as if one should take a sheep; but he speaks in the Hebrew way, that whoever does not eat this little paschal lamb is lost.

69. to the eighth: And every company in all Israel should slay [it] between evenings. That is, in every house one should eat such a little paschal lamb. Whoever does not do this and does not eat Christ, the true paschal lamb, is not helped. But how is Christ slain by us? This happens when we recognize that Christ died for us, and when, according to St. Paul, we confess and preach Christ, as he says: "I sanctify the gospel, that is, I sacrifice the gospel. There he interprets the ministry of preaching that it should be a ministry of slaughter. The sacrificing he draws all

time to the ministry of preaching. For I make a great sacrifice to God when I preach about Christ [Ps. 116, 17]. With the preaching of Christ I offer the highest and most beloved sacrifice to God, and fulfill all the sacrifices, what they mean, and kill the old man, and convert them, so that they become new men.

70) The ninth is to be slaughtered between evening and evening. One shall preach and confess when it is half night and evening; this time is called the evening or the last hour, as the Lord Christ indicates in the parables; and John in the fifth chapter, v. 28, is said: "The time is coming" 2c. For the last day shall follow this sermon, and after this sermon no other shall arise from GOD. The devil may raise others, as he raises heresies for and against; but God first gave the Law; now, at the end of the world, Christ comes, bringing the preaching of the Gospel, which teaching the Holy Spirit has brought. For this is the last sermon in the world, and is called a sermon that comes at evening [Matt. 20:8], that is, at the end of the world. This little lamb is to be slain, that is, of this Christ alone is to be preached.

71. tenth, "And thou shalt take his blood, and put it upon the two posts of the door, and upon the topmost threshold of the houses, where they eat it within. This can be applied to the ministry of preaching. For the sprinkling or the coating is done with the mouth or with the tongue. Others draw it on human thoughts, on memory and understanding, or on reason; but God speaks of the things that belong in the church. For in all Christendom, in the assembly, they shall eat the paschal lamb, which hath not my thoughts, nor thine, but another. Therefore do according to the teaching of St. Peter, who also says: "We are sprinkled with the blood of Christ" [1 John 1:7, Acts 1:5]. 1, 5.j. For if we are enlightened by the Holy Spirit, let us preach everywhere about the paschal lamb, so that the whole world may know how the little lamb died for us and shed his blood for us. So when I preach about Christ that he died for us

blood, then I sprinkle and sprinkle the uppermost threshold. When I preach that he has reconciled me to God, that wherever I turn, I see the blood everywhere in the doorway, 1) and especially at the door where one goes in and out; for this is why the door was made by the carpenter.

In the Holy Scriptures, the door is called a man's walk and life, which he leads. Therefore, in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, v. 3, it is said of St. Luca that the Lord Christ went out and came in among them, that is, had his walk and life among them. As is also said in the 121st Psalm, v. 8: God has his entrance and exit with us, just as it otherwise happens in this life. So then life should be fasted in such a way that through the preaching the blood is sprinkled over itself, and the swellings are covered with it, namely, when I speak of my nature and life as it is before God, that nothing else helps me but the blood of Christ.

73. This then is a right covering, and there then is the blood of Christ between God and me. What I do then pleases God, for the blood is between me and God. Therefore, my work is pleasing to God. For so shall all the works of a Christian be put and put into the blood of Christ, that they may be acceptable and pleasing to God.

For the blood of Christ protects me on the right hand against the temptation of goods, when one is well; item, on the left hand, when Satan tempts me with persecution of body, good and honor. On the right hand, when he attacks us with pretense and cunning, as happens with the spirits of the wicked. On the left hand, when he bursts in and strikes with persecution, fear, gloom, and other things, so that he attacks us on the left, as the one and ninetieth Psalm, v. 7, says: "Though ten thousand fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, it shall not fall upon thee.

75 Therefore let the preachers watch, defend, and preach. When you are challenged

that they admonish you to remember the blood of Christ and to take comfort in it, so that you may know that it pleases God. This must be preached diligently, whether any false prophets arise, that we always keep the blood of Christ, and go between, that our walk may be in the blood of Christ, whether a man live or die, or whether he be sweet or sour. This is what the preaching ministry should do [Is. 30, 8. 21. Ezek. 33, 2.ff.].

Now he comes to how one should eat the paschal lamb. So far, he has said of the blood of the paschal lamb how to take it and sprinkle and coat the top of the threshold with it, which is nothing other than how to preach, proclaim, mark, and make known who Christ is. Faith is the food that contains and strengthens us. Just as the belly, when it eats and drinks, takes food, swallows it up, and returns it to the place where it is turned into blood, so that the food of the body becomes nourishment: so also a man eats spiritually when he swallows and drinks Christ, brings Christ into himself, and Christ nourishes him.

77. Therefore this eating is nothing else but the true, right faith of the heart, if you accept Christ with right faith, and know 2) that he has shed his blood for you, and that this comforts and strengthens you in cross and hardship, because you believe it without any wavering of the heart, So you eat Christ and digest him 3) in you, and he comes into you, that you may become one thing spiritually, having one mind and one thought, and one will, and one wisdom, and one prudence, and one strength, and one gain, that you may become a new man, daily increasing, growing, becoming great, fat, and strong in the knowledge of the Lord Christ [Col. 3, 10.]. As the Lord Christ John also says of this in the 6th chapter, v. 35: "He that eateth me shall not hunger." There you also have the spiritual food of the heart. For what a Christian eats with his mouth does not help him in his Christianity [1 Cor. 8:8], but if the heart eats something by faith, it helps, and through it the heart eats.

1) In this sentence the "Constructiv" is broken. It should probably read: When I preach that he has reconciled me against God, then I see, where I turn, the blood everywhere in the exit 2c.

2) Eislebensche: wissest.  
3) In the original: "bauest".

one becomes a rich, complete Christian before God, so that everything he does pleases God.

(78) In the twelfth Moses says, "Ye shall therefore eat flesh that night. He calls "flesh" the Lord Christ, although he does not yet clearly express Christ's flesh; but he wants to say, "You are inclined to eat that which is good for the body and is pleasant: Well then, I will give you once a right flesh to eat, from which you will be glad to eat, and which is fleshly food.

79 Moses has presented the little paschal lamb to us until now, by which the Holy Spirit has signified and shown us our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in two ways; first, how I should preach about him, and also what I should think of him. That the little lamb should be a male and not a female. First, that the lamb should be a male and not a female. Also, that it be slaughtered and sacrificed in the evening, so that the two pillars at the door may be covered 2c. In this, the preaching of the divine word is actually described to us, that we should preach about Christ, how he reconciles God and us with each other, and leads us in the world, both on the right and on the left.

80 Then the other part was how to eat the paschal lamb. Namely, one should take this little lamb, sacrifice it, slaughter it and roast it to eat it. This is now to lead the ministry and to present Christ or the oral word, and is "to eat" in and to take in, so that the man digests it and transforms it into himself, from which he becomes fat and healthy, increases and grows [Ps. 107, 9]. For therefore it is slaughtered, that it should be eaten. So it is also preached that we are saved, made fat and strong by Christ, which is nothing else but faith. Faith is the spiritual eating and digesting, by which all things are strengthened, and Christ is better known, which things we have in him, and which we ought to have in him. Therefore, in the sixth chapter of John, v. 54, 51, it is also said: "He who eats my flesh", item: "He who eats of your bread never dies. After this, eating also gives strength and power, which makes alive Christ in us, and again us in Christ.

receives. Moses interprets it in one another, that we are changed into Christ, and Christ into us; that is, eat, as he says, "This night then eat the flesh."

Otherwise eating flesh is an evil sign in the holy scriptures, as God also forbade to eat blood in Moses [Gen. 9:4, 3:7, 26, 5:12, 16]. And so elsewhere "eating flesh" means believing, and there one thinks something of flesh and blood. But when one preaches of the sensible life, as the hypocrites have done, there is flesh and blood as it was born of Adam. Then there are the real carnivores, who believe that they can still do something by their powers and abilities, so that they will be converted to God. This is forbidden, and such carnivores will not remain unpunished.

82 But there is much other meat prepared to be eaten, and it is commanded to be roasted and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter salts. For it is a different food. As if to say, "Hitherto they have taught and preached how to be godly, but it is man's way, and only as reason thinks good. If ye will be well fed and taught, then will I also once give you meat to eat, but such meat as Christ dwelleth in. So Christ is our food, that he gives us his body and blood, as he naturally received it from his mother; this is our spiritual food and drink, not for the flesh alone, but that God dwells in it. He does not say, The flesh is the food, and the blood is the drink, but: My flesh and my blood; mine, for I am GOD.

If I believe that Christ hung on the cross for me, and truly became flesh and blood, and yet is God, and this person, being God, dares to give his flesh and blood for me (for God could not otherwise suffer or die; but therefore he took the flesh to himself, that he might suffer, and gave his flesh and blood for me, thus helping me) - if I now believe that this flesh was given and sacrificed for me on the cross, that is, to eat and drink, that is,

Believe Christ's blood and body was given for me.

This could not have been done by all the flesh of the saints; no one could have said: If you believe that this body was given for you, you will be saved. No, they cannot say that; only this Son of God, this divine person, applies this piece, his body and blood, to me. Therefore his flesh and blood is as valid as he is valid. For the person is God, therefore this flesh and blood has no end, but means something eternal, and also remains eternal. Otherwise all flesh is vain and nothing [Is. 40, 8. Ps. 62, 10.], except when this man comes and says: "My flesh is your food" 2c. [Jn. 6, 55.], for I am GOD. This person is too high.

This eating is believing in Christ, and drinking his blood is believing with all your heart that he was given to death for us. This is what God wanted to indicate to the Jews through this outward Easter feast. They were bodily, and had to eat bodily of the little lamb, but we eat spiritually of it, that is, we believe that the flesh and blood of the Lord Christ was given for us. But the same eating is done by the Holy Spirit.

86) To the thirteenth he saith, In that night. When the evening came, they slaughtered the lamb, and until the paschal lamb was prepared, it was night, and they had to eat it in the dark. So we should also eat the paschal lamb at night. If I really believe in Christ, my heart and soul are nourished by the fact that he gave his body for me, and I do not doubt it, then it is night; I then have nothing more in the wide world [Phil. 1, 21. Gal. 2, 20.], my life is hidden in Christ, and we have died to the world, as St. Paul says to Colossians [Cap. 3, 3.].

Otherwise the world with its reason has a light [2 Cor. 4, 3], and shines beautifully, saying: This you shall eat on this day, and so you shall clothe yourself on that day, live so and so, do this and that. This order does this today, tomorrow that order does something else, it prays, fasts, and does this and that; thus bind and grasp the "certain" with laws, that it should all be valid before God.

and look after these things. But a Christian closes his eyes, and does not ask anything about it, lives in the day, and says: Before God I am no better, I eat meat or fish, or whatever is put before me [Rom. 14, 2. f.]. A Christian's conscience does not turn to it, but says: God has set before me a paschal lamb, of which I shall eat, and I will remain so. For one should cling to his word alone. If outward things come, let them go to him. Therefore the world to a Christian is a noisy night and darkness, which faith makes, which hangs only on the blood of Jesus Christ, and looks at nothing else, nor respects anything else.

88. On the fourteenth, Moses often instructed that the paschal lamb should be eaten with unleavened bread, or sweet bread should be used, since no leaven had come, and that such sweet bread should be eaten for eight days. What this means is explained by the Lord Christ Himself in the Gospel of Matthew the sixteenth, v. 11, where He says: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. For they held their human doctrines higher than God's commandment; they abrogated God's commandment, so that only their doctrines remained. This hypocritical teaching of theirs is called "leaven" by the Lord, so that the peelers, the Pharisees, deceived the people. So now with the sweet bread it is indicated that one should keep the faith pure, because it cannot suffer any addition. Do not mix in the doctrine of men, for faith does not suffer it.

89) The same thing is said by St. Paul in 1 Cor. 5:7: "Get rid of the old leaven"; for all leaven is that which does not live Christianly; and commands that one who had taken his stepmother in marriage should be cast out of the church and not suffer. So leaven is false doctrine and a wickedly vexatious life and example. For one mangy sheep is apt to infect a whole flock, and the spreading 1) pestilence makes other people sick also. Therefore, the word "leaven" is used here for teaching, although it is also often used for life. So then we are to take the faith that

1) "braiding" probably as much as lichen-like. (This meaning is missing in Dietz.)

We must take Christ, the little lamb, so that our conscience may be and remain pure, clean, and bad, clinging to Christ alone. But this is very difficult, and becomes sour for those who are held captive by laws. Therefore one must live by faith alone. Faith brings us to the suffering and death of our dear Lord Jesus Christ. Otherwise our nature wants to perform ceremonies and all kinds of meritorious works for the conscience to control and rely on, but this is leaven. So Moses wants to encourage us to keep the faith pure and unadulterated, and to beware of all additions and little human feelings, because leaven is like an addition.

For the fifteenth, it should be eaten with bitter salsify. For it tastes good if there is a little vinegar with it; this is given by nature, that bitter salts and sour herbs taste good next to good roasting<sup>2)</sup>. But it means that one should crucify the old Adam, to whom it should become sour. Faith restores the heart, makes it strong and confident in Christ, who died for us and was given into death. To this belongs and should follow that the old Adam must be armored according to the outward man [Gal. 5, 13. 16. 17.]; sour grapes must be there, the conscience must be attacked and struck. For the gospel is not a sermon for coarse, crude, desolate sinners who live without some devotion, but is a comfort for afflicted souls [Matt. 11:28]. For it is a tender food that a hungry soul wants to have. Therefore the dear Virgin Mary also sings in her Magnificat [Luc. 1, 53.], "He hath satisfied the hungry with good things."

Otherwise, the mad mob falls in, and all want to be evangelical and Christian brothers, and then they create mobs and all kinds of misfortune. The devil on their head they are. A Christian is not insolent, wild and crude, but his conscience is stupid, fainthearted and despondent, sin bites them, and they are afraid of God's wrath and of the devil and death. The Lord Christ is good to such a downcast and troubled heart. Item,

Redemption from sin, death, the devil and hell is also good for those who are in death and feel such distress and would like to have rest; they get it when the heart has faith, but they also feel how frail the old Adam is.

92. sixteenth, the paschal lamb shall not be eaten raw, nor boiled with water, but only roasted by the fire. There are two kinds of faith: one is when one hears the gospel and the Holy Spirit enlightens, stirs and kindles the heart to accept and believe. This faith makes one free from sins and blessed, but the other faith grows out of our head. As when one hears the gospel of Christ preached, how he died for us, and wants to understand and grasp this with reason; as one finds all too many people who think they know it and have faith; this is a faith that comes from our powers, and is a dream, an image that occurs to one at night, but not true faith. It is the same as when a man finds money in his sleep or wins a city; in a dream it seems serious, but when he wakes up, there is nothing behind it. So it is with them also; they think they have it, and are good Christians, have faith and understand Christ very well. But this faith soon comes to an end; when persecution comes, that one should suffer danger to property, honor and body, then the eyes are opened, and the dream is gone. The Lord Christ is forgotten, for it was only a pretense and a delusion of faith. Just as one sees a man's image and face in water or in a mirror, it looks quite like it, and seems to him as if he saw the same man, but it is really nothing. So when it comes to the meeting, this faith also flees away and lets itself be seen that it is nothing. This is what is preached here, that the little lamb should be roasted with fire.

To cook with water is to kindle with reason, since the fire does not come to the lamb, nor may the cold of the water warm it; rather, the heat is driven in by the water. Water is called such a conceit and opinion, since one thinks that one knows Chri-

1) control--support.  
2) Roasted or Gebratnis - roast.

stum, and yet is wrong. But so it shall be: I hear the gospel well, and it seems to me that I understand it; but I do not trust in it, but I ask God to give me faith in his word [Luc. 17:5], which is true faith and not imaginary faith. I did not invent it in a dream, but the Holy Spirit made it righteous in my heart, without my strength, through the word that is preached. He himself kindles such a fire [Luc. 12, 49], and lights up my heart with a new light and fervor, so that in the midst of death I do not forget the Lord Christ.

The watery or false faith disappears. Just as an image disappears from a mirror, so this faith does not hold the puff and sting, but the fiery faith that the Holy Spirit kindles, that same faith endures, even though it is sometimes frightened and distressed. For there is still the old Adam wriggling, yet so he endures. The fire is the Holy Spirit, who roasts the paschal lamb in us, and establishes a right faith, so that we accept Christ and remain with him, and we also are roasted and not boiled, just as he was roasted by fire. Now to this faith belongs temptation and affliction, that it may burn quickly and not be quenched. And he that believeth aright hath a fire, that is, he regardeth not his reason. For faith is not a human but a divine power, as St. Paul says to the Romans [Cap. 1, 16].

95 This power does not rust, nor is it idle, but is overwhelmed with tribulation, so that man may see that he is not walking in his own power, but in divine power. And faith is never stronger and more glorious than when affliction and temptation are greatest; for this reason faith is called fiery. And I fear very much that our much faith also is watery, that we speak of it much only with the mouth; but when the blows come, that we are persecuted, then this fire comes, and the little lamb is roasted in our heart. So the former is false faith, but the latter is true faith; the former is watery faith, but the latter is fiery faith.

96. to the seventeenth, one shall celebrate the Easter

Eat the lamb, its head with its thighs and entrails. The head they have made the deity, but the thighs the humanity of Christ. I will take it in one heap. For this is what he means by saying that the paschal lamb is to be eaten whole and nothing is to be left of it. To eat it whole I mean to eat Christ whole, to cling to him alone, and to seek nothing else but him. This will serve against the faith of the Jews, who do not consider Christ to be the true Savior, and pretend that the Messiah has not yet come, and wait for another Messiah, for another faith, and for another teaching. But know that he who has Christ has everything in one heap.

So, if I believe in Christ, I have forgiveness of sin, dominion over death and the devil, and eternal life. Here nothing is lacking, not a claw nor a hair is missing. God always wants to keep us in pure faith, so there should be no addition that one wants to improve it, or doubt as if something is lacking in it; as St. Paul to Colossians [Cap. 1, 12] calls faith the whole inheritance. As if he should say: Faith has it all in itself, be it above, in the middle or at the end: take it where you will, and you will have it. So we are sure and certain that we have everything and eat everything.

98) To the eighteenth, 1) That nothing of it be left over until tomorrow. The Jews wait as if another little paschal lamb were to come, and want to have their little paschal lamb extended until another one comes, and another teaching is brought to them, or the day dawns; which teaching that little paschal lamb burned up and annulled still goes on, although the day has passed and the little paschal lamb has come. 2) That is, the Old Testament is finished, it is no longer valid; therefore he commanded that they should keep to the same, and if anything else existed and remained, it should be done with fire, that is, with the

1) The Erlanger has here and at the following section: "To the 19th".

2) The meaning of this sentence will be: although the right paschal lamb, Christ, has raised the doctrine of a future paschal lamb, this doctrine is still held by the Jews, although 2c.



Holy Spirit be burned. As if to say: We have everything in Christ, and it is not necessary for us to keep all kinds of customs, manners and ceremonies, or to do the works of the Old Testament, but we have everything in Christ. So faith abides in Christ, and has its joy, pleasure and play in him. This is what the little paschal lamb of the Jews was to remind them of, until Christ, the right, true little lamb, came and took it away. As we see then that all things are done for his sake, and all things go to him, that we may be made perfect and rich in the preaching and knowledge of the Lord Christ [Col. 3:16].

(99) So we have heard how one should eat the paschal lamb, that is, preach about Christ. One should preach and teach that one should eat it whole, that is, one should preach nothing but the whole faith alone, which does everything for God. Now he will prepare in a wonderful way the people who are to eat the paschal lamb, since we should teach the people beforehand how they should wash their hands and put on new clothes before they eat the paschal lamb. But God reverses the order here. For the Holy Scriptures would gladly prevent our works, so that we might first believe and trust in Christ through the Word of God, humble ourselves, and place everything in God.

100 Passover means entrance or transition, and is therefore called that the angel by God's command went through all the land of Egypt in one night and killed all the firstborn of the Egyptians. This means the suffering, death and resurrection of the Lord Christ, by which he left this world and came to his heavenly Father. In the same passage he defeated sin, death, the devil and hell, and redeemed all his Christians and believers from this Egyptian prison, and leads them to his heavenly Father. This is ours, the Christians, and the right, comforting, joyful Passover or Easter. So the evangelist John, in the 16th chapter, v. 28. says that Christ said to his disciples: "Again I leave the world and go to the Father." This is the right course.

101. to the nineteenth: "To your loins

you shall be girded." The Holy Scripture speaks moderately and chastely and not insolently. St. Peter makes it spiritual, and wants us not to have various sects in faith, but to remain in one faith. But here God wants to establish the outward discipline that one should keep chastity, and commands that one should gird up the loins. For the Holy Scriptures attribute chastity to the loins. So also in the first book of Moses it is said that from the loins Abraha shall be born zc. Therefore it means not only the discipline or chastity, but the whole body. Just as the whole man is born of one woman, so it also means here the whole discipline of the outward whole conduct, that one leads an honorable and chaste life, not wild, raw or evil [Rom. 12, 2.]. For if one believes in God, he eats the paschal lamb. But after that I gird up my loins, that is, I keep the body in discipline and restraint, so that I myself do not fall into sin, nor do I present others with an evil life [1 Cor. 9:27].

102. to the twentieth: "And have your shoes on your feet." God gives to each one his modest portion: to this woman the man, and again to the man also that woman, and that one so, the other otherwise lives, does and behaves among the people. Therefore they cannot and should not all walk in the same way. This is what putting on shoes means. For he that putteth on shoes prepareth himself to go, and is directed to walk.

One cannot imitate all the cases and examples of the patriarchs or their works. That is an evil allegory. One should not imitate the examples of the saints everywhere, but look at their faith and the fruits of faith, and learn to follow them. God leads each one his own way. But take care that you may believe as they believed. Therefore, this piece means the armor or readiness of the gospel: that our feet are booted and clothed with the gospel of peace. For therefore put on nian shoes, that one may be equipped and skillful to walk; that is, to be exercised to understand the gospel, to read it, to preach it, to do it, to sing it, to handle it always.

That here the whole way is prepared, and that we do everything with the gospel, in the gospel, and through the gospel that we have to do, as St. Paul [Eph. 6:15] also interprets it.

104. for the first and twentieth: "And you shall have staffs in your hands. The purpose of the staff is to help a man to walk and to lean on it when he is tired; item, that he may rely on it and take courage. Such a staff is now also the dear gospel [Ps. 23, 4]. When we live in this world and are troubled and weary, there should always be comfort, strength, admonition and stimulation from the gospel. The preaching of the gospel should always teach, admonish and comfort, stimulate, urge and entice, so that one continues and does not become lazy or idle. Therefore, it is necessary that one should be for and with the word, and wake up the old, rotten maggot sack, so that it does not become sleepy and lazy. This is called having the rod in one's hands and shoes on one's feet, that is, teaching and admonishing from God's Word.

105. second and twentieth, "And they shall eat it as they hasten away." They shall not so eat it hastily, and chew the cud nimbly, and cackle, as geese eat oats; but they shall eat it hastily, as they that would be glad of it; that this "eating hastily" is more of the heart than of the mouth, as they that are in fear. Therefore it is a frightened haste, and not a bad haste. The meal does not want to last long, any two, three or four hours. It should only be a backbite 1) or morning bread, that one stands and eats, since one does not give much food, and quickly goes on his way. For God says: You shall go out of Egypt with haste. For they were chased as if the Egyptians were after them with clubs. Because of this, they ate the paschal lamb with haste, trembling and trembling, so that they did not dine or sit down long, as if they had been invited to a wedding, but they wanted to get up and leave.

This is the hope of Christians. For they that believe in Christ know that

this life must be over, and we have no lasting place here, as the epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 13, 14] says. It is not a matter of settling here, but of standing for a short time [Eph. 6:14], that is, those who hear the gospel and know Christ have no reason to stay here, but they think on and want to go away to another country. There it is also true. As the children of Israel hastened out of Egypt unto the promised land, so shall the faithful go out of this life unto another and eternal life. Therefore this life is not pleasing to a Christian, he thinks more of this than of this; he also has more desire for this than for this worldly life [Col. 3, 1. ff]. But the old Adam resists hard, and this bitter salve does not want to taste to him; however, the faith must go. For in this life there is nothing else but sin, plague, misfortune; so the flesh and the devil still clings to our necks; so God also punishes sin in this world [Ps. 90, 5. ff.]. But how do I get out of this life? For he who bites at the pleasures of this world does not like to do without it, but he who believes in Christ and has the Holy Spirit despises this life 2c.

107. "For it is the Lord's Passover," that is, passage, so he punished Egypt in his passage.

This is the interpretation of the paschal lamb, which God commanded Mosiah that the children of Israel should eat. Such lovely paschal lamb, which was ordered so long ago, is now set with us, who have the gospel and Christ, and eat, drink and are nourished by the true paschal lamb, which is Christ. In this faith the children of Israel also ate the paschal lamb, and in this faith they were saved, except that they had a covering over their eyes, and it was somewhat dark and hidden from them, and they saw only the outward, bodily lamb. But because they had God's word, they also recognized Christ, and remembered and were comforted by the paschal lamb, and stood in this faith of ours and were saved [Rom. 1:2, Eph. 4:5].

1) Backbite - a small snack.

109 Now follow at the end still some pieces: as, to the third and twentieth, that no stranger nor hireling, or housemate, should eat from the paschal lamb. This is the difference between the figures and the fulfillment or interpretation. The figures commonly call it a work or deed put in measure of a law, that it signifies a work which men do; and this signification of the figure remains with God, that he should do it, or Christ by the Holy Spirit. The latter is done by men; but this is done without the work of men. For believing in Christ is not done by our works. A Christian is not made by being called so; a Christian is not made by laws, commandments or works, but it happens from above, as a divine and not human work [Joh. 3, 3. Jac. 1, 17.]. Thus the figures are fulfilled; that was done by men, this is fulfilled by God.

(110) Here it is commanded that a foreign man or woman, a stranger, and an uncircumcised man shall not eat of the passover, but only the children of Israel. This is a work and commandment not done by men; it is not a human but a divine work, and means that no one can eat the paschal lamb properly unless he is a member of Christ and a citizen of the Christian church [Eph. 2:19], because it is done by the Holy Spirit and not by good works. Therefore no foreigner or unbeliever can use this lamb without the Holy Spirit. Even though the Israelites often had two or more of them living together in one house, the master and the housemate, the stranger, housemate, hireling or servant could not eat of it; it did not help him that he was and lived with the master in one house, he was not allowed to use and enjoy the paschal lamb. It is the same when many in the Christianity gather to the church and are all called Christians, are among the Christians, have the appearance and work, receive the sacrament of the altar, are baptized, and yet are stuck in unbelief and godless, sinful nature, they are false Christians and hirelings [Matth.

7, 21. ff], unless they come further; otherwise they remain our housemates and do not enjoy the paschal lamb. For they are Christians only in name, appearance, and outward behavior, but inwardly and fundamentally there is nothing behind them. Therefore, everyone must form Christ in himself and become Christian, renew himself completely, otherwise he will not be able to eat this paschal lamb in the new testament.

(111) A servant, that is, a purchased servant from among the foreign people, and not an Israelite servant, who after all would be circumcised, this one should be counted among the Jews. But it is this meaning, that unbelief and the old sackcloth or Adam should be cut off from the heart. For circumcision is through the gospel and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, even though he is a Gentile, he comes among the Jews. This means the Gentiles, who are foreigners, but bought by the blood of Christ, and brought here to be with the Jews, that is, with the apostles and righteous members of Christ, have also believed, and have become one kitchen with them. Therefore they have been spiritually circumcised. This is not by our work, but by the work of the Holy Spirit.

In the old days, a bought servant was not efficient according to the *jure civili*, but now one has servants for hire; one no longer buys them, but hires them and gives them a wage. This law, that in former times men were bought as his] ox or sheep, God does not abolish here, but he confirms it. A poor man had to sell his daughters or sons, as in the Evangelist Matthew [Cap. 18, 25.] the Lord, who reckoned with his servant, said, sell and pay him, his wife and children 2c. Such has been the way and custom of old, and does not hinder Christian life.

Therefore it is an inconsistent pretense that some do in our time, who say, If we are Christians, all things must be common to us, and make of faith a human thing. People do not make and order a Christian faith; neither will it be done by their association; but it comes down from above.

1) In the original: none.

From the collection of the mobs, we do not become Christians. If it were true to inscribe the name, we would want to be the best Christians. And so the Turks could also gather. Do not mix the Christian essence, because it does not come from the earth, but from above.

Thus the murderer of souls, the pope, also did that he commanded that one should go on pilgrimage, call upon the saints, buy letters of indulgence, and wanted to make Christians with these laws. But not yet, dear journeyman, no one should be forced to believe or be called a Christian, but wait until God makes him a Christian. Close your mouth and your eyes. God has the gospel preached in multitudes, after which he gives one another courage and the Holy Spirit, and he lives a Christian life. Now they want to make all Christians in the world and force them to become Christians, saying: "Dear brother, if you do not want to be a Christian, we will burn down your house.

Serfdom is not contrary to the Christian nature, and he who says so is a liar, but Christian freedom redeems souls, and Christ is a founder of the same spiritual freedom that is not seen. What is external, God lets go, and does not ask so much about it.

For the fourth and twentieth, every house shall have only one little paschal lamb. This commandment applied to the physical paschal lamb, so that each house slaughtered only one paschal lamb. But God says: I will make it so with my spiritual Paschal lamb, that all the world shall have only one Paschal lamb. For before all the world did not eat one little paschal lamb alone, but every householder had for himself one paschal lamb. Therefore by the one paschal lamb in each house it is meant that in Christianity only the one Christ is to rule, otherwise everything else is to be eliminated [Apost. 4:12], that is, only the one mind and understanding of Christ is valid here, so that no divisions and sects are made among us, and divisions are caused, as happened with the Corinthians [1 Cor. 1:12], where some said, "I am Apollonian," others were Petrine, and others were Roman.

third Pauline, but Christians, who would all have One Mouth, Sense and Understanding.

This unity among Christians is not enforced by the law, but infused by the Holy Spirit. This means that in one house no more than one paschal lamb is eaten. Nothing helps our salvation, except the Lord Christ alone. External things may help to bring about order, but this sense and unity in Christianity is maintained only by the Lord Christ through the Holy Spirit, so that all walk in one mind, heart and faith, as we confess in our Spmbolo with these words: The Holy Spirit keeps in one mind even 2c.

(118) Therefore these are foolish preachers, who by good works seek to make Christians, because they destroy the one mind and work which was made by Christ, and seek to change it into Moses; thus they destroy and corrupt the simple mind and faith; which the foolish prophets do now, and the foolish people follow after, who without this are very apt to do. Does this piece therefore signify the unity of mind, spirit and faith among Christians, that they may have one mind and understanding?

(119) The fifth and twentieth, that they should not eat the passover outside their house; that is, this passover should not be eaten among the unclean. And this goes against the heretics and false prophets who drag out Christ; there it is commanded, here it is offered. Eating within the house means this preaching ministry, which is done within the church of God. However, even though I preach, it does not go into the heart, except to those who are members of Christ, and who have a simple mind. Therefore, if I were to go forth and say, I will make this man a Christian by this and that work, as by iconoclasm or by making goods common, it is not possible.

120. sixth and twentieth, that the little lamb be not divided. To divide the lamb among those who are not Christians, or to divide it, is wrong. This was also commanded before; but now it is kept without commandment, by the Holy One.

The one spirit cannot be divided and cut into classes, orders, works and sects, but only remains in one faith. St. John the Evangelist [Cap. 19, 35. f.] drew this to Christ when he was hanging on the cross. He did this out of the rest of the wealth of his understanding, and wove together the spiritual lamb Christ and the bodily lamb. Before the bones were bodily, and the blood of the lamb was also bodily, just as the flesh and blood of the Lord Christ is also bodily, but now the use and custom must be spiritual. That branch was bodily, but this custom is spiritual, of which in the same evangelist [Cap. 6, 54-56.] the Lord Christ says: "He who eats my flesh" 2c.

(121) Do not make a spiritual blood of Christ, for he did not give a spiritual body and blood for us, but a natural flesh, which he took from the Virgin Mary. Therefore this spiritual food is in the word "eat and drink". Although the Jews understood both as carnal, the Lord Christ says: "My words are spirit and life", indicating that such eating and drinking must be done spiritually. This is what is written and said here: Let the bodily legs remain.

But now we want to stay with the breaking, which is spiritual breaking. Bones signify the strength that sustains Christianity. For flesh and blood does not otherwise sustain Christianity, but the Holy Spirit gives it, that one may have strength, courage and fortitude, and not be oppressed. So death also devours the Lord Christ, but one must leave him the bones. He died by the power and strength of the flesh, but rose again by the strength of the Spirit. These are the bones, which are meant here in the spiritual sense, as that the Lord Christ could not be suppressed, even though he was very weak and died like another man, Isa. 63:5. Thus the bodily and spiritual legs are put together here; that is, the paschal lamb Christ, whom that paschal lamb meant, will die so that he nevertheless remains eternally. And here, the death and resurrection of the

Christ's Lord, because his bones have not been broken.

That was a work and a commandment that could be done to the executed or hanged men, but to break their bones on the gallows or on the cross; but this man, Christ, the Jews were not to break the bones, that is, in his highest weakness and in death he could still be kept whole. This must be a bodily sign that, just as the bones of the little lamb were not broken, so Christ also remained whole and rose again from death.

124 So now we have done the same with the paschal lamb of the Old Testament, and this means the preaching of the gospel, that one may know Christ and believe in him, in whom all things are fulfilled. Whoever knows this, then, sees how the Holy Spirit has pictured what the ministry of the gospel should be, what one should teach, what Christ is; namely, that one should preach how he shed his blood for us and gave his body for us, and that one cannot have or receive these things except through faith alone.

This is the first part of the spiritual interpretation of the paschal lamb. Now follows the other part, about the firstborn, what happened to them after they ate the paschal lamb and did everything that the Lord had commanded Most and Aaron.

## **V. 29. And at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in Egypt 2c.**

This is the last sign and a terrible, great miracle that God did in Egypt, when He killed all the firstborn of the Egyptians; but the firstborn of Israel remained alive. With which miraculous work God proves His omnipotence, that in one night He kills the firstborn of men and cattle, which should justly arouse us to the fear of God; in addition, it shows His earnestness against the impenitent sinners, that He is not far from them with the punishment. In this way, he wants to give everyone cause for correction, and then also to show his grace and mercy, so that in this cruel plague that is coming upon the Egyptians, he will still be able to protect the people.

Israel's firstborn is spared, 1) and in anger is still mindful of grace and mercy [Hab. 3:2]. Therefore we have to provide ourselves with everything good to God.

Finally this miraculous sign also confirms God's truth [Ps. 111, 7. ff]. For he had promised to kill the firstborn of Egypt and to lead the children of Israel out of the house of Egypt. This is happening now, that in the king's house, and in the house of the least shepherd, dead men and cattle are being recovered, and the Egyptians are forcibly driving the children of Israel out of their own land.

We have heard this history, now let us come to the allegory or secret interpretation. But if you want to follow the interpretations, and play the conscience of the redemption of the children of Israel, take first the Jews, then the Christians, in whom this redemption is finely and gloriously seen. Accordingly, it may also be applied to those who have it in common. When many Christians were made in the New Testament, the Jews wanted to be right, so the apostles also wanted to be right. The Jews wanted to keep the prize alone and by force, that they were God's people; but they had provided for it, and had deprived themselves of it and forfeited it. The Lord Christ also speaks of this and says: "The first shall be last, and the last shall be first" [Matth. 20, 16. 19, 30. Marc. 10, 31. Luc. 13, 30.]. There are two kinds of people here: The Jews, as the first, had God's word and the testimony of the prophets that no nation on earth should be preferred to them; they pride themselves on their firstborn, but are struck dead. But after them is a portion of the people who follow the apostles who preach Christ, and these are the ones who are baptized into Christ and are saved; these Christians and apostles are silent about their firstborn and are preserved. There is a battle and a fight over the firstborn.

129 Thus the pope also boasts against us of his firstborn, that he comes from the apostles, and has his doctrine from the ancient fathers and from so many conciliarities; but

We stand on it and say: Our teaching is right, yours is wrong, because it is man-made and cannot be proven from God's word. That is why the works saints always want to have a head start, they want to be the first and best in the world, the most distinguished, they go up. And when they want to be sure of this, the Holy Spirit seethes a new being, and this upsets them; just as is happening now. They want to be the first, and to be considered the highest saints; but it does not remain long after that (as now before our eyes) that they are found to be the greatest sinners and the worst hypocrites, and those whom they consider heretics are then considered saints. These are God's works, which are seen in the apostles and Jews, and also in ourselves, even to this day and present hour.

130 By Pharaoh and the Egyptians understand the Jews who lived at the time of the apostles, when the gospel began and came forth. And the names agree finely with it. For Pharaoh is called bareheaded, since one head is bare and not covered, that is, he who stands loose, since idleness is, he who has nothing to do. To which opinion the apostle looks to the Galatians at the 5th chapter, v. 2-4, without doubt with these words: If you want to be saved by works, you have fallen from grace, and Christ is of no use to you. As if he were to say, He goeth your way idle, and ye his way idle. For he is to be our head, and we his members, and he is to be suspended in us; it is not to be a body or a lump that has no head. Christianity shall not be a Pharaoh, that is, one who walks alone and bare, and is subject to no one.

This name rhymes well with the Jews. They wanted to be a free people and an oddity, led an apparent life by heart, and even withdrew from the obedience of the Gospel, thinking that they pleased God just as much when they sacrificed much by heart, and let faith stand by inwardly, thereby honoring God alone. Therefore, God is idle with them, and they with Him, and one has fallen away from the other. They are free from God,

1) Eislebensche: will.

and bare, in whom he reigneth not by faith, who yet were the firstborn, the beloved nobles, a holy nation, and should be the inheritance. This is what happened to the Jews in the time of the apostles.

Now Christ takes a walk, he goes from this life to the Father, of which walk he says much in John the Evangelist [Cap. 16], as indicated. By this passage he has put to death all the firstborn, that is, he has taken away this honor from them, so that they should not be first, but be damned, and know that they are not God's people; this firstborn should now be dead. So it was until Christ; but when that night comes, the Pharaohs are all dead; when Christ rises from the dead, with him all the glory and splendor of the Jews goes down. Now it is all dead and shall not stand. Mosi's work and all outward holiness lies down, he does not want them. Nothing can help but to believe in Christ alone.

This is the meaning of God's passage in Egypt, when He slew all the firstborn; that is, Christ rose from the dead, and by this passage He killed everything that is Jewish, so that it would not count for anything in the future. Everything that is Jewish, that is, everything that has an outward manner, and leads such customs, to which one is attached, must be spiritually put to death. This happens through the Holy Spirit, who gives the power that these outward things are not valid.

So we also say that the pope did not know otherwise, nor does he allow himself to be persuaded otherwise, than that he is the firstborn next to his own. He considers himself the firstborn, whereas other poor Christians and laymen, or the common man,

are 1) nothing at all, but they must come to heaven through the help of the clergy. Therefore the pope is a nobleman, just as Pharaoh was. Now the gospel comes like a thunderclap and strikes everything to the ground and kills it, saying that it is all nothing [Ps. 144:6], item that it is also dead, and whoever trusts in it is also slain and dead. This is the battle and the passage that Christ has wrought with his resurrection. And this battle he still does with his dear gospel. For, praise God and thanks be to God, there are now many everywhere who recognize the error of the Pope.

But there are also those who want to suppress everything. This is because the devil raises up some foolish people who want to slay everything, make Jews out of us, murder everything; so that one should only kill spiritually, as preaching with the mouth, so that the conscience is enlightened. When the word of God is preached, one has killed rightly. For the hearts do not know it otherwise; just as one does not know now why one wants to make monastics into Christians. The devil felt that the pope should be slain and die; he wanted to prevent this with this uproar, and thus makes an evil noise to the Gospel, so that one says: "Behold, are these the good evangelicals who are now storming the monasteries and burning the castles 2c? But we say that one should preach until God kills them, so that it may be a divine work that God enters the heart through the gospel and slays all holiness, piety and righteousness of such people.

1) Eislebensche: be.

# The thirteenth chapter.

V.1-4. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, which all the mothers of the children of Israel bring forth, both of men and of cattle: for they are mine. Then Moses said unto the people, Remember this

The day ye came out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, that the LORD had brought you forth with a mighty hand: therefore shalt thou not eat leaven. Today you went out in the month of Abib.

(1) Next we have heard, in part, what the firstborn are, namely, that they are the Jews, who with their outward holiness sat on high, and were the chiefest on the earth; even as they must be spiritually slain by the sword of the gospel, they must otherwise go up to heaven with the Lord Christ, that all their nature and law may be done, and become the last, yea, the most despised on the earth; whereas the Gentiles became the first. The other part of this text is about the firstborn, whom God called to sanctify and not to kill. Which means those who would come to the Christian faith from the Jews and Gentiles. So the firstborn was killed, but the other firstborn remains alive and is kept. And in this is the gospel fulfilled, when the Lord Christ saith [Matt. 20:16], The first shall be last, and the last first.

(2) Moses sings the same in his song [Deut. 32:21]: 'I will provoke them again against that which is not a people, against a foolish people will I provoke them to anger;' for they have provoked me to anger and to zeal." As if to say, "As you have forsaken me, the true God, that I should not be your God, and have chosen other gods, so will I forsake you, if you have been my people, and will accept and choose for my own those who were not my people before," (Hos. 2:23) which will make you angry. Just as the Jews are still angry about this to this day; they are gone with all their glory. God has caused the strife. They are not favorable to any people of God, but only to themselves; but it is over, it is no longer valid to be Jews, but to be Christians [Eph. 2, 13. 19. Col. 3, 11.].

So it may also be interpreted to all who are of their kind. For the papists still want to be God's people today. It is about the name that everyone ascribes this name to him, and they want to have this boasted of them: *Invocatum est nomen tuum super nos* [we are indeed called by your name]. Then the true Christians and people of God, or the firstfruits and firstborns, must be despised and succumbed, also be called heretics, but

The others must be true, and be called the Christian Church, and have the Holy Spirit. No one can separate them, but God alone, with the revelation of his gospel, strikes among them and judges which are the true or false Christians.

4 This will remain until the end of the world. For the world wants to be beautiful and holy, and to be praised for being worthy of heaven and eternal bliss, and persecutes other people for wanting to be the church; therefore the true Christians must be called the last. But our dear Lord God considers those who are so despised in the world to be the first. And this is prescribed for us as an example, so that we may know that it must be so for all those who want to be first and foremost, and that those who are tormented and persecuted for a while for the sake of the divine word and the Christian name may also be comforted. But how did the saints come to be? The text speaks:

**V.11-13. When the LORD has brought you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to you and to your fathers, and has given it to you, then you shall separate to the LORD everything that breaks its mother, and the firstborn among the cattle that is male. The firstborn of the ass thou shalt redeem with a sheep; but if thou redeem it not, break his neck. But all the firstborn among your children you shall redeem.**

In the 12th chapter above, we heard how God gave and established a law and commandment to eat the paschal lamb annually, so that the glorious deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt would not be forgotten.

6th Now follows the other law, of the offering or sanctification of the first birth, in remembrance that the first birth of the children of Israel was obtained in Egypt. The sanctified thing was given to the priest, it was from cattle or other fruits; this our Lord God took to Himself, and it was delivered to the priests. For teaching the Law and doing the word of God, the firstborn was to be their food; otherwise, the tribe of Levi had not received any land in the distribution of the Canaanite land, such as



other tribes. When a child was born, it also belonged to the Lord, but he allowed it to be redeemed with a place of the guildler. 1) And this was to do for the preachers of the divine word, that they might supply the people with the divine word. But as they omitted many other laws and ordinances of God, so they did not keep this commandment of God, and the priests were despised; they were given nothing, so that they had to suffer hunger. Therefore the priests also sought false worship, and were also attached to idolatry [Mal. 1, 7. 8.], so the people gave money and goods enough.

(7) Just as in the past in the priesthood much alms was given, and the priests were made rich, and the money for indulgences was thrown away. For when there were false prophets in the world, who led people by the nose, and deprived us of body and soul, and also of goods, they were given money enough. The queen Isabel was able to feed 800 prophets from her table, because Elijah had to be in flight and exile, and other hundred prophets were fed with water and bread by Abdia [Obadiah], the king's chamberlain, hidden in a cave [1 Kings 18:4]. This can be seen as annoying and foolish in the eyes of reason, but I judge for myself that God would be foolish to hurl his gospel in this way, and that his preachers in the world would have to suffer the greatest poverty.

8 Spiritual sanctification or sacrifice means that one should be in the office of preaching. For whoever wants to interpret, let him draw the greater part of it to the ministry of preaching, for that is what it is all about. For God wills to establish all things by the gospel, and so all things shall be established and drawn to it. When I preach, I should preach nothing but faith in Christ, for this alone is valid before God. For in this way I put to death the old firstborn, and the other firstborn I sanctify to God; that is, this firstborn is pleasing to Him, He accepts it, it is assigned to God, and teaches people about God. After that [shall

1) Place of the guildler = a quarter guildler.

I] say that those are God's children who believe in Christ from the heart, who is also the firstborn before all creatures, 2) as St. Paul says [Col. 1:15], and also makes us firstborn and children of God. And even if these are the last in the world, and others are considered the highest and most distinguished, God's judgment is still there, and considers them blessed, but the others as condemned.

(9) Therefore, whoever accepts the gospel and follows it, the same sacrifices with it, that they may confess with their heart and with their mouth that these are God's children who believe in Christ. So all sacrifices should be directed to praise and honor God. Everything should be a sacrifice of praise. For in the 50th Psalm, v. 23, it is said: "He who brings me sacrifices of thanksgiving praises me." This is the very best sacrifice that may happen to GOD. That is why God now and then tells us in the Psalms to bring Him sacrifices of praise. This appeals to Him very much. When we preach and confess that our works are nothing, but we must have our Lord God's works of grace, His favor, goodness and mercy, that is sacrifice. When I confess this with my mouth, I am sacrificing with it. This is not done with money, but by believing with the heart that our works are nothing, but God's mercy and grace, given to us in Christ, do it. If I praise God in the world and confess Him before the people, I am a priest and offer the most beautiful sacrifice.

(10) Now this is the firstborn sacrifice and sanctification. Those who trust in their works and rely on their good, holy lives, praise and extol themselves, and set up an idol, as if God wanted to be praised by their works, and ascribe to their works as if they could help them, which honor belongs to the Lord Christ alone. Now they honor the Lord Christ with their mouths, but in their hearts they blaspheme and disgrace Him [Is. 29, 13. Matth. 15, 8. Marc. 7, 6.f.]. This means to appropriate, sanctify or sacrifice the firstborn to God.

(11) What is the right of the firstborn? Otherwise, two parts of the father's inheritance, twice as much, would belong to the firstborn son,

2) Eisleben: of all creatures.

than to any other child. After that he was also entitled to the rule, the dominion and the priesthood, that he was priest and preacher in the house; the most property, the greatest power and the greatest honor; he was king and priest, emperor and pope.

(12) We Christians have such goods, all of them spiritual. We also have two parts. First, we are priests, that we may have sufficiency of soul, inwardly, that we may obtain salvation and blessedness of soul through Christ, preaching and confessing him, praising, glorifying, and calling upon him in all our afflictions. After this we have the promise that we shall not die of hunger; and though at times there is no food or supply, yet before the ravens came flying and brought food, as happened to Elijah [1 Kings 17:6], or bread rained down from heaven, as manna fell in the wilderness [Exodus 16:4], if we believed alone.

A Christian heart has much to do and much to suffer [Ps. 34, 20], but it is without worry, so certain and secure, as if it had the whole world full of goods [Ps. 73, 25. 26]. For it remembers: My God can always create more than there is in the world. Even if one takes away his goods, one cannot take away God from him. If he needs something later, God can give him more than the goods of the world are his. But we Christians are so troubled and tormented by this worry of the belly, or temporal nourishment, that we do not grasp this comfort firmly enough. Therefore a Christian is also a king, that is, a Christian is a lord over everything, and all creatures must be obedient to him, but spiritually.

14 His life and goods can be taken from him by heart, but he works and does what he is commanded. And even though everything is taken from him, he always improves, and his faith always grows and increases, and so rules in his heart that neither riches nor poverty grieve him, nor make him sadder or happier. If he is rich, having money and goods, he is nothing more cheerful; neither is he anything more sorrowful if he is poor [Phil. 4:12]. If he is scolded or praised, it is of equal value to him. This is the courage he has; this is the joyful, sure faith, so that he clings to God.

15. now tell me what rule

Is it better for a man to fence and fight with the sword, or to have such courage? Whether you overcome one with the sword, he will do what you want; but a Christian heart is such a lord, whom no one can change or grieve; he always remains for himself. He makes such lords out of us (as St. Paul Rom. 8, 35-39. also says: "Who wants to separate us from the love of God? Neither high nor low, principality nor mighty" 2c.), so that nothing can trouble us. But where are these firstborn found, and where are such Christians? St. Paul was one of them.

16) Thirdly, he is also a priest; he has the authority to preach God's word, and to pray before God, to teach the unintelligent people, go up to God through prayer. For we are certain, if we are baptized, that our prayer is acceptable; and if we all pray, we are all priests, we can all teach God's word, which is proclaimed to us from heaven. This is God's work, that each one preach when it is necessary. Now this is the figure and meaning of the same glory. Christians are firstborn in the spirit; those have had the bodily glory of the firstborn.

17 Now the question arises, of which we also said something before: Since neither here in the text nor elsewhere nothing is reported about the restitution of the stolen goods from the Egyptians, whether the Israelites also did right in carrying away their silverware from the Egyptians? Did they not commit theft with it? They borrowed it for their feast, and since it was lent to them, they go in the night and take it away. Do they have the right to do so, or is it theft, or have they stolen it? Has not God commanded in the Ten Commandments that one should not steal? Above [Cap. 11, § 4 f.] is also answered: Such things are not called stolen, but given to them by God, for this cause: Our Lord God's is all. Now he commanded them from heaven to borrow it from the Egyptians and take it with them. Stealing is when I take from another what is his, when I take from another something that he does not give to me, but I steal or alienate it.

secretly. God gave the Egyptians the silverware; now he goes and takes it back from them and gives it to the Israelites; he borrows it from them and deceives them, saying, "So I will have it. Perhaps because they had done hard labor in Egypt, and received no reward for it. But God cut it on a piece of wood and wanted to pay for their work.

So this is what happened according to history. But what does it mean in the New Testament? It is supposed to be an indication of the world's prosperity and wisdom, that wise people with sayings take and draw the Christians to themselves 2c. Now, God does not give us much worldly wisdom. We should leave the beautiful sayings and teachings of the pagan scribes in the external world kingdom, and separate the kingdom of God, where Christians are, from the external world kingdom, and say: To the kingdom of God belongs nothing of worldly wisdom. Nothing else rules and reigns here, but only the pure, pure word of God.

(19) If there are other wise and prudent sayings in reason, let them come out into this outward life, so that one may have more reason and understanding than another. Therefore we have many beautiful sayings in all tongues and languages, for this outward life and being. So one is also better and more skillful than the other to lead a government, because he has a higher reason and understanding, which is the worldly wisdom, which God also gives and gives. Another may also take an example of this, borrowing doctrine and sayings from him; after which example his country and people may also remain in peace, and improve themselves from it; as the pagans have done for the improvement of the police or the world regime, to which the histories bear witness.

The histories rhyme well with such reason or understanding, for they have everything to do with experience; just as the Germans also say in the proverb: Good courage is half the body. This is a fine saying, drawn from reason, and is used when one is distressed, so that one says to him: "Take good courage, and you will get through it. But it is an outward consolation, because out of reason

one comforts the other; which then is also a gift and present of God, and it should be recognized that such comes from God; just as He otherwise also gives wealth. So it is also a special art to wage war; item, to prepare horses; they are all gifts of God, which he has cast into the Rapuse, so that we should govern ourselves. But in the things that are over us, where conscience is to be governed, these sayings apply nothing at all; but there only the clear, bright and pure word of God must govern.

21 Therefore, this meaning is not valid, because the Christian church has been polluted with pagan sayings, even destroyed by them, as the papists have done. But the devil thanks them for this, for this means that Christianity has been pushed to the ground by human wisdom. For worldly wisdom cannot and does not know more than how to have peace on earth; but God wants you to be a Christian and know how to have a gracious God and eternal life, which you will not learn from reason, but God's Word teaches such.

(22) I have often spoken of this, and would very much like us to separate these two kingdoms. For reason, no matter how beautiful and glorious it is, belongs to the world kingdom alone, where it has its dominion and territory. But in the kingdom of Christ, only God's word has the upper hand. Nevertheless, the devil always wants to rule in the church with reason, to have a hand in the sod, and to reign with beautiful pagan sayings and proposals. But the gold and silver, the beautiful jewels, which were stolen in Egypt, are the holy scriptures. For as soon as the apostles separated themselves from the Jews, and they became new people and God's people, the Jews had lost the holy Scriptures; the letter and the parchment they have kept, but the right understanding and opinion or sense they have not [2 Cor. 3:3].

23 Therefore the holy scripture abideth with the true Israelites, and they owed it unto them. There we have fine sayings, beautiful histories and examples, which we use for eternal life.

We are finely instructed by Proverbs; item, see how God has worked faith in Christians. For everything depends on faith; the whole Christian life is based on it. This is the gold and the precious jewels that were stolen from the Egyptians, just as we have stolen the Holy Scriptures from the high schools. Although they carry many books, we have the pure understanding of the Scriptures and adorn ourselves with them, that is, strengthen and improve ourselves in the faith by such sayings. In the prophet Ezekiel [Cap. 16, 10. 13.] God also says: "I have given you my gold and silk", that is, my holy scripture, and the right understanding, which I gave through the prophets, you have perverted, and made a waxen nose on it, according to all your will.

**v.18. And the children of Israel went armed out of the land of Egypt.**

24 They also wore armor. What was the point, since they were much weaker and inferior in strength and power than the king of Egypt, and God wanted to execute them by his power, so that he alone would have the glory of it? He still calls them to arm themselves and to prepare their army, as if they wanted to fight with the heathen; but it is because of this that we do not tempt God. The means are God's larvae and mummery, in which he runs from the earth. He wants to help me in all things, in body and soul, and that I trust in his word alone; yet he also wants me to do my part, to have horse, spear, sword and chariot, and to make spearheads, as if one wanted to overcome by the sword, when it was not God's opinion. David in the 20th Psalm, v. 8, says: I do not rely on my horse, sword or bow 2c.

(25) What is the purpose of all this? Under this armor and warfare, God wants to be with you and hide under it, so that other people will think that you are doing it with your armor and your own power, when God alone is doing it [Psalm 60:14, Psalm 144:1 ff]. God does the same with other things. He tells us to pray, to work 2c., which is all just a mirror

is to be respected. For where God did not bless, not a hair would grow, nor a few straws, but all things would be finished. Nevertheless, he wants me to stand like this: if I did not plow or sow, I would have nothing at all. 1)

For without my work he will not let it be done, and yet it shall not be done by my work. He does not want me to sit at home and be lazy and command God, and wait until a roasted chicken flies into my mouth. That is God's temptation, that he should let something grow for me, since nothing else grows; he does not want that. Therefore it is well said that the ancients said: *Dat Deus omne bonum, sed non per cornua taurum.* And so we must keep ourselves in heart, knowing that nothing will come of it unless he does it, that God may have room, and that he may get a tabernacle with thee, wherein he may hide himself. So they used their armor of war, as if they were skilled in battle and warlike. As if God wanted to say: I will use you for a pretense in this matter alone.

**v.20-22. So they departed from Sukthoth, and pitched tents in Etham, which is before the wilderness. And the LORD went before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them in the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light to walk by day and by night. The pillar of cloud and pillar of fire never departed from the people.**

(27) This is also a marvelous miracle, that God has placed a pillar of white cloud in the sky by day and a pillar of fire in the sky by night, according to which the children of Israel should travel. This miracle is often remembered in the Holy Scriptures, as in the fourteenth chapter of Exodus, v. 14, and also in Nehemiah, v. 12. For God wanted to indicate that He wanted to be present with His people, to protect them from their adversaries, and not to abandon them with counsel and action in all kinds of dangers, but to provide for their survival in the darkness.

1) The meaning of the last sentence will be: God wants me to stand as if I would have nothing at all if I did not plow or sow.

sal that it may be endured [1 Cor. 10:13].  
028 We Christians also walk out of Egypt, out of the kingdom of the devil and of sins, toward the promised land, that is, toward eternal life; and come into the wilderness, that is, into all kinds of tribulation, distress, and trouble; not knowing the way, that we might

and overcome them. But God gives us guides, as the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, that is, the preaching of the divine word and the custom of the reverend sacraments; which shine and shine before us, that we may meet the way in the desert and find it to eternal life.

## The fourteenth chapter.

**V.1-4. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say that they turn about, and pitch their tent toward the valley of Hiroth, between Migdol and the sea, toward Baalzephon, and there over against the sea pitch their tent. For Pharaoh shall say of the children of Israel, They know not where out of the land; the wilderness hath determined them. And I will harden his heart, and he shall pursue after them; and I will bring glory upon Pharaoh, and upon all his might; and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD. And they did so 2c.**

(1) Hitherto there have been told several plagues which God inflicted upon Egypt for the children of Israel's sake. Then followed, in the 12th chapter, the tenth plague, which struck the firstborn, and is the last plague, after which the children of Israel immediately came out of Egypt. But so that this, along with the other plagues, and also the redemption from Egypt, would not be forgotten in the world, but would be preached and known to everyone forever, God instituted the feast of Easter, and commanded all kinds of outward ways and customs or ceremonies to be kept at this feast. But if we look at these by heart, it seems to be vain foolishness. For it is strange that they had to eat the paschal lamb with unleavened bread, and stand dressed up, as if they were wanderers. One cannot calculate the reason why God commanded it in this way. However, God undoubtedly wanted to bind the eyes and minds of the descendants by this special way.

Ears to this exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt.  
(2) Just as we Christians are commanded to preach, praise, sing and speak of the memorial of our dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and to preach, speak, write and write about His glorious work forever and ever, that He was the Son of God, born of Mary, crucified and died, and rose again from death on the third day, so that He might deliver us from death, sin, hell and the power of the devil. 1, 23. ff], and that this remembrance might remain in the world, the Lord Christ instituted the reverend sacrament of the altar, an outward ceremony and manner of receiving in bread and wine the body and blood of the Lord Christ, which we should practice, preach, sing, and say, commemorating his passion, death, and resurrection. In the sacraments he wants to be taken hold of and found, and to be with us.  
(3) Baptism is also a sure sign of taking hold of the true God, who created heaven and earth, and whose Son died for us, and who gives us the Holy Spirit in our hearts. In the same way, the paschal lamb was to be a reminder to the same people of Israel that God was present with them, and that they served Him and called upon Him, because He had brought them out of Egypt through so many miracles. And to strengthen this memory, this outward sign of the paschal lamb is used. For God has

He has always revealed himself to the world through his word and outward signs, and he has done this because he cannot bear us building our own bridge to heaven and seeking him there.

(4) Just as those who wanted to climb to heaven with their works did before that time, when we were monks. We preached: If I am shaven, and have a plate, wear a black cap, then I please God. Yes, you please the devil on your head. Such things are all set up and invented by them. I will get him with my sign. 1) Such a sign and signifiers invented by me are not valid; it is the devil. I shall have a sign, and that is an outward sign; but not that which I have instituted, created and devised, but which God has instituted. I shall have such a sign, of which God Himself says: "This is what I have instituted, that it may be such an outward sign, so that you may feel that I am such a God, and that I am present with you.

5 According to history, this is so that it may be said with certainty: God truly dwells here. So he also gave the sacraments as a sign, so that one could say: God truly dwells there. I have not instituted it, nor has any man devised it, but it has come from heaven; lest I should add by myself, and not make a consecration to please God.

006 As Jeroboam prepared two calves, one in Dan, and the other in Bethel, and preached, Behold, Israel, here is thy God, which brought thee up out of Egypt: and the people went and sacrificed there, thinking that there was the right worship, and that God was there: and that they called upon the true God, they suffered them not. The prophets have broken up with the false teachers and have preached to each other, and they have also recently perished, so that they have all been slain because of this punitive preaching.

7 So we have also done, and with the

1) Here the relation is again very unclear. With this last sentence, perhaps it should be said: I will seek to attain Him [God] with the outward signs raised by myself. Cf. f.

The monks and popes who pretend that their indulgences, masses, vigils, pilgrimages, monastic life, fasting, praying and almsgiving should make them a gracious God, and that their life would be the right service of God.

8. but God says: Here you will find me, in the preaching chair, in baptism, in the Lord's Supper, for this is my outward order. But we, in the papacy, have pretended and said: If you want to go to heaven, you must go out of the world into a monastery, crawl into a cloister; there, you will find our Lord God; so we have fallen into it, like swine into the gate.

9 Now, although this seems foolish and foolish, it should apply in the Christian church alone. For God wanted to give His people outward signs, outward pieces and order, so that they would meet Him and find Him, and thus He wanted to control and prevent them, so that they would not invent their own worship services.

They did not have to wear shoes; item, carry sticks in their hands, and use other ceremonies. Nothing seems glorious there, but everything has a foolish appearance. But at the same time, before baptism and the sacrament of the altar were ordained, it was a great thing that God wanted to draw and bind the people to Himself with these outward things, and also to bind their eyes and ears to this ordinance, so that they would be right and true.

Our fictitious devotion and works are not like this, even if we use the cap and monastic life in the same way. For the human condition is not valid, and even if one uses it well, my cap is of no use to me. Circumcision does not help either, as St. Paul [1 Cor. 7:19] teaches; but the divine ordinances are all based on faith. Also the sacrament of the altar urges me on faith, because the words: "Take, eat and drink" 2c., they demand faith. The same faith is not lacking. Even though I am a prankster, God's word and order is nevertheless in its power and remains with the faithful. So they also sang, and remembered when they ate the paschal lamb: "I am the

O Lord, your God, who brought you out of Egypt." You must now believe this.

(12) Those who have misused it have done so to their detriment; the order is in itself delicious, and the word has remained right, true, good, and wholesome. But if I say, I will go to a monastery, and so I will be saved, the same word is not right, for I do it without faith. Therefore, what God ordains, however foolish it seems, because it has God's word for it, that is valid for your faith. As far as this story is concerned, in our time all this has ceased, and now something else applies than the sacrament of baptism and the altar.

013 Let this be said of the history. Afterward the children of Israel went out of Egypt, taking with them all the goods they had borrowed and borrowed, and leaving all the firstborn dead behind them, and so they must go out by night, being driven out in haste, so that they cannot make dough for bread.

**V.9-12 And the Egyptians pursued after them, and overtook them, when they were encamped by the Red sea, with horses, and chariots, and horsemen, and all Pharaoh's host, in the valley of Hiroth against Baalzephon. And when Pharaoh was come nigh unto them, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians went after them; and they were sore afraid, and cried unto the LORD. And they said unto Moses, Were there not graves in Egypt, that thou hadst to lead us away to die in the wilderness? Why hast thou done this unto us, to bring us out of Egypt? Is it not that we said unto thee in Egypt, Cease, and let us serve the Egyptians. For would it ever be better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness?**

(14) We will soon hear how they were delivered from King Pharaoh, and they have a beautiful example of faith. They went to the Red Sea at God's command, at His direction and instruction, and pitched their tents there, having God's command and calling for themselves, but came into great danger and distress because of it. For when they come into the wilderness,

They were situated so that they had the Red Sea in front of their noses, and six times a hundred thousand fighting men were with them, without any other women, children, servants and maids, who could not jump over the sea. After that there were high mountains on both sides, so that they were like a gulf between two great mountains, and in front they had the sea. Behind comes the enemy Pharaoh, and presses on them with all power, and the enemy thinks: Ei, it is good, there they will not escape me over the sea, so they will not be able to climb me over the high mountain. Falls therefore into delusion, that he thinks, he has them now, as he himself wants. And indeed he had them, just as one might have a mouse in a trap, and partridges in a yarn. But he did not think that God would help them. But God announced this danger to the children of Israel beforehand, and also promised them help and salvation, because he wanted to put honor on him and prove that he alone was God.

(15) From this we may learn how it is with those who walk in the divine profession, that temptation, hardship and danger come under their eyes. For the devil does not celebrate, but sends all kinds of impulses to them, if they want to get tired and weary of the profession. But God knows well about such danger and wants to help them out of it. For He does not send such distress to His own to destroy them, but to show His grace and mercy toward them, and to show His earnestness, wrath and displeasure on His enemies. For this reason he also says in this place that he wants to give honor to Pharaoh and all his power, and that the Egyptians should realize that he is the Lord.

16. but they, the children of Israel, can neither see nor know this; indeed, the fear and distress of death comes into their faces, as they testify with their own words, when they say to Moses, Yes, "were there not graves enough in Egypt, that we should have died there?" 2c. If we fall over the mountains, we break our necks in two; if we jump into the sea, we drown; if we run back, we fall on the enemy's sword. And so there is a great clamor and a great cry.

The people complained because they did not all believe and trust in God. Many of them also left Egypt for the sake of carnal freedom, because they wanted to be noblemen after the great work, hardship and joyful service. But when the cross and the danger of death came, their unbelief became apparent, their mouths were full of blasphemy against Moses, and their gestures showed great impatience and despair against God.

(17) Moses' heart also trembled and wavered here. For he was their duke and commander, their chief and captain, that he thought: You have carried them out, and now you bring so many people around your neck. See how they are cheering for you. Such inward melancholy and crying of the heart of Moses is heard by God quietly and soon, although Moses does not cry out much. For this is the reason that he was much too afraid and anxious to do so.

This is a right, beautiful kind and piece of faith. There one feels the power of the divine word, and what the Christian's faith is. The Christian trusts God, and is well pleased with what God does with him. He could have led the children of Israel through the sea soon, but he wants to try them even better and lets them lie all night so that they can see the tents of Egypt behind them. But the angel of the Lord goes before the children of Israel in a cloud, and now that the Egyptians are following them, the cloud descends and sits between the Egyptians and the Israelites. Now the Egyptians do not think otherwise, because it is only a weather, and cloudy, dark clouds; but God says to Moses, "Strike the sea with your rod; immediately a wind comes and tears the sea apart, so that it stands on both sides like two walls.

19. before that they were very sad, lamenting, they are of death, and these are their words, "were there not tombs in Egypt?" 2c. They want to say: Fie on you, Moses, you desperate villain, you would be worth to be torn with teeth or tongs. Now we think, when such a story is told to us, that they have done too much to the things; but if we had been there, we would have lamented the same. If still

If some warring nation were to come today and attack us without warning, we would all despair. But here we must look at their faith and see into their hearts. Their faith closes its eyes, and does not see the sea, nor the mountains, nor the enemy, but hangs only on the word of God, that God had said: I will do it, and out of Pharaoh's house of service I will bring forth the children of Israel.

20 Nevertheless, look at how strangely he attacks it. Since he wants to set them free, he leads them all the more into death. God says: I will do it. But one would say, "How will you do it? For here is Pharaoh's sword; item, the high mountains and the deep sea, and the great power and might of the enemy. Where shall we go? To bring a man to life when his head is cut off is slow. But God says: Let me take care. Do you then say: It is impossible, reason cannot believe it! Yes, answers GOD, I will have that too; see on my word. I must believe that God can blow away the sea like a stick, and that He can move the mountains, and drive away the sword of Pharaoh, and remove the earth. For he has made heaven and earth.

(21) This many have believed. For God is able to make the sea dry as if a bridge were crossing it, and the soft water must become hard as a wall; but the mountains must become soft as water or a river, and the sea must be a fine, dry path. When one has stepped into it a little before, it has squeaked. 1) Therefore, whoever has seen these walls of the sea and has seen that this sea has become a wall, may think: Who would be so bold as to go in? And if a man were so bold, he should be afraid lest the waters fall upon him and drown him. For the sea stood upright on both sides, as if it were cut in the middle. There one had to fear that

1) Quacking is probably as much as: quacking, making a splashing noise.



not the water wants to fall on your head. Because no one holds it, there is no wall drawn under it.

But faith that keeps it, that knows that God keeps it. The sea will have opened wider than this city of Wittenberg is long or wide; six, seven or eight miles long. This is a great separation and a glorious redemption, and the miracle is so great that one cannot marvel enough at it. So long shall the sea stand for the children of Israel, until they are all over with their goods and chattels. Think how much time they must have taken to get through with such a large warring nation. For this people must have leisure and space to pass through; they must have passed a day, two or three, eating and drinking as they went, for otherwise they would not have had much food or drink in the midst of the sea.

(23) It has been an excellent thing, though it is described here in brief words; but if you think about it and calculate it, it is a great, wonderful thing, and the bottom or ground in the sea has been as deep, and the water as high, as two high, great mountains. That has granted six or seven miles, that in the sea has been a dry way and fort, as otherwise a road on a land.

24 Now, in truth, it was bold people who dared to enter and go in. Is it not a miracle? But it is the right kind of faith, which is seen here in the children of Israel. Faith closes the eyes, though not completely, because the heart is trembling. But they trust in the word, and believe God can either pave the sea, or make the mountains level and even, or blow away the Egyptians, or strike them all to death at once.

(25) If we also believed that when we were in distress and danger of life and limb, when death crept up on us or we fell into the hands of our enemies, we would say: I have a God who has promised me that he will not forsake me; there is his word that he will save me and keep me alive. When I believe this, I do not look at the enemies, at death, sword, pestilence,

I will not go through hunger, prison or any other hardship that comes my way, but I will go through it. And so at last the enemies must be turned to powder and ashes, and the spears to straw; as Pharaoh with all his armor drowns and disappears before their eyes.

(26) But if anyone does not believe, God cannot perform miracles or wonders on him, but he must perish and cannot escape death. But they that trust in God shall be saved, if heaven and earth should perish. For he has thus promised, saying, If thou shalt believe, thou shalt be saved [Ps. 125:1 ff]. His word is more to him than heaven and earth. For with his word he created all things; therefore he also wills that his word and promises should be believed more. Even if all the world, the heavens, the earth and all the stars were against you and proved to be your enemies, you should still trust my word. For is not his voice so mighty that it could sweep away the heavens and the mountains? It is not seen, but he who believes has it.

(27) Faith is quite a miracle; it makes a man, who is otherwise a weak, poor creature, have such great courage that he becomes so proud that he can say: If all devils fell upon me, even if all kings, emperors, heaven and earth were against me, yet I believe and know that I shall be preserved. Faith is a great thing; one can never understand its power, strength and might enough.

For this reason, this example of faith is glorious. The divine word and faith have great power; therefore nothing is impossible for faith, nor too difficult, nor too bitter [Marc. 9, 23]. Faith is a great and glorious work. He that believeth is a lord, and though he die, yet must he live again. If one is poor, he must be rich; if one is sick, he must be healed. So when one has greased the cart 1) by faith, the cart goes on. But we do not practice faith,

and do not yet realize that God can help us in all our needs; item, that faith is stronger than heaven and earth, or all creatures. For God Himself says [Luc. 21, 33. 1: "Heaven and earth must pass away; but His word, that passeth not away."

29 Thus it is seen here expressly and actually that the children of Israel did not help themselves by their armor of war, although they also had sword and other armor. For the fist or human reason cannot help here; the water in the Red Sea cannot be poured out, nor can the high mountains be crushed or shattered, even if they had fasted forever. But there is no other help here than God's word and promise, that God says: I am with you; I will be your God. This word is not our work. Item, that he says to Moses [v. 26.], "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may fall upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and upon their horsemen." This word alone they shall follow and cleave unto; and we also to him, as to the right Asylum, have refuge and comfort.

(30) It is a joke and a mockery to reason that Moses strikes the sea with his staff, and the sea is afraid and runs away from each other, and stands on both sides as a wall, as if Moses took a spoon or a gun, 1) and wanted to scoop out the water, when the whole world could not scoop it out. But this is it that God says: I will save you. Thus saith Moses and the children of Israel, We believe it, O Lord. And Moses says, "Go on, open up the sea. So faith pervades and divides the waters and the sea from one another. Therefore we should also learn to believe, and not despise these beautiful, comforting examples.

031 Now that the children of Israel are passed through, Pharaoh, who is senseless, foolish and foolish, thinks, I also will pass through. For he sees not the miracle and wonder of God, but is blinded and hardened, saying in his heart, We also are pious, we will pass through like the children of Israel; and yet we are desperate and wicked.

The children of Israel, who persecute God's people, think that now they will deal with them and afflict them. But when Pharaoh and the Egyptians come a day's journey into the sea, and the children of Israel are through, God says to Mosiah, "Strike into the sea, and the waters (that stood as walls on both sides) will fall into each other again.

(32) Why did not the mighty king of Pharaoh defend himself? The wheels flow away from the chariots, and all his power swims in the Red Sea. For God has caused a weather, a wind, roaring, terror and flight to come among them, so that they cry out, O let us flee, now is the time to flee. But they had come too far into the hole, and were all stuck together in the water, some hundred thousand men. Then the water was all over and they were all drowned, because not one of them had escaped.

So God can save His people and help them. If Pharaoh had had faith, the walls of water would have remained standing; but since he does not have faith, the stones turn back into water. Faith turns water into stones, it also turns fire into water, and it can turn water into fire, and God does it as he wills who believes, as the 145th Psalm, v. 19, also says: *Deus facit voluntatem timentium se*, he does the will of those who fear him. This is what God wants us to know from Him, and this is what we should do to Him, that He wants to help the faithful. That is why he has done these miraculous works, so that we may also learn to believe and expect God's help. As in the prophet Isaiah, chapter 30, v. 15, God exhorts us to faith and hope in divine help, saying: "In silence and hope you will be strong. As Moses also says: "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see what salvation the Lord will do for you today.

(34) Thus far we have heard of the children of Israel coming out of Egypt, as before of the paschal lamb and the firstborn, which the Holy Spirit signified and signified by these two things to come to pass in the new testament. Now the third and last one is still to be dealt with behind the scenes, as how the children of Israel through

1) "Grinded" is probably as much as: Scale, scoop.

went through the Red Sea. God did a great miracle in leading the people of Israel through the Red Sea with dry feet, because otherwise they were trapped on both sides. For they had the Red Sea before their eyes; on their backs the enemy pursued them, the king of Egypt; on either side was a great mountain range and high cliffs over which they could not climb; they were therefore in great distress and trouble, and death was before their eyes. Therefore they said also unto Moses, Were there not graves in Egypt?" In spite of all these obstacles, God nevertheless directed this march or passage through the Red Sea. So that he wanted to indicate that he could and would help us in all our needs and concerns, that he also knew how to find ways and space where there was no way or space at all, and in sum could make everything out of nothing.

**Interpretation of this story.**

(35) Now let us also consider what the Red Sea is. In Greek it is called the Red Sea, not because the water is red, for it is one sea, but because it had a red shore; the mountains on the shore or edge had red earth. In Hebrew it is called the Reed Sea, because many reeds and canes have grown on the shore from time to time.

(36) Now we have done three things before it comes to pass. First, the Israelites are terrified, and it is as if they were dead. Then God promised that he would harden the Egyptians to follow the Israelites to the sea, and said to Moses, "Strike the sea with your staff and the water will be divided. Third, he sends an angel before the people in the air, and the angel must lie down behind the people and retreat, and sit down between the Israelites and the Egyptians. Our Lord God does not take care of His people in any other way than as a father or mother takes care of her children, cares for them and helps them [Ps. 103:13]. For God takes care of them with such concern and diligence that He does not abandon them in times of need, but helps them out and rescues them.

His. But he will not come sooner, unless all is gone, and utterly desolate, that the trouble is greatest [Ps. 9:10]. Before that, everything must fall to pieces, and the oxen must stand on the mountain, and the string must be pulled to its highest point, so that it now wants to burst; the water must go over mountains and valleys, before they will be delivered from the Egyptians.

37 For this reason, the help has been delayed so long that they are in despair over it, thinking, "Oh, who would have died and been buried already? They grumble and are impatient. This shows our weakness and sin. When the conscience is frightened, it fears God's wrath, which makes one despondent and stupid.

038 Then Pharaoh also is after one, that is, the lawgivers, who make heaven too narrow, and hell too wide, and make one despair, and fear that he shall be eternally lost. So the children of Israel feared that they would lose their hair and be lost in this misery of death. Now this is a miserable torment, which is often lamented in the Psalms, where the saints say, "O Lord, you have cast me out of your sight" [Ps. 51:13]. Item, in the 6th Psalm, v. 1. f.: "Oh Lord, do not punish me in your anger, and do not chastise me in your wrath. O Lord, be merciful to me, for I am weak; heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled, and my soul is greatly distressed. O Lord, how long!" Wherever I look, I die among my enemies. I am frightened everywhere, heaven and earth have become too narrow for me, I could stay nowhere, everywhere were my enemies.

(39) We are taught that we should not fall into despair, nor despair, and how we should get out of trouble in sorrow. For if it does not come to such a hard state and move, then God's grace and help does not taste good to us.

40 Then Mosi was told to strike the sea with his staff, and the water would be divided, become dry, and stand like two walls. The water that would otherwise drown others must become the protection and keep them alive. The one that should choke and cause damage to the

That must do to the pious and bring them to life. That should also lead to hell, that must help to heaven.

(41) Many prophets and psalms have been concerned about the Red Sea, that it served the people of Israel for life, and yet it was the death of Egypt. So wonderful is God that he helps me to bliss with that which is otherwise my hell, and that he brings me to honor through disgrace. The Red Sea would have been the right bitter death for the children of Israel; they would all have been drowned in it, as it happened to the Egyptians; nevertheless, this death is a life for the Israelites. And it is said here that the sea stood as two walls, as if there were no water at all.

42 But how does this happen? Because Moses struck it with a rod, stick or staff by God's command. It is the blow that does it. It is a foolish thing that he should strike the water with a rod, and this blow should have such power that it should divide the sea, that it should stand as two walls, and become the Israelites' shelter and shield. If it were not written in the Scriptures, it would be considered the greatest folly and foolishness for a piece of wood or a stick to do such great things. But it is that God could have done it just as well without the staff of Moses, and the staff would not have been necessary. For God did it, and not the staff, if one wants to look at it right. For the text says: When the sea was smitten with the rod, there came a wind that lifted up the sea, and it was dry. The wind took it away, and not the staff.

The rod is the holy gospel; as everywhere in the holy Scriptures God's word is called a rod, as in the third and twentieth Psalm, v. 4: "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me," 2c., and in lesaiä in the eleventh chapter, v. 15, it is said: "He will make his hand pass over the waters with his strong wind, and will beat the seven rivers, that one may go through with shoes. This is done with the rod or staff, so that it must go and be beaten, and be driven with joy between the seven rivers.

to sinners; this then makes consciences confident. When the blow is struck, sin, the devil, death and all misfortune depart. After the blow, the wind blows away the sea, so that it becomes space; that is, when God's word is driven, then the rod is struck into the water, and after the word follows the Holy Spirit, who blows away the water and makes a courage, renews the hearts; then death, sin and all misfortune is gone, disappears, atomizes and flies away.

Now this is a wonderful art of God, that he acts with us through the oral word when it is preached, gives and bestows the Holy Spirit, who creates that nothing must harm a Christian man, but the counterplay must take place so that what would be harmful and corrupt in himself and in his nature may also be helpful and useful to him [Proverbs 8:34 ff]. The casting of the rod into the sea is to freely thrust out the gospel, to preach and drive it, in temptations bodily and spiritually. Then the Holy Spirit comes and makes room. So it is when sins weigh me down, my evil conscience weighs me down and drives me to despair; the more these offend and weigh me down, the more I am driven to hope in God.

45 This is a merry and subtle warfare, that I have the word of God, and hear Christ preached, that he is my Lord, and stand for me [Eph. 6:13, Pf. 144:1]. Then my former life and being, also my sin is there, which is like the Red Sea, where Pharaoh says, This and that thou hast not kept: but the more the law, sin and devil torment me, the more I hope, and space is made for me, if I cleave to the word of God. So also the sins must help a Christian; and if he had not sin, he would not come through so well. For if I did not feel sin, the evil life and conscience, the power of the divine word would never taste good to me. But because they torment me and make hell hot and terrible, I am all the more aware of the power of the divine word, which I cling to and brings me through.

46 Thus God has decreed in this matter; and what I speak of sin, that

is also said by others. You will not get out of it but by the word of God alone, when you strike the sea with the rod; that is, if you accept God's word, then no misfortune need harm you. The word of God divides it tremendously, so that this same sin may benefit you and help you to get through it much better than otherwise. So the sea makes alive that which otherwise kills. This is done by the rod, and that the wind comes, which makes everything dry and dries it. The rod did not do it, but the staff only struck; but the wind did it. For God wants to give the Holy Spirit through the word; without the word He will not do it [Joh. 3, 8. Gal. 3, 2.]. He could have divided the water without the rod, but he did not want to do it. So the wind will not divide and drive away your temptation and calamity without the rod or without the word of God. Hold fast to the word alone, take it in your fist, and strike freshly into the midst of sin and death; here is God's word, and it will make all things pass away, and make room.

Otherwise, the devil has filled the world with spirits preaching from the wind and the Spirit, but without the staff of Moses, and has abandoned the holy Scriptures. I warn you to beware, for I greatly fear we will lose God's word again because of our ingratitude. The wind does not divide the sea unless one has struck it with a rod. God does not enlighten you without His divine word.

48 The rod is nothing compared to the sea, if one wants to calculate it with reason. For the staff is about two cubits long, so the sea is about eight or ten miles wide; nor does Moses strike it with his staff, because God told him to strike it; and the wind soon followed, dividing it and drying it. So also the word of God is a bad letter, black ink, a word like another word. Then they say: Well, what will that redeem from sins, death, the devil and hell? But see thou, and handle diligently the divine word, and the Holy Ghost shall come, and follow with the word, and smite out all thy calamities, and help thee through.

The other Pharaohs, Pharaoh himself, were drowned in the Red Sea; that is, where the word of God is not, but the doctrines of men and the statutes of men are, or the law of God, and trust in good works, all are drowned.

(49) Pharaoh is a teacher without God and without the Holy Spirit, an idle preacher who makes one fall from the grace of God and walks in his own holiness and trust in good works. He who follows this teacher must fall to the ground, he cannot resist it. But whoever has God's word, sin, the law and death do not harm him. But he who does not have the rod, but hoards other spirits, whom he follows, he will drown in his conscience.

**V. 19, 20: Then the angel of God, who reigned before the tents, rose up and came behind them, and the pillar of cloud also departed from behind them, and came between the tents of Egypt and Israel. And there was a dark cloud, and it lighted up the night, so that they could not come together all that night, both they and they.**

50 It is also a miracle that God calls an angel to interpose between the children of Israel and Egypt. This is a glorious comfort, that God cares for his own in a fatherly way. For He makes His help appear here, and gives us the angels as guards and escorts. It is as if God wants to say here: I will make it so that Pharaoh will chase after you; then he will guide you. Thus, in His word, God has announced to us beforehand what is to come and what would pass over us. That is to say, fatherly and faithfully warned and admonished, and also promised that He would not forsake us. For there is God's word, which says: Those who persecute you shall serve and benefit you. Just as even today the pope and tyrants have promoted the gospel against their will, even though they have raged and raged against it and wanted to suppress it completely.

Therefore, God acts fatherly enough with the Israelites, proclaiming to them that He will not forsake them. Therefore, the saints have taken much comfort that God is so close to His saints that even the angels have given them

The fourth and thirtieth Psalm, v. 8, also says: "The angel of the Lord is encamped round about them that fear the Lord, and helps them out"; and the 91st Psalm, v. 11, 12, says: "He hath commanded his angels concerning thee, that they should keep thee in all thy ways, that they should bear thee up in their hands, and that thou shouldest not strike thy foot against a stone." If we believe this, we should be the more joyful. For the dear angels are our guards and escorts, yes, our servants and attendants, who must wait on the Christians so that no harm befalls them, as the epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 1, 14.] testifies that the angels are ministering spirits, sent out to serve those who are to be saved. So we also see here that the children of Israel do not have any wall or rampart around them, but like a great host, by which they are protected from Pharaoh, so that they are now safe and certain of God's help.

(52) But faith is needed to know that the angels of God are around us, just as an army of war encamps and settles in the field with its armor, spear, rifles, horse and chariot. This is undoubtedly true, whoever could believe it alone, and trust in God, would be sure that the dear angels are standing with him. Therefore, we should take comfort in the protection of the angels and be sure that we will not have or gain any trouble in dangerous situations. I myself would rather have one angel around me than four and twenty Turkish emperors with all their power and authority; even if they had a hundred times a thousand guns with them, it is still nothing compared to one angel [2 Kings 19:35].

And if we had no other consolation than this one, it would be enough. Tell me, is it not a great thing that God is so careful for us, and looks so closely upon us? What more can he do? Yes, you say, I would like to see an angel. Dear, there would be no need for faith; but one must believe it. We have a fine, glorious example of this in the history of the prophet Elisha [2 Kings 6:14-16]. His servant saw that a great army of Syrians was coming around the city of Dothan, where Elisha was, and was besieging it. This knew

When the servant told him, he said, "Do not be afraid, there are more of them with us than with them," and asked God to open the servant's eyes, and he saw that the mountains around Dothan were all full of fiery horses and chariots. Yes, if one opens his eyes in this way, he will see. Therefore, if you trust in God alone, you will see not only a hundred thousand angels, but all the mountains full of angels; indeed, you will see God Himself around you.

(54) So it is also shown here that the angel had to take care of the people of Israel against the Egyptians, so that we may know that we have such a Lord who protects and guards us, so that no harm may befall us (Ps. 121:4). Truly, it is a sin and a shame that we have so many beautiful histories and sayings of the holy Scriptures, and yet we cannot trust the dear God, who has given us such strong, mighty and comforting promises in this case; nor do we go there and respect it. This is all due to our sorrowful unbelief.

**V. 21, 22: When Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, the LORD caused it to pass away with a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry, and the waters were divided from one another. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry land, and the waters were for walls unto them on the right hand and on the left.**

55] This is the other miracle that happens here, that God leaves the waters as walls, and the depths of the sea must be dried up, so that the children of Israel may pass through; so that God's right hand, power and omnipotence may be felt, that He may well help His own in times of need, as a gracious God. So let us learn to believe in God. For this example shows us what faith is capable of, what help it achieves, and what emphasis it has. Of this the epistle to the Hebrews in the eleventh chapter, v. 29, boasts and preaches with these words: "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as through a dry land; and when the Egyptians wanted to follow them, they all sank and were drowned. [Now follows the third miracle:

**V. 24-26 When the morning awakening came, the LORD shouted at the tents of Egypt from a pillar of fire and a cloud, and made terror in their tents. And thrusting the wheels from their chariots, he overthrew them with impetuosity. Then said the Egyptians, Let us flee from Israel: the LORD fight for them against the Egyptians. And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand over the sea, that the waters may fall again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen 2r.**

056 And when the Egyptians pursued after the children of Israel, and overtook them, God by an angel terrified them, that they should flee: but the sea smote them again, and kept them, and drowned them all.

(57) This miracle should awaken the fear of God in us, so that we may reflect on it and see how God can punish and overthrow the wicked and impenitent, as He is doing here to Pharaoh and Egypt. Therefore Joshua says in chapter 4, v. 23, 24: "God dried up the Red Sea for this reason, and let them pass through, so that all the peoples of the earth would know the hand of the Lord, how mighty it was, and that they would always fear God the Lord" 2c.

(58) Now we must also treat the last part as the saying of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 10:1, 2, where he says: "Our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized under Moses, with the cloud and with the sea," which in the same place is not a mystery or allegory, but a history. But if anyone desires to make secret interpretations, to interpret a history, and to draw it into an allegoriam, let him draw it on the divine word, and see how one deals with faith and conscience. St. Paul uses it as an example and history for himself, as if to say: "Our fathers were baptized in the sea, just as we are; that is, they also had God's word at that time, that they were told to die and enter eternal life through Christ; that they were therefore redeemed through the word and faith in Christ. Therefore, through faith in the word they have attained the same righteousness.

1) Eisleben's: the clouds.

which we also have. Abraham also entered eternal life and was baptized through the word of God to Christ.

(59) Being baptized in this place and several other times in the Scriptures (as when Christ told the two sons of Zebedee in Matthew 20:22, "Can you be baptized with baptism, that I may be baptized?") means and understands in itself every man's peril, challenge or work, commanded and imposed by God. This is his baptism. For he has God's word, and is led into many adversities, from which God helps him through the word, and all his suffering and temptation becomes like baptism to him.

60] But that St. Paul [1 Cor. 10:6] says, "All these things happened to them as an example," has been interpreted by some as if the example were an allegory or spiritual interpretation, but it is wrong; rather, it says, "All these things happened to the Jews, and this deed, as the passage through the Red Sea, happened as a figure, an example, and an example, to show that it will happen to us also. For just as they had their adversity and peril, from which God saved them, so we also have our adversity and baptism, from which we are saved. As if he should say: Whoever wants to be a true Christian and be saved must be baptized, that is, rolled, armored and afflicted, Apost. 14:22, of which we have many examples in the Scriptures. And it costs more to learn the Scriptures correctly than to learn them, as the idiots and false spirits themselves dream, so they soon get tired of the Scriptures.

61 The example here is not called a mystery, it was not a figure, but a great earnestness; God's word, which gives life [Ebr. 4:12], and the right faith were there; therefore it was not done to them in appearance, but the deed itself was there. The figure or example must not be drawn and interpreted on the spiritual interpretation alone; it was an example, that as they have done, so must we also do.

62) Although all histories have their interpretation, so that they signify Christ, they are also serious in themselves, and are

not only the shells, but also the core. St. Paul 1 Cor. 10:4 says: "They had the same drink with us," that is, the same faith in Christ as we have. How could they have led a meaning alone, and not have caught Christ Himself? Yes, indeed. So learn that it is not a meaning or figure, but an example. Every man must walk in his sea of red if he is to bathe in it. Then learn how to divide the red sea, and

make a safe road for you. Do not look around at your good works, but take the staff, that is, the divine word. When you do this, the wind comes, that is, the Holy Spirit comes with the word and makes way, so that you can say: If it had not been for this calamity, I would have been there, and I would not have passed through as I have now. The water must help the children of Israel and be their wall; thus, what otherwise wants to hinder us and be harmful, that must prosper us to benefit and all good.

## The fifteenth chapter.

**Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord, saying: I will sing to the LORD, for he has done a glorious thing; he has cast horse and chariot into the sea.**

We have just heard of a great miracle and wonder that God performed for the people of Israel, when He led them through the Red Sea and drowned King Pharaoh and his warriors in it. This was an extraordinary miraculous and terrifying work of God, and was done so that the people of Israel would believe in God, trust in Him, and give thanks and serve Him for such an unspeakable great good deed. For he snatched them out of the jaws and teeth like death. But such a story is also described so that we should recognize from this wonderful deed who God is, namely, who can help even in the midst of death. As the 68th Psalm, v. 21, also says: "We have a God who helps, and the Lord GOD who saves from death. Therefore one should trust in him that he will do all things well.

(2) For this purpose we are to make good use of this history. For as the children of Israel received help from the Lord, so he will be our helper in time of need [Rom. 15:12]. The children of Israel see the Egyptians on the shore of the sea all dead and drowned; therefore the people fear the Lord, and believe in him, and

From that time on, they recognize what kind of God they have and learn to fear and obey Him. Such devotion was great among the children of Israel if it had lasted long; but it does not last longer than a dance and high mass.

3. now follows Mosiah's and the children of Israel's song of joy or praise, as they thank God for these great benefits; which psalm was sung in Israel afterwards for years and years. For it has been the way and usage to sing of God's miraculous work, or, as they used to say, to set up a play to sing and say about. For God acts with us in such a way that we have both ears full, and everywhere cause and incentive enough to praise, extol and honor Him. We have an example of this here in Moses, whom David also followed and made many wonderful psalms and songs. After that, other fathers did the same when God performed a special miracle on them, as when some honest battle took place and God gave victory, they sang about it afterwards. And it is right to do God's work by preaching and singing, so that the ears of the whole world will be filled with it.

### I will sing to the Lord.

This is the summa of this psalm, that Moses and the people will sing and praise God. It shall be a psalm of praise, when they sing



and want to say about God's omnipotence, seriousness, power, and also about his grace and goodness, that he has done a miraculous work on them. They have no song to sing on account of themselves, for there is nothing in this deed of which they could boast; but they were terrified and also half-dead because of the cruel danger to life and limb in which they were when they were to be laid in the grave. But that something good has happened, they have to thank our Lord God; to Him they also sing praise and praise for it, and thank Him.

(5) Therefore, these are joyful words that burst forth from the heart that has recognized God and now wants to praise and glorify Him. For it has been a great, praiseworthy work, and this deed may well be seen and come to light. God has shown a masterpiece here; it has been a delicious, excellent and great victory; the fact that the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea is a sign of God's power and might against His enemies.

## **V. 2. The Lord is my strength and praise 2c.**

6. we could not do it; the six times hundred thousand men would not have been so strong to wipe out Pharaonem with his war power 2c. Now whoever can say to God: You are my strength, he is differently equipped than we are lazy drops. But how does God become our strength? In the things that God encounters, and not only in these, but in all things, we must despair of ourselves, that we are unable to do anything. So they give Him glory and confess that they had no strength nor powers, and that what had happened was arranged by His power and might, it was not their work, but God's grace and blessing, He was the right man of war who had overthrown their enemies.

7 This is a haughty defiance, that one can say, "The Lord is my strength. And have sung the words of them much, but understood them little. But they want to say: This is God's work; defiance is commanded to anyone who harms us or bends a hair [Rom. 8, 31. ff.] Therefore, if God is my strength and power, what is my strength and power?

ow will God's strength be able to break anything off from me? For I can say: Even though I am a poor little worm, I have God's strength with me [Ps. 22:7, Is. 41:10 f.]. Item, even though I am nothing, and on earth weak and sick, and so weak that I could not even ward off the flies that sting me, yet I am strong, for God is my strength. This is what the children of Israel have had to learn from experience, that they despair of them, and say: We know nowhere to beat the Egyptians but with faith and trust in God. And in this trust I take hold of God's strength in me, and God's strength then takes hold of me, since God does not abandon those who trust in Him.

### **My hymn of praise.**

This is my glory. As if to say: I know nothing to praise, extol and sing but of this.

### **And is my salvation.**

(9) My victory, my salvation in this matter, with Pharaoh the king; my salvation, which overcometh the enemy, which maketh me bold by trusting in him, and destroyeth the enemy. This is said of the power that fights against adversity and death. Would to God that we could also meet this verse when we are defeated, that we could say against sin, death and the devil, and everything else that tries to harm us, "I have a victory, strength and salvation greater than thou art; despite which I grieve. This is how one overcomes death and the devil and everything unpleasant. This is a great thing, that a poor, weak man should feel that he has such strength with him that he may overcome even death and the devil. The Israelites did not fall into the sea with the sword of Pharaoh and drown, but because they clung to God through the faith and trust of their hearts. Therefore, faith is a divine strength, a divine work and thing 2c.

### **This is my God, I will praise Him, He is my Father's God.**

(10) For the great joy of the Spirit, which the Christians have from the works of God, they speak of the same thing in many ways; since

The mouth overflows with special words. When the heart is full of joy and has well considered a thing, then it follows that the mouth speaks much about it [Matth. 12, 34]. For the heart teaches the mouth to say, "Here is God, in whom I hold fast my faith, and with him I will abide.

### I want to raise it.

11 That is, I want to adorn him. Some have interpreted it as if he wanted to build him a delicious temple. Thus the Jews interpret it as if he wanted to build God a tabernacle, that is, a dwelling place, since God would be close to them. But the little word "raise" here means to adorn, to decorate. For the Jews did not build the tabernacle or the tabernacle before God, but God wanted it from them and told them to build it, as he later told David to tell his son Solomon to build the temple [2 Sam. 7:12, 13].

### He is my father's God.

012 As if he should say, He is my God, and the God of my fathers; yea, we mean this God only, who spake unto our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and revealed himself unto them, and promised their seed and seedlings that he would not leave them, but multiply them as the sand of the sea, and as the stars of heaven. But we thought that we were poor, that we were in the throat of death and the devil, that we had no God, but now, because we have passed through the Red Sea, we have experienced His strength. Then Moses will say, "This is the God who spoke to my fathers and promised them that He would bring their children out of the house of bondage in Egypt; and this He has now proven in truth, therefore I will praise and exalt Him. Of this exaltation, how Mary also sings in her hymn of praise [Luc. 1, 46.]: "My soul exalts the Lord"! Moses does it wonderfully; he gives God many names, so that he will praise him, praise him highly, which the Hebrews call "exalt".

13. these are the right works that please god, that we may honor, adorn, adorn, and make god beautiful, that he may be more beautiful than the sun, and that nothing else may be beautiful against him.

is [Ps. 104, 1]. He may not be exalted, for he sits above all heavens in the throne of his glory [Isa. 6:1]. But if I shout Him out with my sermon and with my praise and preach about Him, how mighty and fine God He is, then He will be exalted and made known [Ps. 145:1, 2]. Otherwise God is unknown to men, he is of no use to them, and stinks to them. Therefore, when he is lifted up and adorned, so that through my mouth, my preaching and confession his praise comes to the people, so that God, who before stank, is now preached and held holy, then it is the most beautiful wreath that one can put on him, and the prettiest skirt that one can put on him, yes, the prettiest house that one can build for God. This mouth does much when I adorn God in such a way that people think much of Him, that He comes into people's hearts, and do not get any other evil thought from God, or hold Him suspiciously out of giving in to the evil spirit [Jac. 3, 9. Ps. 34, 2. 9.].

14 Here Moses is a master of speech, and there he does not stammer, as we have heard above [Cap. 4, 10]. Other fools may always go and build temples for him, erect images for him and give him beautiful clothes; but this is the right adornment, when he is recognized in his wisdom, that one thinks much of him; as that God is faithful, true, almighty, just and wise, that is a beautiful adornment. As one otherwise says of a man: This is an honorable man, because he leads a pious, honest life. And in Proverbs it is said that discipline adorns a woman's image more than all her clothes. Solomon also says in the book of Proverbs [Cap. 11, 22]: "A lewd woman who is beautifully dressed is no different than a sow with a gold ring in her nose"; but whichever woman is virtuous and honest has the highest adornment. For though a harlot be adorned with pearls and precious stones from the soles of her feet to the top of her head, yet is she a harlot; whereas another woman in a garment, pious and chaste, outweighs and disguises all her harlotry. 1)

(15) Of this, says Moses, I will preach; this shall be my work. You cannot do a more pleasing work to God than to preach about Him and praise Him. You must not fast to him, build churches, or torture yourself to death; with these I can be adorned and made beautiful; but God's adornment is when I give the sacrifice of praise, that I preach of him and bring him among the people, and make known his power and strength. That is what I am to do; that is to exalt rightly.

### V. 3. The LORD is the right man of war, LORD is his name.

I mean, he could get it. How foolish is he who relies on armor, spears, swords and guns for comfort, and on fortresses for honor and glory? [If you want to wage war, seek the right, cheap war that is done with a good conscience. Other people war, like swine with dogs. God alone is the mighty Lord who gives happiness and victory in wars, as is said in the 144th Psalm, v. 10: Qui dat salutem regibus [who gives victory to kings). He has commanded the children of Israel to come out of Egypt with armored hands, as they have six times a hundred thousand fighting men. Now the power and might of the Egyptians is also great, all of whom are arrayed against the warband of the children of Israel. But what happens? The armor of the Egyptians is destroyed in one fell swoop.

(17) The Israelites could not have slaughtered and killed so many calves in eight days, even if they had been bound, as the Egyptian men of war who were armed here were killed; for there was a mighty king who set himself against this people here. But God agitates and brings him into the field, but let it be proved that he is a true man of war; he knows well where he should meet the armored man. When the hour comes, he throws everything into a heap, so that not one remains of those who have sat down and rebelled against him or his church. This is powerfully proven by this deed of Pharaoh and many, many other stories testify to it.

(18) This LORD is to be trusted, who has such power; and who would doubt him? Moses describes this battle in many long words, and tells how it happened. It was not child's play to see that Pharaoh had so many beautiful, glorious men with him, so many princes, lords, and wise, active, pugnacious men and heroes, that he might devour the whole world; but when it comes to the battle, they all go down and sink like lead in the water, and are drowned, so that it may be seen that God is the right man of war.

(19) God would still do this today if we had the right faith. If a king stood up, as is said in the 7th Psalm, v. 2, I would say: God, in you I will trust. If they want to surround my flesh and kill it, they do not have to harm me. For I will trust in God more than in my strength and ability; for glorious and mighty is his hand. Moses says here: You are my salvation and strength, you, you have done it [Acts 9:5]. How the children of Israel boast here! They blame the Egyptians for doing against God, for fighting and contending against God.

(20) So we should also learn and become accustomed to entrusting the matter to God, saying, "They have not fought against me, but against you, O God. I am your weakness, you are my strength; I am vain sin, you are pure righteousness; I am your filth, you are my adornment and adornment, so it will be better for us. The devil sees us as weak, powerless and feeble, but when it comes to the meeting, God says: I am all here. Then it is the same as with a poor little worm that sticks to a fishing rod, which the fish wants to eat and devour, but it is caught. So God also lets us be weak, and yet is with us with His strength, and sustains us. Then the enemies troll along and want to destroy and devour us, but soon they lie on the ground; even if they think they want to devour us in one bite, they are still lacking. For God's strength is hidden in our weakness and overcomes all danger.

021 I shall say unto GOD, I am thy servant; thy faith and thy word have been in me; and because I have had thy word, they will oppress me: but behold, how fine they shall run, that will oppress GOD; it shall be unto them as it is unto the Egyptians here. They are here and want to eat me, but they do not know that they want to eat you, God; they will not lead them out. May God grant that we may also boast of this one day.

V. 7 For when you let out your anger, it consumed them like stubble.

(22) In these words Moses relates the great earnestness of God against His enemies, how the persecutors of His church and Christians shall perish immediately. For just as straw or stubble cannot withstand or resist a great fire and blaze, so it is when men fight and fence against our Lord God [Isa. 40, 24. 41, 1. 2.]. There could not be more arrogant and defiant words that Moses and the children of Israel used here, since they were saved from Pharaoh and the Egyptians, to say that God's wrath is a consuming fire, and God's enemies are straw or stubble.

023 Here they have a much different spirit, and mind, and tongue, and speech, than they had before. At first the children of Israel thought they were like water bladders against Pharaoh and the Egyptians. But now they see that if anyone trusts in our Lord God, his enemies must be as straw and stubble against a fire, since stubble does not harm a fire, but makes the fire greater the longer it lasts, and finally is consumed by the fire and turned into dust and ashes.

(24) One could not speak of the great power of Pharaoh and the Egyptians more contemptuously or more disgracefully than Moses and the children of Israel do here, that they call this mighty, powerful, splendid king, so many princes, the core and the highest fortune of his whole empire, stubble and straw. If someone were to call the Roman emperor, the princes and rulers, the whole empire stubble, would he not be said to be mad and foolish? But Mosi's heart is full of

divine help and power, of which he rejoices here and thanks God for it.

(25) Let this be a comfort to us, so that all that troubles us and weighs us down, even though it appears to be great and wants to devour and swallow us up, will not frighten us. For if we look at such things with faith, and feel our weakness, and also look at the great power of our adversaries, we can still take comfort in God's strength, and despise the power and authority of the adversaries. For they are equal to nothing against God. Yes, the world, heaven and earth and all creatures are against God like a drop of water against a bucket of water [Is. 40, 15].

26 This can be seen from the history given, where Moses explains how after their passage the sea fell through one another again, as if heaven and earth were about to sink. For the water stood as far apart as a great city is long or wide. Now that it has suddenly come together again, what do you think must have been the roar and clatter? It will not have done otherwise than as if everything wanted to fall over a lump. If one is frightened by the roaring and rushing of a water, what should not have happened here? Before that, God made the water stand still, as Moses says here [v. 8]: "By your blowing the waters were opened, and the floods came up. The waters were opened, and the floods were heaped up." Spirit and wind are called one thing by the Hebrews. He let a fury come, or he snorted once, then I saw your power and might, so all the strength and power of the Egyptians (as fire consumes the stubble) has destroyed.

27 Moses describes not only how they were minded, and how they felt, that they were fainthearted and despondent; for there are high mountains, they thought, whither shall we go? there is nothing but death before our eyes; but he also reports the safety and glory of the enemies, because they have determined the children of Israel, as when swine are brought together into a stall. Therefore they cry, Won, won; and with them is strength and might, and a certain hope of victory. But the Israelite

The multitude must groan and say: O we are of death, and all are lost 2c. God is not seen with his strength and power, but he is in great weakness with the children of Israel; yet he sustains them, and overthrows Pharaoh, and inspires the children of Israel with courage.

These are excellent examples and words of sincere faith, that when an enemy rages, rages and struts, and makes himself believe that heaven is full of violins, but you are powerless and powerless against it, that you can then conclude and say: Dear Lord God, you are mine and I am yours. And this is God's work, this is what He delights in, as also the 73rd Psalm, v. 18, sings, that God raises some high, so that He may bring them low again and overthrow them, and the Virgin Mary also sings it in her hymn of praise [Luc. 1, 52.]: Deus deposuit potentes de sede etc. [Deus deposuit potentes de sede etc.]. [ , he pushes the mighty from the chair, and raises the miserable]. For even if I want to bring a thing down hard, I lift it up high; on hard blows one saves high. Therefore God lifts up the enemies, that they may fall hard. So he lifted up Pharaoh and the Egyptians, as if they had the children of Israel in their hands; but when they were too sure, the waters closed their gorge and ate them up; so Pharaoh lay in the Red Sea, and Sennacherib lost his people before Jerusalem [2 Kings 19:35]. Antiochus, the tyrannical king, also perishes miserably in Persia [1 Marc. 6, 8. ff].

29. From this we are to learn that God is such a man: whom He lifts up, it is dangerous with him; but what He lets fall, that means something good [Ps. 113, 7. Sir. 3, 19.]. The lifting up is terrible, because he also breaks it gladly, and makes that out of it, which it was not. Such things belong to the Creator alone. That is what he does; namely, what is high and great he brings down, and what is nothing he exalts. Just as the Lord Christ himself says to the Pharisees that what is high and great in the sight of God is an abomination in the sight of men. Therefore, when they think they are all things, and stand on firm feet, they lie down. Again, what is despised and rejected, God takes care of [Ps. 10:12]. This is the way of our Lord God.

**V. 10. and sank like lead in the mighty waters.**

(30) Just as when one throws a piece of lead or a block into the water, which soon sinks to the bottom, so also the Egyptians were drowned in a hui, so that in a moment there is neither man, horse nor chariot, and they can no longer swim or move a finger [1 Thess. 5:3].

**V. 11. Lord, who is like you among the gods?**

(31) The Holy Spirit is full of words; he overflows with praise, as a cask in which a must pours, (1) so Moses foams with other joy and thoughts. There have been many gods on earth, but no god has done such a glorious deed as the right God. God imposes and allows other gods to be raised up as well; as St. Paul [1 Cor. 8, 4. 5.] says about the devils pretending to be God and wanting to be worshipped, but there is only one God over the wicked and over the godly. But this is the difference, that the service and office are unequal. For this one wants to serve God in one way, that one in another way, and all lack God. But just as there is only one God, so there is only one way to serve God. For the others also want to serve our Lord God, but they serve the devil.

For this reason, because of many idolatries, cruel sins and abuses, for which the devil is very quick, undaunted and willing, God decrees that one people shall subdue and destroy another. For Satan is the god of the world; he has many angels who serve him. So, in this chapter, King Pharaoh and his princes are slain, but God does it through the devil. Although the wicked often force the pious among themselves and win a battle, Satan also helps and sometimes protects his servants and people. He has this power, but it is nothing compared to the strength of him who has built one heaven above the other; therefore he is a god above all gods, he has one heaven above all gods.

1) yaw --- yaw,

mel built over all the heavens. We call this one heaven as far as we can see it; above these visible heavens it has other heavens.

So there is only one Lord and God, although people dream and invent other gods for themselves. In Hispania they have St. James as their patron, there they honor and serve the devil under the name of St. James. In Rome they have St. Peter; elsewhere St. Catherine, St. Barbara and St. Nicholas have been invoked as emergency helpers. The devil is a god and prince of the world; therefore he is powerful and mighty. He can sometimes help, and God thus decrees it; for God's counsels are wonderful. That is why Moses wants to say: It is nothing with the straw men 1) and gods, against you. He confesses that they are called gods, but he says, "Who is like you among the gods, who is so noble and holy, terrible and praiseworthy and wonderful?"

34 This is the conclusion of the first part, since in this psalm of praise Moses praised God's power and earnestness against the persecutors and enemies of his word, because he wants to say: There is none. There are many gods on earth, but there is none so excellent in holiness as you. For all other gods, which are invented and pretended, profane themselves; but he that honors this God becomes holy, and he also sanctifies God. The monks have honored St. Bernardum, Benedictum and Franciscum; but served the devil under the name of the saints, and under these saints' names only disgraced themselves; but this people has the right GOt and the right spirit; and as GOt is holy, so they also walk in holiness. Other gods are inwardly foul and unclean; there is none so terrible, praiseworthy and miraculous as you.

### **V. 12. When you stretched out your right hand, it swallowed up the earth.**

35 That is, they were under heaven; but when the sea and the water fell together, they were submerged, and fell into the earth; both parts smote together, and the Egyptians are in the midst of the water, therefore they are sunk into the abyss of the earth.

### **V. 13. You have guided by mercy your people whom you redeemed, and have led them by your strength to your glorious dwelling place.**

Here he gives thanks and praise to God for his glorious blessing, grace and mercy, that he not only led and redeemed his people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt, but was also their escort, and governed them on the way out of Egypt to the Red Sea, and also brought them through the Red Sea. The angel of the Lord went before them by night in a fiery pillar, and by day in a white cloud 2c. Which cloud was set before the Egyptian highway 2) between the Egyptians and the children of Israel, that they might not come together.

(37) This is what he means here, that the Egyptians did not do as they pleased, but God stood with the Israelites, so that they would be sure not to go out or move away, unless it pleased God to be with them. Moses says: "It was due to your goodness, not to our merit or good works. For if you had acted according to our merit, you would have left us unguided and unguided."

(38) You may think that from the great and terrible deed there was a great cry in the surrounding countries, who heard of the miracle, that all the power of the kingdom of Egypt was drowned in the Red Sea, and that the children of Israel were the people who went through the sea dry, and all the countries thought: Help God, who will remain before this people? For if the Turk were to enter these lands and pass through the Elbe with dry feet, what a great cry would go up through all the lands? How would everyone's heart fall out? Much more has happened here than this glorious miracle has taken place. But the same countries were still not converted to God, but thought it had happened by magic. For there was much black magic and sorcery in use at that time, and idolatry was used extensively. Whether Israel

1) Straw pots - popanz of straw.

2) Thus taken over by us from the old edition of Walch. Eislebensche: Straf.

served the right God, the pagans thought: One God is stronger than the other. Although the God of Israel succeeded in one thing, the God of Egypt must not be wrong.

**V.14. When the nations heard this, they trembled; fear came upon the Philistines.**

39 That is, the surrounding countries, as, the Philistines, Edomites, Moabites, Cananites and others were afraid, they staggered, ran together, there was a rumor, because this happened. The Philistines were the nearest neighbors, therefore he remembers them, and the Philistines were a strong, mighty people, dwelling toward the evening of the land, where they were to go. The children of Israel went in from Egypt as from the evening toward the morning, as if they were going to the land toward the north; which was the right way and road to the land where the Philistines dwelt, which land had many great cities, and princes, and giants; but God led them astray for a long time, guiding them around the mountains because of their sin. These Philistines were also afraid of the cry. The people of Israel have never been able to completely dominate the Philistines, so that they would have been subservient to them; they have been interest-bearing to the children of Israel, which is as far as David was able to go [2 Sam. 5, 17. ff. 1 Chron. 15, 8. ff.].

**V. 1s. Then the princes of Edom were terrified, the mighty men of Moab cried out, and all the inhabitants of Canaan became cowards.**

040 The Edomites dwelt on the left hand, and came from Esau Jacob's brother: and the children of Israel went about their land almost forty years. Moab was a little farther toward the east. Edom was better situated toward here. Above these nations lay Canaan. These countries all at once, which they had before them, were astonished at this marvel, though they were mighty, great, powerful, and strong nations. Nevertheless they thought how they would smite and subdue the children of Israel. This is what happened to the children of Israel and how they were redeemed. Now he closes the hymn with a prayer, saying:

**V. 16. Let terror and fear fall upon them by your great arm, that they may be frozen like stones.**

41 As if to say, From the cry of this great miracle let them be cowardly; press on, dear Lord God, press on, they are troubled, afraid and terrified, and we must pass through and shall pass through. We have overcome the Red Sea, ei, so let us also smite and overcome this multitude of Philistines, Edomites, Moabites and Cananites. O help us to do it soon, and you do it; for you alone are mighty. You recently drowned Pharaoh and the Egyptians in the Red Sea, so we hope you will destroy other nations before us and bring us into the Promised Land.

But how shall he do it? Take away their heart! For God has this art: He does not cut off a fist or a leg, but takes away the manhood and the courage, so that the heart falls away, so that there is no courage or manhood. As the 76th Psalm, v. 12, 13, also says: "Bring gifts to the terrible one, who takes away the courage of princes, and is terrible among the kings of the earth." When the courage is gone, one stands like a fool, yes, one can hardly stand on his feet, arms and legs become trembling and powerless, that one lies there like a block, lets himself be cut and stabbed, as on a block or wood. A boy can strangle a man. So our Lord God leaves a man's fists whole, his harness and spear and knife undrawn. But he gives a despondent heart when one is to strike with the enemy. Therefore it is not in the fist, nor in the sword, but in the courage that does it. When a man takes a thing into his mind that he may do it, it is already half done. For beware of him who means you in earnest; for when it is thus resolved in the mind, the fist goes soon after.

43) This is our Lord God's agility, his art of war, his advantage and best armor, namely, that he takes away the courage of the harassers and the devourers of men; then one becomes less than a child and more stupid than a woman. Therefore Moses says here: Take away their heart and their courage, and give it to us; let terror and fear fall upon them, so that

they will freeze like the stones. Then we will overcome them; if manhood escapes them, they will be dull and half dead, so that they will not be able to lift a finger.

### **Until the people come through whom you have purchased.**

44 As if to say, "It is your people, you care for them, so that you may be honored and praised; therefore take away their courage and give us a heart. So our Lord God fights against his enemies; so let whoever wants to fight, I will be satisfied with this warrior [Ps. 108:12, 13].

### **Bring them in and plant them on the mountain of your inheritance.**

45 That is, bring them into the land of Canaan, drive out the heathen. "Your inheritance." For the land is yours, so we are your inheritance; therefore you, God, will set up a dwelling place, temple and seat there, where you will be found.

46. for God has always done this, that He has given on earth a bodily sign, a person, a place, and a place where He will surely be found. For if we are not bound and caught by a bodily, outward sign, each one will seek God where he desires. That is why the holy prophets wrote many things about the tabernacle, about the dwelling place and the tabernacle where He wanted to be present. God has always done this. In the same way, he has built a temple for us Christians, where he wants to dwell, namely, the oral word, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are bodily things. But our false prophets, the spirits of the wicked, and the enthusiasts despise them, and cast them away as if they were worthless, saying, "Yes, I will sit and wait until a flying spirit and a revelation come to me from heaven.

(47) But beware of this. We also know that water, bread and wine do not make us blessed; but how do you like it that in the Lord's Supper there is not bad bread and wine, or even in baptism pure water; but God says that he wants to be in baptism, that it should cleanse and wash us from sins? And in the Lord's Supper, under the bread

and Mine, the body and blood of the Lord Christ is given. Will you then despise God and His sign here, and look upon and hold the water in baptism as the water flowing in the Elbe, or as the water you boil? Or, wilt thou esteem the word of the gospel as the words or speeches of the peasants of the Kretzschar or the Tabern? For God has said: When the word of Christ is preached, then I am in your mouth, and I go with the word through your ears into the heart.

(48) Therefore we have a sure sign, and know that when the gospel is preached, God is present and wants to be found there; there I have a bodily sign, so that I may recognize God and find him. He is also present at baptism and the Lord's Supper, for he has joined himself to be there. But if I go to St. Jacob's, or to the Grimmethal, 1) go to a monastery and seek God elsewhere, I will lack Him. And if now the red spirits preach: Just as monastic life, invocation of the saints, mass and pilgrimage are nothing, so baptism and the Lord's Supper are nothing; that does not work by a long shot. For there is a great difference when God orders and establishes something, or when people establish something. Yes, you are to believe God's ordinances and endowments, worship them and hold them in great honor; so He also commanded Mosi.

49. "Bring them into the land," that is, arrange and name a certain place, so that whoever cannot worship you there in person may turn his body here, and turn his face there and pray. So I also have God in a certain place, namely, here in the Word and Sacraments, so that even if someone is in Rome, or wherever else he may be, if he only turns his face to the Word and Sacraments and worships, he will find our Lord God there, and even if he wants to be found in a straw, he should be sought and honored there. Therefore the prophets said, "We will come to his footstool, for he is holy; there we will worship him.

1) "in Grymthal zu Franken," Jäger, Carlstadt, p. 188, note.



(50) But our prophets (who are so much wiser than those in whom the Spirit of God is manifest) say: Do you think that this wood, water, bread and wine is holy? I myself know that without the word and its nature it does not have holiness. But if God wills to give holiness and power to these things by His word, they will not lack it, but God, who sits on it and sanctifies these things, is in His word. If he only says, All here I am, and there is my word, there is found GOD; by him it is sanctified. Therefore, if he will be here, I will not despise him or the outward sign.

051 Moses therefore saith, Let them be established, and take root in the land, and dwell therein continually, and not sojourn there as sojourners, eating and drinking, and having only a lodging place there, and departing thence; but let them increase and grow, that they may be planted therein, and be established or remain.

### On the mountain.

(52) He called the whole land mountains, and Moses spoke of it as if it had already happened, when it had not yet happened, but God intended to build His tabernacle and tent there. The land was otherwise not so delicious because of its fruits, but because God wanted to dwell there. And God's dwelling place and tabernacle are not to be counted according to wood and stone, but that God speaks there, as the 60th Psalm, v. 8, also says: "God speaks in His sanctuary; I am glad." And so it is also where God speaks in His word and in His sermon, which Moses praises highly, that it is a delicious land, and says: Plant it in the place where You have made Your dwelling.

Therefore also another Psalm [Ps. 122, 1.] says: "I rejoice that it has been said to me, 'We will go into the house of the Lord'; not where there are organs and pipes, but where the Lord our God speaks; there we go to life, blessedness and mercy. Thus the prophets had God, that they were sure by a bodily sign that God was there; otherwise we run here.

and there, and know nothing certain of God. Therefore this one has run into a barefoot monastery, that one has become a Carthusian; one gropes here, the other there. For God does not sit there, does not speak in the same place, does not entice to Himself, as He otherwise does where His word is preached.

O! the great spirits do not want to suffer this. But let all the nations rage and rage; he will establish a kingdom that will last forever, as he concludes this hymn of praise, saying [v. 18]: "The Lord will be king forever and ever." For he also alone is a true, eternal, almighty, earnest and merciful, gracious King and Lord; Pharaoh in the Red Sea taught Mores and drowned, but let us Israelites go through the sea with dry feet and redeemed. Now follows a new chapter, which should be distinguished from the others.

**V. 20, 21: And Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her out with timbrels and dances. And Miriam sang to them: Let us sing to the LORD, for he has done a glorious thing, having cast both man and horse into the sea.**

55 Miriam was Mosi's and Aaron's sister, and according to the languages the names are changed, as, Hans in German, is called otherwise graece John, Claus is called graece Nicolaus. So we have to reckon them; the new spirits do not pay much attention to that. Mary, the mother of the Lord Christ, is also called Miriam 2c. This Miriam, Moses' sister, takes an example from her brother Moses and from the other men, and also sings a song of thanksgiving to the Lord with timbrels and round dances, in gratitude that she and the other women also praise and glorify God because of His good deeds and miracles that He performed on them, thereby wanting to lead and entice others to God's knowledge and service.

**vv. 22-25 Moses sent the children of Israel out from the Red Sea to the wilderness of Sur, and they wandered three days in the wilderness, finding no water. Then they came to Marah, but**

**They could not drink the water of Mara, for it was almost bitter; therefore the place was called Mara. Then the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? He cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree, which he put into the water, and it became sweet.**

So far we have heard the mystery of great, glorious deeds, demonstrated in the children of Israel when they were brought out of Egypt, and how they praised and thanked God for these great miracles. Now let us return to the story and hear how they fared; and this text is the end of the fifteenth chapter. God brought them out of Egypt by a great miracle; therefore he still continues with miracles, and does not cease to perform miracles, the whole journey, for forty years, while they are in the desert, until they come to the promised land, and performs one miracle and wonder after another for this long time.

(57) But here we are also given an example of those who see God's miracles, think them great, praise and glorify them, and yet soon fall back and forget all God's benefits, in that they murmur against God and become impatient that they have not had water to drink in three days. Shortly before, they had seen and experienced the unspeakable miracle of how they were led out of Egypt and brought through the Red Sea. This should have been a great thing in their eyes, for the Red Sea was not as narrow as the Elbe or the Rhine, but eight or ten miles wide. They were miraculously rescued from it, and Pharaoh's enemy was sunk and drowned in it with all his people.

But what happens? For more than three days they forget everything, they despise the previous divine help and assistance, they wag it in the wind, they have set themselves against God, as if He were no longer with them, and they know Him no more. Is this not sin and shame? When they come out to the wilderness, to a heath and grove, where no people dwell, nor lands, nor cities, where there is not a flat field, and yet this wilderness goes straight to the promised land, there they find no water. But when they came to Mara, there they found

found water, but could not drink of the same water, for it was almost bitter; therefore the place was called Mara, that is, bitter or bitterness; so the people murmured against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

(59) They can never stop here; their patience is too short. They have lacked water for a day or so, for otherwise they would have carried water with them from the Red Sea; but when they are thirsty for a day or two and do not have water soon, they grumble and are not devout for more than three days. But God has tried and tested their faith by sending a new trial, trouble and tribulation among them, like thirst. They did not think, "Behold, if God has brought us out of death and out of the Red Sea, then He will also give us drink," because they believed and trusted that He would control this thirst. After that, they saw the pillar of cloud and the fire going before them day and night, which they followed as a banner, which was a public sign that God was visibly reigning before them as a duke and supreme commander, both by day and by night. Which is a glorious example of the presence of God with His people. Nevertheless, it does not move them.

They ask nothing about the previous miracle and salvation, which should have strengthened and comforted them, that the God, who had helped them before, was still alive and would still help them, as 1 Sam. 17, 37. David also says: "The God, who helped me from the lion and the bear, will also save me from the uncircumcised Philistine. And 2 Cor. 1, 8-10, St. Paul says that God helped him in Asia out of his weakness and death through their intercession, and will continue to help him, and thus says: "We do not want to keep you, dear brethren, from our affliction, which 1) happened to us in Asia, when we were overburdened beyond measure and overpowered, so that we were considering losing our lives and had decided that we would have to die. But this was because we did not put our trust in ourselves, but in God, who raises the dead, who

1) Eisleben's: our tribulation, the.

has delivered us from such death, and is still delivering us daily, and we hope that he will also deliver us hereafter, through the help of your intercession for us."

61) So the children of Israel only look at the belly, how the gorret 1) wants to have and to drink. They are gluttons who pay more attention to the belly and the lack of water than to God's miracle, word and promise. So they fall down and care only for the body. Just as if they do not have water, they no longer have God. They want to have the belly taken care of, let God remain in heaven, or be where He wants. Let this be a warning to us, and do not put our eyes into the present distress and danger, but look to God's word, to His previous miracles and examples of how He has helped others; for thereby faith is strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

Now God is somewhat silent about this, and lets them be as they are. And notice here that they did not all murmur at the same time, as follows in the text. For some of them still stood and waited for God to perform miraculous signs among them, and also used the previous miracles correctly, and hoped that God would not abandon His own. For when God performs miracles, he sends some first, or one at the least, who has faith. For He does not perform miracles unless there is faith first, for which He performs miracles. That is why there were still some here who believed, like Moses, Aaron and others. For Moses cried unto the Lord for water: as there were also found later two other godly men, Joshua and Caleb, which came into the promised land, when all the rest were dead. So there are still a few pious men here, for whose sake he gives water, and the wicked peelers enjoy the good deeds of the pious; and the pious must pay for it all here, because the wicked peelers and the boys have murmured because they are among them, just as the wicked often enjoy the good deeds of the pious.

63. god could have made a spring-

But he will not do it. For he acts miraculously; just as here, that water stands unnaturally in the rock, and it still goes on daily, that all water sources go out of the mountains and stones. Moreover, it is no less a miracle that the clouds give water. Where does it take it? There can be nothing thinner and softer than a cloud, for it is nothing else than air; how then can it make water and rain out of air; or, how can it make stones out of clouds, but when it rains and hails? Is it not to be wondered at that in half an hour the whole sky is covered with rain? But nobody thinks about it, everything is despised because it is mean.

(64) But all things come to pass, and so they come to pass, that God may gladly stir up and build up faith in us, that we may put our trust in him. For he will not let us lack. And even if we were to sit in the clefts of stone, he could still make water and all necessities out of it. Item, what is bitter, he can make sweet, and again, soon sweet also sour and bitter. So, what is soft, he can also make hard, the creatures must be obedient to him alone [Ps. 135, 6].

(65) So the water here was bitter by nature, and so created; but now that they are to drink it, the Lord calls for a tree or wood to be thrown into it, and it becomes sweet. Not that this wood had such great power, but it was a miracle that God willed to do by His word, without any action on Moses' part, and soon the water was not bitter as before; indeed, He can make it remain bitter and taste sweet 2c.

(66) All this is written and done so that we may learn faith, its challenges and trials, and know that we have such a God who makes all things from nothing [Rom. 4:17]. Nothing is too small for Him, nor is any thing too great; and they that believe shall have all things.

**V. 26. There he set before them a law, and a statute, and tried them, saying, Wilt thou obey the voice of the LORD thy God, and do that which is right in his sight, and come unto him?**

**If you keep his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will not put upon you any of the diseases that I put upon Egypt; for I am the LORD your physician.**

God often gave them laws, as in the 12th chapter above, when they were to eat the paschal lamb; item, how they were to borrow gold and silver utensils from the Egyptians. So now he gives laws, orders and rights through the man Moses, and not through himself; as he will give the ten commandments again through himself by great miracles on Mount Sinai.

68. At the hour when the bitter water was made sweet by the tree, he preached a sermon on the miracle, and Moses took this miracle as a reason to preach a strong, good sermon on it, as if to say: You have seen God's miracle as before; therefore I say to you, stop your grumbling, do not be so impatient after this miracle, which you saw the other day; submit yourselves, obey the voice of the Lord your God, and do what is right. The land is promised to you; he will not let you go. If thou wilt obey his voice, he will be thy physician, thy helper; it shall be well with thee, he shall preserve thee yet: as thou hast now known by the miracle of the bitter water, which was made sweet.

69 This was the cause and opinion of the sermon and other speeches of Moses to this people. For he exhorted them and raised them up to believe that they would obey God and let him be right, that he would not leave them, even if they had to suffer a little. For God tempted them and made them weak and sick, so that He would be with them and heal them again: He wants to be their helper and physician. This is the part where they wandered in the desert for three days.

### **Allegory of this story.**

70 Now follows the mystery or allegory of this text, for many have interpreted it wonderfully. But what you want to interpret spiritually, you should always draw on faith in Christ and the gospel. Some have interpreted it in this way,

that Mara, the bitter water, means all kinds of crosses, sufferings and misfortunes that may befall a man. But that Moses throws a wood into it and makes it sweet, is that one throws the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the body and blood of Christ into it, and one remembers the suffering and death; then all cross and suffering taste good; then no suffering is so bitter and bitter that it does not become sweet and sweet. Let these be Christian and good thoughts; though they are childish enough, yet they are drawn to the suffering of Christ; but to point rightly is to the spirit, to the conscience, and to faith.

"Mara" is the law of God, and "walking in the wilderness" is the heaviness of life, which is led under the burden of the law and good works, since there is never rest nor peace, but the spirit is even killed, and through the laws everything becomes the longer the worse. For the law makes an evil conscience, and only causes wrath, and increases sin, Rom. 4:15. Therefore, the more the law is preached for the conscience, the more man must be frightened by the bitter water; this makes everyone sad, it judges people to be melancholy; as then those experience who are under your law.

Now, there arises a grumbling and impatience against God, which naturally happens [Matth. 20, 11]. For the heart cannot do otherwise than to become hostile to God. I am now speaking spiritually of the law. For outward, coarse people must be forced with the outward law [1 Tim. 1, 9], but the tender souls (that is what I am talking about now), who belong to the Gospel, God leads them on a three-day journey and tortures them, and brings them into great thirst, fear and distress, to the bitter water, which they must drink, that is, that they have a bitter conscience. The grumbling that follows is of the conscience that is secretly angry with God; with the mouth it says it loves God, but the heart denies. For it does not want to be so severely tempted, and is hostile to all punishments that go beyond sin.

73) Punishments make a bad conscience, hurt it and are quite annoying for the old Adam; but if there were no punishments, then a sinful life would be nothing but a sin.

fine thing. Because they are hostile to the laws and wrath of God, they are also hostile to God, and this for the following reason, that it follows irrefutably: He who does not approve of the punishments does not want God's justice, and invents for himself alone such a God who is merciful (as the world is now in the habit of doing, and knows how to make masterly use of it), therefore he does not want to have God Himself either. Therefore, within the conscience there is a secret resentment, blasphemy and grumbling against God, since the heart would like there to be no God or punishment. Therefore, the conscience must always tremble and quake, even fearing and being terrified of a rustling leaf.

Now this is a secret sin, that one covers up such things, of which not many people know [Jer. 17:9]. Should they love God and be favorable to Him? They would gladly flee and disown God, and would that there were no God; as is seen in those who are to die, or suffer something for their iniquity. And in the last day they will prove it much more clearly, when God will drive away from Himself the hearts laden with the sin of impatience and wrath, precisely because they were impatient and grumbled against God; which God hears very well, so everyone who can judge and judge spiritually also sees it; but those who do it do not recognize it in this way. But all who are frightened by the knowledge of hell and the law do so before they receive the Holy Spirit and their hearts are softened. Therefore, that we may become favorable to the law and be held, this is what the tree does, which is shown by God to Mosiah; whatever kind of tree it must have been, for here it is not expressed by name.

(75) Now two things are signified here: first, that the water, which is the law, is not made sweet without the help of Moses, who by the terrors of the law makes a man hard and weary, and so afflicts him with bitterness that he longs for help; and secondly, when the Holy Spirit comes, it soon becomes sweet. But our red spirits want to have the Holy Spirit without the divine word. So this tree is the dear gospel; the bitter water is the law, or the erudition.

knowledge of sin. The tree of life [Gen. 2, 9] is the dear gospel, the word of God's grace, mercy and goodness; when the gospel is immersed in the law and knowledge of sin and touches the heart, where the law causes sadness, fear, terror and grief, it tastes. Moses does his outward service; so here also. It does nothing without the outward gospel, for through it follows sweetness and desire for the law. One recognizes from it that Christ died for us, and receives the Holy Spirit, and gets pleasure and love for God, to whom one was otherwise hostile before. If God pleases him, and this desire has begun, then there is peace, and what God means and commands, and also the law wants, comes to pass. It is pleasant and fun for him, and he likes to hear about it, because the law has been fulfilled by someone else; he has even become a different person.

Thus it should be applied to the ministry of preaching; and therefore I am practicing the young theologians who are studying the holy Scriptures, guiding them freshly and driving them to the Word of God, and founding their faith on the Word of God. The other, previous interpretation [§ 70] is too weak and too childish, does not attain the reason and spirit.

When the bitterness is taken away and the heart is cleansed, it does not grieve. Then it is recognized that God has given them the law to obey the voice of the Lord. He did not want to put a disease on them, as he had put on Egypt, but he wanted to be their physician, since they would immediately be attacked with disease; this is when the gospel is given, which makes even death sweet, yes, a gentle sleep. Then the foundation is laid, and this is the right doctrine, where one must persist, urge and exhort that man turn to Christ and learn how he helps us from sins, law, death and the devil. Stay with it and learn to trust in God. Whenever you are tempted with bitterness, always keep the word, and God will be your physician and protect you from all sorrow.

78 For in these two things is the ministry of preaching: first, to teach that which is not known;

To admonish and urge them to keep in mind what they have learned and known, and not to leave it or forget it [2 Tim. 4:2]. We are flesh and blood, so it cannot be preached enough. This is also seen in the Holy Scriptures,

who preaches the same doctrine in different words all the time. God knows that the old rogue, the old Adam, is lazy and indolent; he soon lets him take away the pure and righteous doctrine, and after that he is persuaded by erroneous, seductive little human beings.

# The sixteenth chapter.

**Cap. 15:27 And they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water, and seventy palm trees; and they pitched there by the waters 2c.**

**Cap. 16:2, 3 And all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and said unto them: Would to God that we had died in the land of Egypt by the hand of the LORD, when we sat by the fleshpots, and had abundance of bread to eat. For this cause ye carried us out into this wilderness, that ye should cause all this congregation to die of hunger.**

(1) We have heard the text of the sixteenth chapter of the second book of Moses, how the children of Israel went from the Red Sea to the wilderness of Sin, and how they came first to Elim, but abode not long there, when they found twelve wells of water, and seventy palm trees. From the same place they came into the wilderness of Sin, when this great deed was done, which follows. After that they came to Raphidiin, where the people again had nothing to drink; from there they came to Mount Sinai.

Now it is reported here that they found twelve wells, that they had no need of the water that God had given them through a miracle; after that they also found seventy palm trees. And it may well be that by God's special providence this well water was thus divided into twelve different springs, so that the people of Israel would have water enough, as God had done before.

3 So God provides them with food and drink, that they must have bodily sustenance, to drink in exile and in the wilderness, and to

He brings them here to a fun place where they can refresh themselves and enjoy themselves again. Palm trees have a sweet fruit, the date; they have eaten it and drunk the water of the well; perhaps they will have kept some of the raw dough. Because they traveled only fifteen days from Egypt to the desert of Sin, no doubt everyone would have taken a bushel or two of flour for bread with him on the way for his house, and would have had some provisions. From this we have also recently learned that God is our shepherd and keeper, who feeds us and gives us enough; as the 23rd Psalm, v. 1, also teaches.

(4) But when the flour is out of the sack and there is no more dough, then the idol, Squire Belly, stirs up and says that he cannot wait for our Lord God's delay. For this people murmurs against God that they have no bread to eat, just as they murmured above because there was a lack of water to drink. In truth, the children of Israel were a wicked people, who soon forgot God's miracles and good deeds and grew weary of their profession, despairing of God's grace and mercy. They blaspheme Moses and Aaron, as if they wanted to let the people die of hunger; yes, they blaspheme God Himself, as if He had not let Moses lead them out of Egypt. Therefore judge what a herb this people is, how they doubt God's command that Moses should lead them out of Egypt into the land of Canaan, item, despair of God's help.

(5) And we are of the same kind; such ungodly beings also look out of our eyes. If

If there is no longer any supply, our faith will also cease. They have not gone more than fifteen days' journey, and they say: Moses has well directed it, we cannot go back, for we would die of hunger; nor can we go further, nor break out to the side, because of the desolation and wilderness; 1) the devil has led us into the wilderness.

(6) According to reason they have cause enough against Moses, because they have nothing to eat or drink. Think ye yourselves, if thou wert in the wilderness fifteen days and fifteen nights, and couldst not come out, think ye yourselves also that thou shouldest die of hunger. This cause have they had, that all the people murmur against Moses, saying, Give us meat; why didst thou send us forth out of Egypt, that thou shouldest cause us, our children, and our cattle to die of hunger?

(7) What mocking, scornful and blasphemous words are these? It is a deep unbelief that they thus fall back, abandon God's word and promise, no longer remember the previous miracles and help of God; and yet the boys want to be pious people, to be unpunished by God, and yet they want all the devils to take Aaron and Moses away. For they say here: The Lord knows nothing about it. They say: There, in Egypt, we would have been blessed people, but here in the desert we must die of hunger. A hundred devils have brought us here. Is this why you brought us out, so that all the people would die of hunger?

008 And after they have all murmured and spoken one to another against Moses and Aaron, the pants of both of them should have fairly stunk; but they stand like heroes, their heart full of God, and they beat out this blasphemy, which they must hear, saying, Ye are companions that have carried us out, and have acted as the wicked; should God have commanded you such things? There the miracles are all gone, which they have seen and felt before, yes, praised and extolled in the previous hymn of praise, since they have been completely convinced and convicted that this execution from Egypt is no man's work.

1) Cislebensche: Gewildniß.

work or fraud. Well, it does not go differently; where the Abgott belly comes, and the stomach begins to burst, there it is all gone. A noble, tender fruit is the man, if he is left to himself.

(9) But we had better strike it out, that we may see who we are against God. For we curse, blaspheme, even persecute his messengers and servants, and bring his miracles to shame. Here a whole congregation falls, with six times an hundred thousand men, many excellent, great people. Joshua, Caleb and others are now all going away with the multitude and rulers of the people, and 2) only these two remain steadfast; they still keep their color and do not retreat. Why should we be surprised that some are now staggering and tumbling away from the gospel, because so many people are falling away here, all of whom are being devoured by the devil? And this alone is the cause of the belly's concern and brings them to this horrible apostasy [Matth. 6, 25].

(10) It is a wonderful thing about a Christian who stands by when there is need. Nevertheless, such people are not held in high esteem in the world and are not much in demand. But our nature is such, as Solomon says of it: "When one has a thing, it is evil, and is not esteemed, and is good for nothing; but when it is gone, it is esteemed. So it also goes: If God gives enough, we still do not have enough, and nowhere is good enough, gawking at the lack, and we leave the abundance and provision of God, which is available, until we come to it. O! then it has been very good.

(11) I will interpret it still better, that it may be heard. Take before you a husband and one who lives outside of marriage, or a poor man and a rich man, of whom the saying goes, "Good makes you strong, but poverty hurts. He who suffers poverty in marriage does not see what will become of him, and tolerates poverty with unwillingness; all his eyes, thoughts and senses look at the lack; but that he does not die in hunger, and has a secure, cheerful courage to it, even lives without worries, that is what gives him the right to live.

2) Eislebensche: remained.

God, and is the poor man's special advantage and benefit. 1) He does not worry because he knows that nothing is stolen from him, he can sleep in peace; on the other hand, that he has a house full of children is nothing in his eyes, he does not count any goods [Ps. 128, 3. ff. Ps. 127, 3. 4.]. If you were to weigh this on a scale, you would see how far such goods surpass all poverty. [So he goes and needs of heaven and earth.

(12) On the other hand, a rich man, if he has many goods, must also feed many mouths. He must take care that his goods and wealth are not stolen from him, and he is always thinking how he will grow and increase in goods; he does not have enough, but is always thinking: If only I had this in addition. So he never has a secure and cheerful mind, the property makes him uneasy; moreover, he has neither peace nor rest. Again, the poor man only looks at the rich man's goods; but he does not consider that he has any advantage over him, as indicated just before, which the rich man completely lacks. Cause, it is said, as Augustine says: *Divitiis invenisti, requiem perdidisti* [Riches you have found, peace you have lost<sup>1</sup>.

(13) So now the evangelical peasants also lack nothing, only that they see how they should give interest and bullets, also tithes and other righteousness to the authorities, who do not do wrong by demanding their tribute (Rom. 13:1 ff.); there alone they turn their eyes. But they do not see that their fields and meadows, their houses and farms are in good peace; the authorities give them this security, otherwise they could not sleep safely for an hour in their houses. This security and such great good is not seen. A drink of well tastes better to such a one than boiled and roasted food 2); nor does he gape and look around at the great Hansen, who trot along on beautiful stallions and are resplendent in golden chains. Ah! this fool thinks, God would that I should sit there in his place! and everything that is in his house must stink to him; but he sees and does not know what burden, danger and displeasure clings to and follows this position.

1) Previously -- Preference.

2) Cislebensche: boiled and fried.

(14) So does one who lives outside the married state; he considers his being a vain misery, and makes himself believe that the married state is only a rose garden, and does not see the advantage that he has only a belly or a mouth to feed. Again, he who is in the conjugal state does not see the goods that are given to him, namely, that the man and the woman are created and ordained together by God; item, that they have children and goods are given to them; this makes him dream that the single state is a paradise.

(15) The goods and gifts of God in every state are ten times greater than the harm and lack that one feels in them. If you were to count your neighbor's goods as your lack, and his lack as your goods, you would also do as the sages have written: If it were possible for a man to take his goods and his misfortune in one heap and distribute them at the same time, each would say, "Dear man, give me your goods," and would not want to have the misfortune in addition.

Thus the pagan poet Horatius said to indicate this very thing, that no one is sufficient for him in his status: *Optat ephippia bos piger, optat arare caballus*, the ox would like to be a horse, and the horse would like to plow like the ox 2c., so that no one should make it better nor order it differently than God has made it.

The peasants will also be like this. If it were not against God, I would wish out of anger for the rebellious peasants to be princes for only one year, to read letters. If I were angry with the rebellious peasants, I would wish for them to be princes for a year, to read letters, to hear complaints, to carry out and decide on disputes, to write letters, and to do other things that are necessary in this state; then one of them would so soon tire of them that he would say: "Keep your precious spurs, silver sword, golden chains, coats of mail, spear and armor, beautiful horses and hung chariots; I want to remain the same as I was before.

018 So are we all one with another: and our brethren the children of Israel in the wilderness do not long remember the manna, or the bread of heaven. Just as in Egypt they did not remember the meat and the bread they had in excess, but they howl and



cry out only because they were burdened and oppressed with joyful services and other things. They did not consider their good, which God had given them, but only saw the misfortune and the evil. But in this place, having come out of want, and having obtained the good, they run back. So our eye is a mischievous one, and God Himself cannot do it justice.

(19) Shall we suffer nothing at all? shall we suffer nothing here? In heaven we shall not lack nor be afflicted; but in this life we must (willingly or unwillingly) have affliction and want among us. If you are poor, if you have no house or other goods, you also have infirmities: but why do you not think that you have a healthy body, healthy eyes and other senses, you have your strength, children and other things? 2c. But your infirmity, which you have beside, is very little and small.

020 But they must begin to blaspheme and desecrate because of a small and little affliction. Just as the dear sons, the children of Israel, do here; when they are full and filled with meat and bread, they go away and despise the bread of heaven, because they cried out to God before. Many say that God is angry and displeases us and sends us sickness, but we keep quiet about it, so that we deserve it. Let him attack it as he wills, but it is no good to us anywhere; should he not strike us? If we were God, we would not hold on to ourselves for so long that we would not quickly strike at it with clubs; but he is much too patient. Since what he gives us is present, we despise it; when it comes away, we praise it, and will by no means "first consider" how good it is. Because a man's wife is still alive, he does not see what use she is to him; but when she dies, he thinks, "O God, if I still had my wife!

21 Thus, if the sun were to stay out one day and not shine, we would all be saddened; but because it shines daily, we are accustomed to God's goods and do not think otherwise than that it should shine for us; but because it always shines, we do not thank our Lord God for it. When the children of Israel were captives in Egypt

and servile, they longed for freedom; and now that they have freedom, they despise freedom. So it goes: As God makes and cooks it with us, so we will not bite it; nor does he bear it. Therefore St. Paul speaks in the stories of the apostles [Cap. 13, 18]: God tolerated and bore their ways and customs in the desert; and that is truly so, he can well suffer and bear [2 Mos. 34, 6. Ps. 103, 8].

(22) It is such a shameful evil in us that we are ungrateful for the present gifts and goods, and consider only a small infirmity. And each one may go home and count the goods he has, and he will find many more goods than lack, and thank God for them. What do you want more than a healthy body? Item, your possessions and goods, and that you have beautiful children?

23. But how shall we help him? Solomon says [Ecclesiastes 7:15]: In die malorum memor esto bonorum, et e contra: In die bonorum, memor sis malorum [on the good day be of good cheer, and the evil day also take for good]. If you feel evil, turn your eyes to the good, and remember, as godly hearts do, to turn your eyes away from misfortune and turn them toward greater happiness. So let them comfort themselves, or else they will make their lives miserable and do nothing with their sorrow.

(24) We read of St. Martino, a citizen of Rome, when all his goods were taken from him and he was driven into exile for the sake of the Christian faith, that he said: 1) Even though they have taken everything from me, they have not taken Christ from me. If my wife and child, my property, house and farm, my good friends, my honor, dignity and glory are gone, I still have the Lord Christ. So a Christian looks with his eyes even more at the present happiness and good than at the misfortune and evil that befalls him.

(25) But our nature cannot do it; it does as these wretched people do here. Nevertheless, our Lord God presents Himself as a God who has great patience, and who can keep it for them, and says: "Well, I will

atone for your lust; although it is wrong that God should bow down to the will of this people. God gave them a promise above [Cap. 15, 26] that they should obey His voice, so He would be their physician; therefore He gives them bread from heaven, so that they should not die of hunger; but they do not remember the promise here. Now he tries the very last thing, whether they would obey him, that they should bring in manna for six days, but on the Sabbath day they should stay in their tents and not go out, so God gave them manna twice, for the sixth day and also for the seventh day. God is a good steward, he gives the daily bread and does not give more to each person than he can eat.

26 Then they began to believe again, and to think, Is not this a fine floor of grain, or granary, that every morning the air and the clouds give as much bread, or manna, as much as we can eat? [When the first evening came, when the manna fell in the morning, there was nothing left; then many of them thought, What will we have in the morning? So they thought, "Lord, give us our bread today, and we will not provide for the morrow," just as he proved at that time.

Thus God provides for us, that He may take away the miracles of the belly. For the belly always smites our Lord God's word and miracle; but once, according to the teaching of St. Paul, one must dig the belly and food under the earth. Therefore, live in such a way, and rely 1) on the fatherly faithfulness of God, that one may be uncertain what one may bring in tomorrow. And if even this great Lord with his words should not be valid, oh! then one may believe the devil. As experience shows, unfortunately, all too many are unfaithful to God and become addicted to the wretched devil only because of his nasty stomach.

**Then the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven upon you, and the people shall go forth, and gather daily the things which they have need of, that I may try them, whether they walk in my law, or not: and on the sixth day they shall send themselves to bring in twofold the things which they gather daily.**

1) control - support.

**Moses and Aaron said to all the children of Israel, "In the evening you will know that the LORD has brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD. For he has heard your murmurings. What are we, that ye murmur against us? And Moses said, The LORD will give you meat to eat at even, and in the morning he will give you bread in abundance: because the LORD hath heard your murmurings, because ye have murmured against him. For what are we? Your murmuring is not against us, but against the Lord.**

028 Here Moses and Aaron answer the blasphemy of the children of Israel, saying: Alas, that we had died in Egypt by the hand of God; that they might so much as give to understand: There we had a gracious God, the devil has brought you to us; and they say, Now you blaspheme God and murmur against Him; tomorrow you shall see a miracle, that ever God may be praised and glorified. We want you to feel it and grasp it, and also to experience that God will do it, and you will realize that it is not we, but he who has brought you out of Egypt; otherwise there will be no miracle or miraculous work tomorrow, but God will save and prove his glory with it.

29) With the mad mob one should act according to such grace and mercy. It is indeed insidious, 2) and they would rather have something better than this, namely, if they said and pretended to them: Do you think that we are the people who were able to bring you out of Egypt, and ask that you will not take revenge on us? But they apologized so well and so rightly. Moses said this and told Aaron to speak to them to their faces and to tell others, so that they would spread the word among the people. Aaron also took it from Moses' mouth, that he might speak it fearlessly, and tell them the very opinion against whom they had murmured and grunted.

**V. 9 And Moses said unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come ye before the LORD: for he hath heard your murmurings.**

2) certainly - spoken in a pointed way.

To come to the Lord is to gather together and hear the Word of God, for where His Word is, there the Lord is also. It was not yet the temple at that time. This is Aaron's ministry. He first punishes them and brings them to the realization of their sin, that they have murmured against God and have thrown all his previous miracles to the wind. Now the sermon begins, and in the middle of the sermon they turn away to the desert, because he did not preach this sermon in one day. And this happened under the sermon of Aaron, that God makes Himself specially seen in a cloud, He seems to be seen in a cloud, from which Moses alone heard this voice, and not other people. That is, people can carry. And as he preached, so it is done: but he let the word go before, as he was wont to do, and after that the work followed. Through this preaching they were converted again, and Moses and Aaron had great trouble and work with them to establish and strengthen their faith. Therefore, God also performs this miracle.

(31) What quails are called is still disputed among the teachers: some think that they are partridges, others that they are curlews; but it is certain that they were meat. More than a year later, God performed almost similar miracles, as we read in Numbers 11:31, 34, where it is indicated how high they flew in the air, namely, that they could be grasped with the hands, and no net was needed. But that the same place in the desert was called the grave of lust was because the lecherous people were buried there. Now one must not think that they are one story or history, but they are two histories. For here they have also manna or bread of heaven with the flesh; there they have flesh only. But this food came in a fine heap, so that everything lay full; so that it was not long before it was gathered together and taken up, so that it all lay fine together.

32. manna was almost like coriander; although coriander is still a small grain, like rice or millet with us; but manna was whiter and rounder, and tasted like honey mixed with bread, and

The bread or food is called manna, fine, sweet and clear like white-grained flour. The same bread or food is called manna, fine, beautiful and clear, like a white-grained flour.

**V.13-15. And in the morning the dew lay round about the tents; and when the dew was fallen, behold, there was something in the wilderness thin and small, as the hoarfrost is in the land. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, This is Man; for they knew not what it was.**

33. they say: It is something; for it has been a new miracle work, therefore it has no name, because it has still been a new food. It is called in Hebrew, cash, gift or offering. As if to say: It is God's gift, which God distributes among us. As if we were given a strange, unknown thing, which was good and apparent, and we called it manna. We Germans call it Himmelsbrod from the 6th chapter of John, v. 31, but they called it God's gift.

**And Moses said unto them: This is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat.**

(34) As if to say, Here you have it: God keeps His promise; now eat and be satisfied with it.

**V. 19. thus. And Moses said to them: Let no one leave any of it until tomorrow. But they did not obey Moses. And some of them left it until tomorrow. Then worms grew in it, and it stank. And Moses was angry with them. 1)**

(35) This is trying very hard and setting a goal for God, because they have tapped, grasped and felt God at once, and he has let himself be seen in a cloud. This is indeed God's temptation, which He has harshly forbidden, that one should not say, "Give it to me this way, or this hour; that I should present to God a person, place, way and space, by which, where, when and how He should help me; but I should present it to Him, and only ask for the need; which they have not done here.

1) These text words are missing in the editions, although the following is completely incomprehensible without them.

(36) So we have heard of a great miracle that God did with the manna, so that He fed the children of Israel forty years, and gave them manna every day, and gave them no more than they could eat. This seems to us to be a bad deed, but it was a great work. As such a blessing of God, with the manna, is praised everywhere in the holy scriptures.

(37) And God did it first of all to make His glory seen against the unbelievers and blasphemers, that He alone was the true God. As Moses says: "In the evening you shall know that the LORD has brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD," 2c., thus proving that by God's command Moses and Aaron brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. After that, God also wanted to indicate that He would feed and nourish His faithful who walk in their profession; as it is said in the 8th chapter of the 5th book of Moses, v. 3, 16: "God gave you manna, when you and your fathers did not know what kind of food it was, so that He might show you that man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. For God can also feed His own where there is no bread, as here in the wilderness, where there was neither field, grain, mill, bread, baker, nor any other supply; nevertheless, before they die of hunger, manna must be given them from heaven. Just as Elijah, at the time of the Theurung in Israel, was also miraculously fed and nourished at the brook Crith [1 Kings 17:5, 6]. And this promise is also given by the Lord Christ [Matth. 6, 33], if one "first seeks the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and then all the rest shall be added to us". The 37th Psalm, v. 25, also says: "I have been young, and I have been old; but I have never seen the righteous forsaken, neither have I seen his seed going after bread.

(38) But this miracle of the manna did little for them; because the manna fell daily, it was very common among them, and they did not regard it. Just as the sun rises daily for us, which is also a great miracle, that it does not rise for one day or two days, but for one day or two days.

It seems to be like this for many months, even every year; but it has now become a habit that we think it cannot be otherwise. It is no wonder to us that wine and grain grow every year. God should, as with these, so also with other daily miracles, encourage our faith; for that a grain of wheat or other growth should come out of the earth is as great a miracle as if God were still giving manna from heaven on this day; but it does not have the prestige, so it makes the ordinary contemptible.

39 So they have collected for each person or head of the day a Gomor 1). How much it was, one does not really know; for the pound, the cubits and the measure change; where one comes only over two or three miles, soon they do not agree any more. Just as the bushel, the language, the customs, and external ceremonies are not the same in the world. For many a country, many a custom, and many a measure is. The Gomor was so large that it was as much as they could eat in one day. Now it was a special miracle that the little one did not eat more than the big one, and the big one not more than the little one; one received as much as the other, the third or fourth just as much.

(40) It may also be understood that each one brought in a heap; one a handful, the other a bowl, the other a hatful, and afterward they divided it out at home by this common measure. After that one came, who brought little, he also got out of the Gomor, as much as another, that he had enough; as the text also reads thus. It may be of one mind that they have measured it out by this common measure. Item, it can also be that everyone has collected much or little, and when he has come home, he has received neither more nor less, it has been true with the measuring.

1) Ex. 16, 36: "A gomor is the tenth part of an ephah. One ephah is counted as 15 Berlin matzos. Therefore the Gomor would be 11 Berliner Metzen. (Karl von Räumler, "Der Zug der Israeliten aus Aegypten nach Canaan", p. 27).

(41) One also senses besides this, as is now said of sharing out, that they have been stingy and not to fulfill, and have not trusted God to give them bread, in that they have, contrary to God's prohibition, brought with them above the appointed measure. From which excess worms were made, so that God's word would be fulfilled. And because of this, that it did not continue with them, the noble food had to perish. There was a great army and a great multitude of people, so they ate up everything purely in the evening. In the morning God again had so much food for them. It did not melt from the heat of the day; they baked it, boiled it, and roasted it, and were not satisfied that it tasted like breadcrumbs, and as each one wanted, but they were allowed to make and seek other things out of it.

042 And this was a miracle unto them, that on the sixth day they found two Gomor: therefore they went in, and asked Moses, saying: How meanest thou that we should gather but one Gomor by day, or worms would grow out of it; yet have we two Gomors this day? What did he answer?

**V. 22-24 All the rulers of the congregation came in and told Moses. And he said to them: This is it that the LORD hath said: Tomorrow is the Sabbath of the LORD's holy rest: bake that which ye will bake, and boil that which ye will boil: but let that which is left over remain, that it may be kept until the morning. And they left it till the morning, as Moses commanded; and it stank not, neither was there any worm in it.**

43. Who kept it then, that it should not spoil? God commanded it, and gave his word concerning it, and kept it, that it should not become corrupt, nor stink. From this you see that the Sabbath was before the Law of Moses came, and has been from the beginning of the world [Genesis 2:2], especially that the pagans who had the true worship of God came together on that day and called upon God; from that time the same day was called the Sabbath,

And it was a holy day set apart from other days, that men and cattle might rest there. But afterward this commandment was given publicly from heaven by Moses, that they should rest on the seventh day, and cease from labor and other unholy things.

44 Finally they wanted to make it too much, so he also fell among them, as you will hear; therefore they also had to keep Gomor until their descendants [v. 33]. The Jews use this act of John in the sixth chapter, v. 31, to embarrass the Lord Christ's word, boasting: "Our fathers ate manna in the wilderness, which came down from heaven." To this Christ answers masterfully, saying, v. 32, "Moses did not give it to you, but my Father gives you the right bread from heaven." And says further, v. 49, 50: "They are all dead which have eaten it: but whoso eateth this, dieth not."

45 Otherwise, you will hear several times: All God's gifts and miracles, if they are not gathered together with or in the word of God, they are of no use. The water in baptism, if not accompanied by the word of God, is nothing. So, if the manna did not have God's word in it, it would not have the power. This is what the Lord Christ means in the preceding words: "Many have eaten it, and yet have died, because they have not eaten this appendix of the Word, therefore they have not been preserved. All creatures of God are like this; if they are received without the word of God, there is no life, power or strength in them, but it is a bodily thing.

**Allegory of the manna.**

46. by the manna God intended to signify the true manna, which is Christ Himself; as in the text of John [Cap. 6, 50. 58.] He thus interprets it, saying, "This is the bread," and points to the great manna, to Himself, as if to say, "There you will find the manna your fathers ate.

(47) But you know how and in what form Christ is the bread. It is not necessary to eat it in the way the Jews understood it, because they

said [John 6:52], "How can this man give us his flesh?" For they thought they must tear it with their teeth, and drink it with their mouth. But as it is spiritual food, so it is eaten spiritually. Eating here is believing; with faith one must receive the food that Christ's flesh was killed for us and his blood was shed for us. Christ says, "He who believes that I was sent by the Father to give my flesh and blood for you who are to be saved has the right manna and will not die. For this is our faith, that he who believes in Christ, who died for our sins, shall be saved; for one must believe in Christ, who died and rose from the dead. He who eats and drinks Christ's blood has eternal life. These are different words, but they are the same opinion. So it remains true, whoever eats the spiritual manna does not die. Your fathers did not eat this spiritual manna, that is, they did not believe in Christ, therefore they died.

(48) This text has been used by our adversaries, the sacramentalists, as an auxiliary and has been wrongly interpreted as referring to the sacrament. Although it is true that Christ's blood and flesh are present there, it is also received with the mouth; it is eaten and drunk bodily. But this food is not credited with bringing life. For many go to it, eat and drink, and yet die; they go to it for punishment and judgment, which is severely punished by St. Paul; therefore they have not life. And the sequence that is sung on the day corporis Christi: Manna datur patribus, is not right, it is sung falsely, and is a foolish sequence, but you should draw it on faith and on the divine word. The word is not received and eaten with the mouth, as the sacrament of the altar, but the word is taken with the heart; if one believes, and if one breathes it into the heart and faith, it is right. Thus the Lord Christ says in John: "The manna of the Jews has meant me, Christ.

(49) If it be said, How canst thou be bread, when men eat and drink? This is what happens when I am distributed. With what

Knife? To preach of Christ by mouth and tongue, and to declare that he shed his blood and died for us; then I set Christ before you, not on plates, but in the heart I put his flesh and blood, which was given for you. That is, put into the heart. If you receive it, eat it and drink it, that is, if you believe it, you are blessed [Revelation 19:9]. This is what the Lord Christ says, "He that eateth my flesh shall never die." Otherwise, it all goes away. In short, you are all lost unless you eat my flesh, that is, eat me with your heart and believe in me, and I am presented to you through the Word.

50 So you have the right manna, which God has signified through that. And recently to speak: Manna is for us at this time the sacrament and the gospel, that is, this sermon, wherein it is spoken that the body and blood of Christ is given for us for the remission of sins. Therefore, when you hear the gospel, it rains manna, and there you gather manna, which is then given to you from heaven. If then thou takest it, that is, believest, thou also eatest, and abidest for ever, even as the word of God also abideth for ever.

(51) So also the manna was white, like a dew, like a snow or a hoarfrost; that is, the gospel is not only a clean, fine, pure sermon, but also a sweet, sweet sermon. Moses is a bloody, red preacher, he carries red in his shield, he is a sharp, angry preacher, he kills a man; but the gospel is white, pure, and has no stain, it has the most beautiful color, and is closest to the light. For light is the most comforting color; but darkness is terrible. Just as in Oriental countries kings, princes and great lords are wont to put on white garments, and to wear white fans 1) around their hats. White is a cheerful color, lovely and comforting. And is the white color the best color, separated from all blackness, inclines closest to the light.

52 Therefore she goeth nowhere, but unto Christ, not willing that any thing should be appropriated unto her: that is, He that preacheth thee

1) Fan (Fechel) -- tie, string around hats, boots and clothes. Cf. Col. 588.

Christ alone makes blessed, who lets the manna remain white and with its righteous color. The gospel is sweet and lovely, proclaiming the comfort, peace and forgiveness of sin that came to us through the death of Christ. As the Lord Christ says to the gout-broken man [Matth. 9, 2]: "Be of good cheer, my son, your sins are forgiven you"; item [Matth. 11, 28]: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" 2c.

(53) After that, it was like coriander, small, like millet or rice; that is, the gospel is a small, bad sermon. Just as the Lord Christ himself [Matth. 13, 31] compares the gospel to a small grain of mustard seed. Thus the gospel is to be regarded as crushed and small; it is despised, blasphemed and desecrated by the world. Nevertheless, the gospel word that we preach has such great power that it saves; it has a divine power with it. Such a word of God, which is spoken and resounds from the mouth of man, is not received by reason, it has no outward adornment nor prestige; nor does it bring with it victory over death and the devil, hell and damnation, even forgiveness of sins, and makes us children of God, lords over heaven and earth [Rom. 1, 16. 2 Tim. 1, 8. 10.]. Such power we have in the word of God, which word is a bad thing; for it is to be done in a moment, then it is over [Ps. 147, 15]. Therefore it is not a beautiful or splendid thing, it has no appearance, and yet it is so powerful.

After that, it tastes like honey and bread, that is, it comforts and refreshes the soul. Others have fantasized here that honey and bread tastes so good is the divinity and humanity; the divinity must first come into the word, if it is to flourish and taste to our benefit. But they fall in with the *vita contemplativa* [with the contemplative life; Satan thus brings them down. No one will taste the divinity, for as it wants to be tasted, that is, that it be contemplated in the humanity of Christ; and if you do not find the divinity in this way, you will never have peace. Therefore, let them always speculate and speak of contemplation,

how everything is courting with God, giving a foretaste of eternal life, and how spiritual souls begin a tranquil life.

55) But if you do not know God in this way, let him be how great and mighty he is; but lift up all this and touch him, and say first of all: I know of no God but he who is given for me. So his majesty will be sweet to you, when you know that 1) you have such a God who is given for you, who has heaven and earth in his hand; then no creature will frighten you, nor this his majesty. For the fact that he is given for you is due to his mercy and love; here take hold of him, and there he is also soft and sweet [Gen. 32, 30. Deut. 5, 33, 2. 3. Jn. 20, 20].

Otherwise God is two things; as God in himself, since he is a Lord, and God in his incomprehensible essence. Then a God given for you, that God may be Lord over you and over all men. Moses preaches this, and he also wants everyone to believe that he is the Lord. But here everyone is afraid of this God, because he is too harsh and terrible. But it is a different thing when the gospel preaches the same God to you, and models him to you, and makes you delight and rejoice in him; namely, when it testifies and shows how he died for you and was given to you; then he is sweet and like honey.

(57) Sixthly, the manna was not made by the hands of men, nor did it grow out of the earth, but came down from heaven, as the dew falls. This is what the prophets saw when they prophesied or preached about the holy gospel. For the gospel is such a sermon, which is not invented by any man, as St. Peter also says in his [second] epistle [Cap. 1, 21.]: "No prophecy comes from human choice or devotion, but the saints of God have spoken, impelled by the Holy Spirit." Item, the Lord Christ says [Matth. 10, 20.]: "It is not you who speak, but the Spirit of my Father who is in you" 2c. The gospel is also given because it comes from heaven.

because reason does not understand it, it does not know that God gave His Son for me, that the Son was sent into the world and became man for me and died. No one can preach this, no one can invent such a doctrine, because it comes from above, from a miraculous consecration, without human intervention [John 3:27]. This much is said: The gospel is a heavenly sermon, not a human word, it cannot be found on earth. Therefore, all other teachings are fictitious, false and doctrines of the devil, for they do not come from heaven.

(58) Manna also cometh in the morning, when the sun riseth: that is, the gospel is risen, and cometh in the time of grace, when Christendom began, and the Sun of righteousness, that is, the Lord Christ, is risen or ascended. For after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Christ, the Holy Spirit comes, and this dew falls on the whole world. Therefore the gospel is food prepared by God without our doing. So we also have manna, the food of heaven, prepared and presented to us. So he gave us the gospel, it is our gift; we did not ask for it, nor did we seek it, but it comes by grace and is revealed to us.

59. but that the manna is gathered up in such a way that each gets as much as the other, and that it is measured according to the measure of Gomor, has this meaning, that one Christian is equal to another, and no one has more or less than the other, they all have One God, One Christ, One baptism, Spirit and faith 2c. [This may well be that the Gomors were unequal, one stone, the other wood, the third copper or glass. So also among us some have a weak faith, others a strong faith, more or less teaching of the faith, yet such is all Christ. St. Peter has not a better Christ than I have, and as much as St. Peter has, so much have I also.

(60) After the name of Christ, let no man be ashamed of another, nor let him think himself better than another; for the one Christ is given for me and for thee. I have given him so

I have confessed more than Mary, the prophets and all the saints have tasted; and because I believe in him, I have as much in him as another. We are equal, my measure has as much in it as the other; it is equal and as great as the other; although those who are weak in adversity and in temptation have a lesser measure, and the confessors 1) have a more apparent measure, yet, according to Christ, they are all quite equal, and have one good of faith, that is, they have the whole of Christ. This is a very comforting thing, that, reckoned by Christ, all saints and believers are equal.

(61) This we should know against the lumpen preachers, who have made a distinction between us and the saints, and have made idols of us out of the saints. But I am speaking here of the Christians, where one of them, though he submits to all and humbles himself toward everyone, is as great in the sight of God as Peter; though he does not have as great gifts and has gathered as much as others, yet he has gathered in the same measure, and also has the same measure as St. Peter, that is, the same Christ; therefore he may boast of nothing. But he does not make an outward likeness of it, he does not draw it into outward things. For that is not why they are called Christians.

62 The Lord Christ has one seed in the gospel, which is scattered in four different places. So all are called Christians, and all have the gospel; but the fourth part of the seed remains only good, and brings forth its fruit. Such a people of Christians I have never seen on earth, nor known; if they are divided among themselves and hold themselves high, it is false. A city should not call itself a Christian city unless it has the right proof of Christianity. Therefore give the fourth part, or the other part, and count as much as you like; I cannot count the persons, but this I can say: Where the gospel is, there are Christians. Item, I can say: Inwardly they are all equal, but outwardly very unequal, there one has collected more, and the other less.

1) "Confessors" here will probably be as much as martyrs (**confessores**). This meaning is missing in Dietz.



63 But what shall we say to the saying of St. Paul, 2 Cor. 8:13-15, when he refers to alms and charity, and begs and exhorts with strange words that one should help the poor and needy? However, he says that one should not give, so that they have enough, and others have to live in poverty and lack. As then lazy drops are wont to take out, and let others give in; the latter let it cost themselves much, the latter want to waste it with idleness and sloth. Now these are his words [2 Cor. 8:13-15]: "It is not that others should have rest, nor that ye should have affliction; but that it should be alike. So let your abundance minister to their lack for this dear season, that their abundance also may minister to your lack hereafter, and let it be done that is equal. As it is written, "He who gathered much did not have abundance, and he who gathered little did not have scarcity. How does this rhyme with almsgiving?

64 Answer: It is another to lead examples, and another to make spiritual interpretation. The example is drawn to the work, and the interpretation goes to faith. As: Christ died for us, and gave us an example, that we should die also hereafter; if I die, I do as Christ did. This is not a meaning, but an example and following. For this reason it should be called an example and not an allegory. So now St. Paul wants to say this much and teach them: I would like to make it so that it would be like the example that was there in the wilderness during the time of the Israelites, so that he who gathers little manna receives his portion just as much as he who has gathered much.

(65) It should be the same with temporal goods. You have spiritual goods in abundance, and not less than those; you have the gospel of God, the rich treasure that is distributed among you. Therefore, by God's will, you are now obliged to share the temporal with others. And now it is the same that he who has little has as much as he who has gathered much; he who has the spiritual treasure is equal to the others. Now you have not less than I, or the other apostles, though we have first had it, and you have

receive it from us. Therefore, whoever among you is rich and able in bodily food, share out of those who are needy, or [those] who have shared spiritual things with you, those who preach and are in battle, and increase your spiritual wealth, that you may be rich and receive the treasure; so give to them again, and feed them, that they may enjoy your temporal wealth, as you enjoy and share in their spiritual wealth.

66 Therefore he also says in the first epistle to the Corinthians, Cap. 9, 11: "If they sow spiritual things to you, is it a great thing if they reap temporal things again? They feed your souls, but you feed only our bodies; we serve you with the treasure of preaching the gospel to you, therefore you also should give entertainment and feed us. So one supports the other. Therefore this is not an allegory, but an example.

67 Now the text continues: What was left over became worms. For it was commanded by God that nothing should be left over for the morning, just as nothing had to be left over on the paschal lamb. According to history, it is because God does not want unbelief, that people do not trust Him or believe Him; therefore He punishes them, so that everything that is left over does not benefit them. That is, unbelief makes it rotten and stinking, and that it becomes an abomination; just as they were inside, even though outside the manna in front of their eyes they made themselves seem pious and holy in the eyes of God; therefore he will not let them remain because of unbelief.

68. but the spiritual meaning is that the Jews understood the law through the old manna, and that is how they interpreted it and wanted to draw it, which does not last beyond one day. They have yesterday's day, we have today's day; their law is finished, the gospel has now risen; therefore now the law becomes stinking and maggoty, it becomes abominable and reprehensible. Moses is angry with the Jews, that is, the law condemns them, but they do not ask anything about it. So you have the story of the manna.

1) "remain" put by us instead of: "suffer" in the editions.

# The seventeenth chapter

**V.1 And all the congregation of the children of Israel went out of the wilderness of Sin their days' journey, as the LORD commanded them, and pitched in Raphidim. There the people had no water to drink.**

(1) The previous chapter speaks of the great miracle that God performed for the children of Israel, feeding them with the bread of heaven in the wilderness for forty years, even though they continued to disbelieve and murmur against God and rejected this miracle (as well as all other miracles), just as we continue to do to this day. But God wanted to prove His power on earth among men with the same miraculous sign; but we do not let ourselves be moved to faith by it.

Now Moses continues and describes other miraculous deeds that God had done for them. For we have here two signs, which he gave to this people: One, that he gives them water to drink in the desert. Then that he miraculously saves and preserves them by Moses' hand in the war against the Amalekites.

Let us look at one of them first. These histories go one after the other, like the mountains in the desert, as one mountain follows the other; as the scholars know how these mountains are situated one after the other. Mara and Ethan is a large mountain range in Arabia; so here the mountains Horeb and Raphidim are close to each other, and yet have different names; for afterwards Mount Horeb is also called Sinai, and Raphidim lies close to it. They traveled a long and crooked way in the desert through the mountains.

4 Now a miracle follows after God tempts the people of Israel and makes them thirst. In Elim they had water enough; now they are in the desert, there is no water at all, and again it seems as if there were no God to ask after them. And the lack makes them forget all the former miracles, as if there were no God to ask them.

The bitter water became sweet; item, he also gave them the bread of heaven, and that the angel preceded them by day in the pillar of cloud and by night in the pillar of fire. Now this is a shameful plague, that the belly should rule us and prevent us from seeing the present miracles. Now it seems to us: If we had been present at that time and had seen the miracles, we would have liked to believe. Yes well!

5 The Lord Christ Matthew says in chapter 6, v. 28, 29: "Look at the flowers or lilies of the field, how they grow; they do not work, neither do they sew, nor was Solomon in all his glory clothed as the same one. Item, v. 26: "Look at the birds of the air, they do not sow, they do not reap, they do not gather into sheds, yet your heavenly Father feeds them." This is a daily miracle, when we see and experience how God feeds countless birds, and gives all flowers their lovely, beautiful colors and ornaments, as a testimony to a great miracle: yet no one in the common crowd takes it to heart.

6th And the Lord Christ speaks of it still more roughly and plainly, saying [Matt. 6:27], "What man is there among you that would add a cubit to his length?" As if to say, Ye are not those whom ye would have created or made yourselves, ye have given yourselves nothing: neither have ye so much faith as to trust in our Lord GOD. And we must all say that we are not for a moment sure of our life, and must confess that it is another's power and authority that we are fed, that is, our dear God. We all have this miracle in our house every day, wear it on our own necks, nor should we ask anything about it. The Lord Christ also says [Matth. 6, 25.]: "Is not the body more than the garments?" As if to say, "You take care of the clothes, if God preserves your body and life, and also provides the same clothes for you.

(7) Now let the Jews be mocked and laughed at, and say, Fie on their skin, that they have not considered these things, and believed God. But listen, reach into your own bosom, and you will also find such an unbelieving Jew in it; and fie on you too, should you not also be ashamed that one should find such a coarse ass in you, who does not consider it a miracle that God still provides you with your bread, clothing, body and life daily, and gives you food and nourishment? But no one thinks of it and thanks Him for sustaining life. It is a common thing to be old; no one thanks God when he looks in the morning that God has graciously kept him through the night. So also the bread of heaven was a daily thing. But when God takes it away again, so that they do not have water here, then one would like to have it again; otherwise it would not have been a miraculous work. So, if He gave us everything every day, we would consider it nothing at all (for look at the rich, who have everything enough, they ask for nothing), so that one would never come to God.

Therefore we must be tempted, have need and want, and lack food and drink, clothing, money and goods, honor, favor and promotion, so that we may gain cause to seek God, lest we forget God when we are full and full. Otherwise, this is our nature and way; we are lacking enough; we are not yet to be tamed and made mad. St. Moses in the 5th book [Cap. 32, 15] also complains about this: "Dilectus meus incrassatus, dilatatus et impinguatus, oblitus est Dei Creatoris sui [he has become fat and thick and strong, and has let go the God who made him]. So it remains well. The people are like the donkey, which licks 2) behind itself, the food stings it, becomes horny, goes dancing on the ice, and breaks a leg. For, if God gives everything enough, we become wanton and sure, and forget our Lord God. But if God wants a little praise, glory, honor, invocation, or thanksgiving from us, He must leave us in want and need.

Suffering, depriving oneself of food to a certain extent, and letting the physical be beaten into the entrenchment: otherwise one asks nothing for the eternal goods of our Lord God.

(9) Carelessness and ingratitude have gotten the upper hand so that no one is satisfied with his wife and child, house and yard, hand, mouth, nose, strength and health. These things are not respected. And what another has in these things is much more dear to us than what is ours, but God casts it into the dustbin. But when a little poverty comes, or God sends a disease, or some other danger, immediately one cries out: O help God, help God. Yes, do you come trolled now? Therefore, because our dear God and Father is so merciful, and we are so blind that we do not see His goods and benefits, nor thank Him for them, He often keeps a little encouragement for us, so that we may have cause to call upon Him.

(10) So you see what kind of people we are, and who God is; item, what the world, flesh and blood do against God. The world is blind, stiff-necked and completely evil: God, on the other hand, is kind and gracious, benevolent and of great goodness, as the Holy Scriptures and His own Word commend Him.

**V. 2. 3. And they quarreled with Moses, saying: Give us water, that we may drink. Moses said to them: Why do ye quarrel with me? Why tempt ye the LORD? And when the people thirsted there for water, they murmured against Moses, saying: Why did you let us go out of Egypt, so that we and our children and our cattle died of thirst?**

The belly wriggles again. Dear Moses had a burdensome, annoying office, that he had to govern such an unwilling, stubborn, stiff-necked people; it also made him weary enough, he was in great danger all hours of his life and body, because he always had to wait, when they came and strangled him.

(12) Now they say again, "We do not know whether we were brought out of Egypt by God, but you did. This is an abominable unbelief and a terrible temptation. There Moses must hear ingratitude and blasphemy, they disgrace God and all his

1) Eislebensche: sollst.  
2) lücken - to hop, to jump; here: to strike out behind.

Miracles, and also his messengers and prophets; Moses must listen to and suffer all this here.

It is such a cheerful thing to govern the common rabble. Whoever does not know this, just start to govern and try a little, he will soon learn it. I would that all strange, whimsical, and rebellious heads should reign but two years, they would soon cast off their horns. The pagans have said: Magistratus ostendit virum, that is, one does not know a man, he has ruled other people before, and has presided over them. For in that place it usually happens that if he does something, it pleases one, but not another; and if it pleases hundreds, there are thousands who do not like it. If God wants to make a martyr of someone, he puts him in a place where he has to rule; if he wants to lead his regiment with a good conscience and keep his soul safe, he should not have the devil painted over his door, nor should he be asked to be a godfather; but the common rabble will do it, so that he will become so flexible that one would like to wrap him around a finger.

(14) If Moses had been an impatient and ill-tempered man, he would have said, "In the name of the devil, what do I get from you? I have nothing for all my toil, labor and good deeds, but grumbling, quarreling, item, ingratitude. This is truly a nice, sweet reward that is given to him. He shared their heart in his body, and for them he devoured life and limb, honor and goods; but in return he has this pittance, so that they consider him a villain.

(15) But this is how it is with Christians: they must take shame, damage, harm, and ingratitude for good and good deeds. It is no different in the world. He who pulls another out of the fire pushes him back into it, and he who delivers another from the gallows ties him up again for gratitude.

(16) It was the same with the Lord of lords himself. For when Christ made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and healed people of all kinds of diseases, and helped everyone, at last they crucified him. It is the same here, Mosi.

He will meet with danger in the wilderness for his sour toil and labor. Whoever then does not want to consider that he is taking ingratitude in the world, only think that he will soon lie down and die. For if he wants to go through and rule honestly, he will soon displease the devil and the world.

(17) But this is the right school, which teaches us to grow weary and tired of this life. For if one is to take nothing in the world for charity and love but ingratitude, heartache and hatred, then one soon grows weary of life, so that one says: Oh, who would be dead! Come, dear God, and only let me die, come death and take me! As Moses will say afterwards in this book [Cap. 32, 32]: Oh Lord, take me away. Yes, that's how you have to make the regiment hot. It may seem fine to rule over others, but try it and you will say, "Oh, who would be a peasant in a village and sit under a green tree in peace!

18 Therefore Moses also says here, "Why do you quarrel with me? I did not do it. Look back! Are you then mad and senseless? It is impossible that a man should do such a glorious work as giving bread from heaven and making water flow from a rock. And Moses rejects them away from the Lord God. Mr. Omnes is a mad devil, he does not obey until he is struck in the mouth. They are spoiled with good deeds, but they have to be beaten. Moses is in danger of death all days, hours and moments. That is the merit. Well, you friendly, blissful world, you fine herb, one should love you; you pay well for faithful services; you recognize fine a blood-sucking work. It gives such a shameful reward that one would like to strike it with fists, or that one would cover this beautiful fruit with may and bring it to the devil for the new year.

(19) But one must bite this ingratitude and overcome it with patience and persevere, so that only the service of God remains pure. If Moses had not listened to the command of God, he would have had to abandon the preaching ministry and regiment long ago. And if I had

If I had been offended by people's hatred, enmity, persecution and ingratitude, I would have gotten rid of my part long ago and would not have read, written and preached much more. But I did not want to do it. For we are to serve the world and do it good, whether it, on the other hand, repays good with evil. God will accept and repay abundantly what the world does not pay and repay; He will look upon our faithful service. God is kind, merciful, long-suffering and of great patience, as is also said in the prophet Hosea: "What shall I make of you, Ephraim? Shall I make thee like Adaina and Zeboim? But my love is too fervent that I do not do according to my wrath."2c. He sees through his fingers that he can tolerate such ingratitude for a time; but he will not let it go unscented in his time [Ex. 32, 34.]. But men can not do it, the ingratitude distresses them too hard, therefore a divine patience belongs to it.

**v. 4-6 Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, How shall I deal with the people? it lacketh not far, they shall stone me yet. And the LORD said unto him, Go before the people, and take with thee some of the elders of Israel, and take thy rod in thine hand to smite the waters, and go. Behold, I will stand there before thee upon a rock, Horeb, and thou shalt smite the rock, and water shall run out, and the people shall drink. Moses did this before the elders of Israel.**

20. Horeb has been a barren, rough, high mountain, a bare mountain, where nothing has grown at all.  
21 Now here are two things: one is that God gives a command and tells Moses to go with some of the elders of Israel to Mount Horeb and strike the rock with his staff, and water will come out and the people will drink. Otherwise Moses might have struck all the trees in the forest, but he would not have brought water from them. After that, he also wanted the outward work.  
22. but it is a praiseworthy miracle, as we pass by with staring eyes, and not

We have ears so thick that we do not hear it, so that we can see how powerful the creatures are in God's hand. [What can be more unnatural than a rock, a hard stone, that water should be in it? If snow or clouds were to become water and rain, that would be more plausible, for clouds are soft and watery; but a rock, a barren, hard, dry thing, a bare mountain, that it should give off water, that is just as if one said that water should come from fire, and again that fire should come from water. Above [Cap. 16, 4.] we also heard the same, because in the desert there was no field, no plow nor harrow, neither seed, grain, wheat, rye nor barley, from which the children of Israel could have eaten and had their food: nevertheless bread grew in the air, manna, heavenly bread, fell daily into the camp.

How does this rhyme? The air gives food and nourishment, and here, the stones or rocks flow with water. It is a wonderful gift. Just as it is strange and wonderful that grains grow from the earth. Who can do this art, and who has this power? God has it, who can do such unnatural things, so that we may imagine from them what kind of God he is and what kind of power he has, so that we may not despair or despair in him, but rather firmly believe and trust in him that he can also turn the leather on the bag into gold, and make the dust into vain grain on the ground, and make the air a cellar full of wine for me. This is to be trusted, that he has such great power, and we may know that we have such a God, who is able to do this art, and that all things rain and snow around him with wondrous works.

24. But it does not help. Oh God! What a terrible, terrible judgment will come upon the world, that it does not turn to these miracles! Learn here what the world means, what a devilish thing it is about the world: it is stubborn and blinded, and does not see God's miracles, nor what God is, who pours Himself out so abundantly with benefits, and proves Himself with miracles, and mildly helps everyone.

**V. 7 Then the place was called Massa Meribah, because of the quarreling of the children of Israel, and because they had tempted the Lord, saying: Is the Lord among us or not?**

25. They want to say: Do we have a God or not? Fie on you, you blasphemers, that you so brazenly tempt God, and despair of God. In the name of the executioner, have you not had manna? Or have ye not journeyed out of Egypt, and passed through the sea with dry feet? Fie on us, too, if we say such things, if God does not give us soon how we want to have a thing! They are in doubt whether God is among them or not. It has been such a sin that they have tempted God, even though the Scriptures here conceal it; and it is a wonder that God suffered so long that they kept tempting Him.

26) It is a cruel, great sin to disbelieve 2) and mistrust God. And the unbelieving mob makes their way and treachery seen honestly here; therefore they also give a name to the place, so that one does not forget this sin of the people; they call it Massa, that is, tentatio; and Meriba, that is, jurgium, a quarrel. For they tempted God, they quarreled with Moses or with God, and they quarreled in this place. Indeed, God was very angry with this sin, as can be seen from the fifth and ninetieth Psalm, vv. 7-11, where it is said: "Today, when you hear his words, do not harden your hearts, as happened in Meribah, as in Massa in the desert, when your fathers tempted me, felt and saw my work, that I had forty years of trouble with this people 2c.; and said, There are men whose hearts are always willing to go astray, and who will not learn my ways, that I swear in my wrath, They shall not come into my rest." There, the prophet cites this sin, that this quarrel, strife, or temptation has particularly displeased God. And this is also pointed out to them by Moses in the 5th book at the 6th chapter, v. 16: "Do not tempt God your Lord, as you tempted Him in Massa Meriba. Item, the 78th Psalm, v. 41, 56, and 106th Psalm,

V. 21 ff. also remember them, although it is not reported in Scripture that they suffered any punishment for this.

27 This is the glorious miracle that God delivered the children of Israel from thirst, and by a great miracle provided water from a stone or rock, as He had previously given them manna from heaven. This truly sets a comforting example before our eyes that God wants to preserve and refresh us, even though the highest and most extreme need should overtake us. Therefore, we should also trust in Him for all our physical needs. For before it should fail, stones must become water, and bread must fall from heaven, which never before was known, and which is above all nature. But enough of this for now. Let us go on to the text.

**V.8-14 Amalek came and fought against Israel in Raphidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us men, go forth, and fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill, with the rod of God in my hand. And Joshua did as Moses told him, to fight against Amalek. And Moses, and Aaron, and Hur, went up to the top of the hill. And when Moses held up his hands, Israel prevailed: but when he put down his hands, Amalek prevailed. But the hands of Moses were heavy; therefore they took a stone, and put it 3) under him, that he might sit upon it. Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on each side. So his hands remained stiff until the sun went down. And Joshua subdued Amalek and his people by the edge of the sword. And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this in a book for a memorial, and command it in the ears of Joshua: for I will cut off Amalek from under heaven.**

28 Now follows the other miracle, which is truly strange in my eyes, that God slays the Amalekites and saves the Israelites. Just now [Cap. 12, 37] you heard that the children of Israel, six times a hundred thousand fighting men, well armed and equipped, went out from the kingdom of Egypt, even a mighty and great army.

3) "him" is missing in the Eisleben one.

1) In the Eisleben: Hångers.  
2) to misuse -- to be dishonorable.

People of war. Here, however, these iron eaters and Scharrhansen, 1) this mighty people, become such a loose people that they cannot protect themselves against the small people of the Amalekites. I would have thought, such a war people should have traveled in the cross through the whole world. But their great power and might put God to shame so shamefully, and such a great people is badly beaten by a few Amalekites, which Amalekites had only a piece of land around the mountain Horeb.

29 There is a new temptation and tribulation here, because the Amalekites want to go to the field and strike the people of Israel, the foreign guests. Now the Israelites were rid of the cruel tyrant and enemy, Pharaoh and the Egyptians, only a few days ago, who were drowned and killed before their eyes in the Red Sea, so that they thought they were now over the mountain, that there would be no trouble or danger with them. For God also gave them bread from heaven and water from the rocks in the desert. But it will not let up and be over; indeed, a new calamity bursts forth, namely this, that Amalek, the enemy, sees his advantage, and thinks that the people of Israel are tired from the great journey, since they had gone out of Egypt, had also suffered hunger and thirst in the desert, are still stuck in the desert and in the mountains, since nothing can come to them, and they are not well prepared for battle; therefore he intends to attack, strike and destroy them.

(30) This is a true picture and mirror of the Christian life in this world, where persecution, crosses and hardships always follow one another: Nulla calamitas sola; and, as it is said in the proverb, "A downpour follows a sunshine. This temporal life of a Christian is like the weather in April. For in April the weather is not constant, and the sun does not shine for and for, but now the sky is bright and clear, and soon it rains, snows, closes, and hails again; quickly such cloudy and wet weather passes away.

1) Scharrhansen - defiant, high-minded people.  
2) In the editions: a cross, "un cross" - crosswise.

Weather again, and comes on it a sunshine. Thus God also changes with the Christians; now they have happiness, soon misfortune; now joy, soon sorrow; now life, soon death. But God always helps in such afflictions, and gives a livelihood in them, so that one can endure the temptation [Ps. 68:20].

(31) There arose a question from these places, when they were come in: How could Amalek have fought against all Israel (for the people of Israel were much more numerous than that one, and that Moses beat them with your prayers alone, and they did not do it with his fist), since they could not afterwards dispute the two much more powerful kings, as Og and Sihon? Item: Why Moses did not pray there also? Well, if it were not written in the Scriptures, I would not believe it myself; I would say it was a lie. But this is how it happened: Joshua chose some. It was not a war against the whole people; for this great people also took up a great space with their camp, they were far from each other, and went wide; so Amalek attacked a thousand or two of the great multitude, and so cooled his mettle.

32 It is also the common custom to speak in this way when a people is defeated in a place; even though the least part takes the defeat, the whole people is said to be defeated. In the same way, when a city is stormed or a nation is defeated, the cry goes out that the prince is defeated and overcome. So in these words the synecdoche is also that Moses speaks of the whole multitude, although only a part has received good flaps. Just as inan also says: He has beaten a dog, when he has hardly hit it on one leg; for no one can beat a dog in all places. In the same way it is said: He has wounded a man, 3) whether he has wounded only his leg, arm, or other part of his body. Item, one says: He has knocked down a house, 4) whether he has only thrown in the stove in the parlor, or broken the windows, or only knocked in the door. Well, this is the common way to speak of a piece of work, where

3) In the Eisleben: gewundet.  
4) throb --- smash.

one understands the whole thing. So here Amalek attacked only one place of the camp, or a part of the people; that is, as if he had attacked the whole people of Israel.

The little piece has lamented Moses. Now he will command Joshua to go out against Amalek. God Himself commands them to prepare for battle and to stand as if they were going to slay Amalek with the sword, but they will not slay him with the sword. What is their sword and armor for, if it does nothing, and yet God calls them to it? For Moses shall say, I will be on the mountain, and will smite Amalek." Joshua, though he warred, smote him not, but Moses on the mount, with his prayer. Joshua is crying from leather; so Moses lifts up his hands to God, with fervent crying. So both go next to each other.

(34) From this we are also to learn how God will protect and defend us, and this in two ways: by means, and, when necessity requires it, in other ways; just as Joshua used the sword against Amalek. But Moses, who lifted up his hands toward heaven and prayed, did more against the Amalekites than Joshua with the edge of the sword. Therefore, one should not despair, even though there is a lack; nor should one become proud, confident and puffed up, nor defy if there is any advantage, but trust in God. There is an abundance and great supply of armor here; but they do not do it from their own strength, and it does not have to come to their use, but Moses with his prayer, or raising his hands, defeats Amalek.

35 Thus the holy scripture everywhere warns that one should not deviate too far to the right or to the left hand, that is, that one should not be hopeful and presumptuous when something good is due to us; nor should one despair when there is nothing, or when lack and need appear; but one should remain on the middle course. For if it is there, God can well withdraw it and take it away; again, if it is not there, He can and does well to provide it from heaven.

36 In this text we have a splendid example of an earnest prayer, and what power and effect it has. For when Moses lifted up his hands and prayed beside Aaron and Hur, the Israelites were victorious and prevailed against the Amalekites. Therefore it is true, as the holy scripture says [Sir. 35, 21.]: "The prayer of the wretched pierces the clouds, and does not cease from the Most High, until it obtains what it desires." Item, which is said in the 50th Psalm, v. 15: "Call upon me in the time of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt praise me." And that God in the prophet Isaiah Cap. 65, 24. speaks: "It will be, before they will cry, I will hear them" 2c. For when a Christian heart earnestly prays to God, cries out, and says: Help, dear God, now help God, have mercy in heaven! sighs, pleads, and perseveres, it is impossible that such a prayer should not be heard by God. Everything must and should be yes; therefore, such a prayer also defeats that angry and fierce enemy, Amalek.

Now we will deal with the allegories of this 17th chapter and say what God wanted to indicate. But that [the] water springs from a rock of stone, we put this in its place, because this allegory is almost common, and St. Paul in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians in the 10th chapter, v. 4, also touches it to some extent, and says: "Our fathers drank there a spiritual drink from the rock in the wilderness, which followed them, 1) which was Christ. And there St. Paul points the rock to Christ, and wants them to have drunk both, the spiritual and the bodily drink. The bodily from the natural rock, so that the body was refreshed and the thirst quenched. But this benefit would not have happened to them, and the water would not have been given to them, if they had not had faith. For this reason they also drank spiritually, that is, they believed; just as we also still believe in the same Christ. But this is the difference between us and the children of Israel, that they believed in Christ, who had not yet come.

1) Eislebensche: be.



But we believe in the Christ who has come.

(38) Thus by the rock the Lord Christ was spiritually signified, so that he is the right foundation on which we should build and trust, and on which we should also groan and rely. Therefore the Lord Christ also says to Peter [Matth. 16, 16. 18.], when he confessed that Christ was the Son of the living God: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church." And St. Peter is called by this, that he is called a rock. But the church is founded on Christ, that is, it believes in Christ, that he is our righteousness, strength, wisdom, holiness and life [1 Cor. 1:30]. Whoever trusts in him is founded on the rock through this faith and trust, and remains unconquered.

39. that the water now runs out of the rock is an incredible thing, and is not understood by reason. But God said to Moses: "Strike the rock, and water will flow out" 2c. Now if Moses had not had faith, no water would have gushed out of the rock. If Moses had followed his reason in this, he would have had to say: God would be a fool, or the devil would have called such a thing. Yes, if it were a snowball, it would give water; but this was too high for water to flow from the rock. Therefore, the faith of Moses and the others brought forth the water, that they might trust the word of God.

40 The meaning is that from the crucified and despised Christ water of the grace of the Holy Spirit springs and flows; and this is also unbelievable, that there should be water of life and the Holy Spirit. How this water is interpreted Joh. 4, 13. 14. when the Lord Christ says to the Samaritan woman that whoever drinks the water that he gives, he will 1) not thirst forever, but the water that he gives will become in him a well of water that flows into eternal life. Here one sees also how this rhymes, or how one can grasp this. A crucified

1) Eislebensche: will.

Man, having flesh and blood, and being put to death (for he is flesh and dies), out of his death, out of his flesh and blood, shall come forth a spirit that quickeneth? Flesh and spirit, death and life, how do they rhyme with each other? Who wants to suck out the Holy Spirit here? It would have to be a skilled master who could do this art.

(41) Therefore the world thinks it exceedingly foolish that the Holy Spirit should come out of the condemned and dead man Christ, and that living water should spring up to refresh and save both body and soul. This is supernatural and not comprehensible to any human mind on earth, whoever he may be. Whoever does not believe it, does not have it; it takes faith for you to believe that Christ is the living fountain and heavenly rock, who died for us and laid down his life for us, and thus dug through and opened it; as St. John also sees in the story of his passion, Cap. 19, 34; all so that I might receive the Holy Spirit through him.

42. but Moses beating on the rock with the rod means that even if Christ were crucified a hundred times and a hundred times, the Holy Spirit would not come if it were not fasted into the ministry of preaching. One must throb and knock on the rock, that is, one must preach from it, one must have the rod of the mouth [Is. 11, 4.]. The ministry of preaching is Mosiah's rod and staff; he that throbs and smites men's consciences out of reproach of the law, and preaches thereon that Christ died for us, smites upon the rock; and out of the same preaching, or out of this smiting and smiting, there cometh the Holy Ghost. Behold, such a low, contemptible thing it is, it is not to be regarded for it. A rock and a staff is an insubstantial thing; so also for the oral and bodily word it is a small thing, and yet from it the Holy Spirit shall flow into the hearts of the hearers, that they may drink of it, that is, receive a living spirit.

But reason says: How can the Holy Spirit be received from the oral word, since He is immeasurable? Yes, he cleanses us from sins, saves us from death, and brings us into life, making us eternal.

Blessed, bless us with goods for time and eternity. This seems to be a foolish thing, that such a thing should happen by the word of a man. Just as it had a strange and foolish appearance that Moses struck the rock. But Moses meant to indicate spiritually that one must strike this rock with the bodily office of preaching and not otherwise strike the earth, that is, one must not preach anything, nor strike or hit anything, except Christ alone. I should strike and thrash with my tongue on this rock all the time, and soon water will flow out, that is, then the Holy Spirit will be given to me and to others, yes, he will come to you also, so that we may be renewed and made alive again.

44 But this is on Mount Horeb, which is a barren place; there is a barren land around it, and it was a great mountain, like the Bohemian and Thuringian forests. This mountain range had many pieces or parts, and therefore also received many names, so that it was called Mount Horeb, item, Mount Sinai; it was located in a barren wasteland or desert. This means that the gospel is preached and water is given from a hard rock, nowhere else, because where there are dry, arid hearts, that is, miserable, afflicted sinners. As you have often heard before, that the gospel nowhere preaches rich consolation, or is drawn to the heart, except among thirsty, hungry, and meager souls. As the Magnificat [Luc. 1, 53.] also thus sings, "He hath filled the hungry with good things." It is also said of the Lord Christ: "The gospel is preached to the poor" [Matth. 11, 5. Luc. 7, 22].

45 Our Lord God's way is to create and work only where there is nothing. For God does not deal with that which is high and great except to break it. Again, he deals with the poor in such a way that he comforts them, and that he makes the dead alive, and preaches forgiveness of sin to them through the gospel, making souls and consciences cheerful and courageous. For where the soul is sinful and the conscience is troubled, it is given strength and power again at Mount Horeb. The prophet Elijah also saw at this mountain Horeb

1 Kings 19:8] that we may see that the prophets and the law have much to do with this mountain; that is, the law drives men to recognize their sin. For Moses comes and strikes the rock with a rod, and water comes out; that is, the Holy Spirit is given to them, so that they are refreshed and refreshed.

46 This is the temptation or strife of Massa Meriba. For in Horeb it is thus: When the law is preached, it humbles the consciences, it reveals sin, so that strife and contention are not left out. For there are some hearts that want to deal with God through their values, and strive against the gospel, not accepting it, as the Jews do, Apost. 13, 46, but others accept it with faith. This struggle and quarrel remains, that these want works, but those want faith; these do not want to suffer the gospel, but others want to have it. And such quarrels continue to this day, which happened at Massa Meriba. As it is also said in the 95th Psalm, v. 7, 8, when David speaks of the new ministry: "Today, when you hear my voice, do not harden your hearts, as you did at Meribah," but accept the voice without quarreling, and let your good works always fall away.

047 Now also let us hear of Amalek, what he is. Joshua was commanded to choose men of war, and to fight against Amalek: but Moses tarried in the mount, and lifted up his hands, and prayed. And while he lifted up his hands, Israel lay on high; but when he let down his arms, Israel lost. For Moses' . Hands became heavy, 1) therefore Moses had to sit down, and stones were put under his arms. But there were two on either side of him, holding up Moses' hands.

48 Now here are two histories. The holy scripture calls the people Amalek the firstlings among the Gentiles, as Balaam says in the fourth book of Moses [24, 20.]: Primitiae gentium Amalek, that is, when Israel went out of Egypt, the Amalekites were the first of the

1) Eislebensche: heavier.

Gentiles, when they passed through, and they also set themselves against the children of Israel. Therefore it was written, Deut. 25:17-19, that they should be destroyed, because they first set themselves against Israel; as it is said there, "Remember what the Amalekites did to you on the way when you came out of Egypt, how they attacked you on the way, and struck those who were behind you, all the weak who were following behind, when you were tired and weary, and did not fear God. Now therefore, when the LORD thy God bringeth thee to rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess, then thou shalt blot out the remembrance of the Amalekites from under heaven; this forget not." And this was accomplished by Saul and Samuel, who drove out and destroyed these enemies.

(49) This people Amalek means the Jews, or the people of Israel. For when the Lord Christ came to earth, they opposed Christ with all power and authority. This people became the real Amalek. For when the gospel was preached by John the Baptist, by the Lord Christ Himself, and by the dear apostles, they were the very first to oppose the divine word, to persecute it with great earnestness, and to kill many Christians. Nor do they yet respect the divine word, for that is their office, to fight against Christ with the sword and with the tongue. It is a spiritual war and strife. But it is as it is written of Amalek, that there was an everlasting war between Amalek and the children of Israel, until the Amalekites were destroyed. So God also inflicted His punishments on the Amalekites for and for, and punished them until the third and fourth generations.

(50) Through the apostles and their preaching, the Jewish Amalekites were faithfully enough warned at that time; but because it was of no avail, their faith came into the hands of the Romans, by whom the Jewish people is subdued, and is still today disturbed and eradicated by the gospel, so that they can no longer do anything. And even if they, the Jews, hide themselves now and then in the countries, they cannot regain their strength so that they can

They were to become a nation of their own, to have their own king and their own head. Just as Amalek was never restored to a kingdom of its own; but since it was at first such a great, glorious kingdom, and, provided with all kinds of supplies, stood together like a mighty, great lake, or a deep-flowing water, it then became as small and little as a brook, where one might wade through with one's feet, as Isaiah the prophet [Cap. 11:15] speaks of it.

51 Joshua chose men to fight against Amalek, that is, God raised up preachers and apostles to fight against the Jews. And these fence and fight with the sword of the Spirit, that is, with the gospel.

(52) But this is of little avail, if our Moses, that is, the Lord Christ, were not on the top of the mountain, and our Prince and Lord. For we only speak the word, and preach it; but where he does not stir the heart, and give the Holy Spirit, and awaken faith in us, and comfort and strengthen us, it is done. This is shown in that Moses with his lifting up of hands contends more than Joshua with his sword; that is, we preach, but he gives the prosperity and the emphasis to it, as St. Paul [1 Cor. 3, 6.] also testifies, saying, "Paul planted, and Apollo watered, but God gave the prosperity to it." So Moses is here an image and figure of the Lord Christ, because all figures are to be drawn to Christ.

53. but Moses having heavy hands 2c. means Moses' preaching ministry, or the teaching of the law. For when Moses' ministry is going on, and the law is being enforced, his hands are heavy, that is, the works of the law are hard to do. But we do not have Moses in the New Testament as the Jews had him; we have only half of Moses; he does nothing more for us Christians than that we are initially brought to the knowledge of sins through him; as Paul says [Rom. 3:20] that sin is known through the law. After this we have Christ, who rules the inner man by the Holy Spirit, but his hands are still heavy in the matter of the heart. For he has yet

There are many weak Christians who cannot follow through with their works; as St. Paul also complains to the Romans [Cap. 7, 18. 19.] about this; the old rascal does not want to follow through. According to the inward law it is all fulfilled, but according to the old Adam the hands are still heavy, it will not follow, there the law is a heavy load and burden, so there presses and weighs down. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit," says St. Paul [Gal. 5:17]. And the Lord Christ [Matt. 26:41] says, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." The flesh always draws us back from the Spirit.

But the two servants who lift up Moses' hands also signify the ministry of preaching in both testaments. One must resist on the right hand and on the left hand with admonishing, stopping, punishing, forbidding, promising and comforting. One must resist, so that one does not become horny, slothful and lazy, as our flesh and blood would have its desire to do. Thus the word wants to be driven, so that we can

Let the flesh and the spirit be bold. When the spirit rules freshly, there is no need for the flesh, if only we are confident in the word. With the preaching of the divine word, the flesh must be kept in check.

**V.15. And Moses built an altar, and called it, The LORD Nissi (that is, a host sign, a panier).**

This altar is Jesus Christ, who is our ensign or banner [Isa. 5:26], on which altar we sacrifice, that is, give thanks and praise to God. For we have the gospel and the Holy Spirit, and know Christ, and also do Christian works here in the flesh. This is our sign, that in Christ and through Christ we give thanks to God for His holy Word. Otherwise the preachers here have made a vain Moses. Now it is good that Moses should be in part according to the outward man, but inwardly Moses should have nothing to do, but Christ alone should reign.

**The eighteenth chapter.**

**V.1-8. And when Jethro the priest of Midian, Moses' brother-in-law, heard all that God had done for Moses and his people Israel, that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt, he took Zipora, Moses' wife, whom he had sent back, and her two sons. One of them was named Gershon, for he said: I am a sojourner in a strange land; and the other was called Eliezer, because he said, The God of my father hath been my help, and hath delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh. And it came to pass, when Jethro Moses' servant, and his sons, and his wife, were come unto him into the wilderness, unto the mountain of God, where he had pitched his tent, that he said unto Moses, I, Jethro thy servant, am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her. And Moses went out to meet him, and bowed himself to him, and kissed him. And when they had saluted one another, they went into the tabernacle. Then Moses told his brother-in-law all that the LORD had told Pharaoh and the Egyptians.**

**Israel, and all the trouble they had encountered on the way, and that the Lord had saved them 2c.**

(1) Before this spiritual government is appointed, Moses ordains the temporal government; for otherwise the gospel cannot be well preached, except there be first quiet in a land, and good peace be made: wherefore Moses setteth this chapter before. For where there is no peace or quiet, the gospel is not to be preached.

2 In this chapter he describes how his brother Jethro, the priest in Midian, comes to him in the desert, bringing Ziporam, Moses' wife, and his two sons with him. For in chapter 2, vv. 15, 16, we heard how Moses escaped from Egypt before Pharaoh, and stayed with the priest in Midian, tending sheep there, until he gave him his daughter in marriage, with whom he begat two sons. And when he returned to Egypt, he sent the woman with the children.

They returned to their father, who is called Reguel above [Ex. 2:18], but here he is called Jethro. Perhaps Jethro was the stepfather of the woman, and Reguel, the right father, will now have died. When this Jethro hears that the children of Israel have gone out of Egypt into the wilderness, 1) he comes to his daughter's husband, Moses, and brings him the woman and her children.

(3) But what is this to us? Why is it written that one brings Mosi his wife and two sons, and after that Jethro is truly converted, recognizes the true God, and after that sacrifices to him? We will take three pieces or three lessons from this. First: Moses was in office, called by God and required to plague the kingdom of Egypt and King Pharaoh, and to lead the people of Israel out of the house of Egypt. For this reason he left his house and farm, his wife and child in Midian and gave them to our Lord God, who was waiting here for his house, his possessions and goods, his wife and child. He takes care of all this much better than if Moses himself had been present. But because Moses has been obedient to God, and has diligently followed the work that God has commanded him to do, God again honors him by providing for his wife and child, and in due time has them brought to Moses more gloriously than might otherwise have been done.

4 From this then we are to take this lesson, that if we go along in obedience to God, and for His sake we must leave house and farm and other goods, that we grieve not for them, nor grieve too hard. It shall be much better with the goods than before; they have then been commanded to the right householder. When Moses was about to take his wife and child from Midian to Egypt, he was sick to death, so he had to send them back. Now that he does not have them with him, he is much happier than when they were around and beside him. So God wants to teach us to trust in Him and to leave everything for His sake, because He is able to preserve it, to protect it and to protect it.

1) The words: "after the desert" are missing in the Erlanger.

and give it back much more abundantly than we would wish or desire. Therefore it is also said by the Lord Christ in the Gospel [Matth. 19, 29.]: Whoever leaves field, house, yard, wife and child, for my name's sake, he shall have it back by the hundredfold. Otherwise, if they had gone away with each other, perhaps they or he would have died in Egypt. But now they have all remained alive and are reunited fresh and healthy.

(5) Secondly, so that this great miracle and work, as the redemption of the children of Israel from Egypt, would not remain unfruitful, here he states that the Gentiles also enjoyed this exodus, so that the Jews would not boast that they alone knew God, but the Gentiles now also know Him; God also has His saints and elect among them. He does not want to be the God of the Jews alone, but also of the Gentiles [Rom. 3, 29], yes, the Lord and God of all creatures. Therefore, when He brought the children of Israel out of the house of Egypt, and they murmured much, and were not reformed, God went and accepted the Gentiles also among His people. For this Gentile, Jethro, repents and turns to God, and rejoices in the knowledge of the true God, and in the glorious good deed that God has done for the children of Israel, in that He has liberated them from the house of Egypt with a mighty hand. And although this may be considered a bad and small thing, and seems as if Jethro alone had come to Moses in the wilderness, he certainly brought many people with him, for he 2) was a regent, even the head in Midian.

The Midianites came from Abraham, from Keturah, Abraham's wife, as it is written in Genesis chapter 25, v. 2. With this, God wanted to indicate that the people of Israel was separated from other people with outward statutes, here on earth, for the sake of this cause: for Christ was to take his humanity from this people. Nevertheless, he also reserved for him the Gentiles, to whom he gave faith and the Holy Spirit inwardly, even though he did not have a

2) Erlanger: es.

He made an outward distinction with them, as with the Jews and Isaac's seed. They also did not have Moses and the prophets, he did not separate them from others like the Jews, but inwardly he keeps them as good as the Jews, he gives them the same faith, knowledge of God and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, God has His church and a large number of believers even among the Gentiles; as the examples of Melchizedek, Job, Naaman Syri, the Ninevites and others show.

(7) Thus he was a priest and ruler, as the ancient fathers also ruled, as kings and princes do now, yet he also preached with them, and taught the people as a priest. For the secular realm was not so separated from the ministry of preaching then as it is now. And because he was in the holy office of preaching and believed, he did not keep this treasure and knowledge of God for himself, but he was to put it on and grow with it, as the Lord Christ Matthew testifies in the 25th chapter, v. 14 ff. Therefore, without a doubt, through him the land of Midian was converted and came to the knowledge of the word of God, just as the children of Israel had the same. So that the knowledge of God and the faith were spread far and wide, and did not remain with the Jews alone, but the Gentiles also enjoyed it. For God's works were to be known throughout the world, so that God would be praised and glorified not only by the Jews, but by all people in the world; as follows in the text.

**V. 10, 11: And Jethro said, Blessed be the LORD, which hath delivered you out of the hand of Egypt, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who knoweth how to deliver his people out of the hand of Egypt. Now I know that the LORD is greater than all the gods, because they have exalted themselves against them.**

8. Jethro praises God and confesses Him before all men, making his confession. This is the right sacrifice that he can make to God, so that after knowing God, one rejoices that God is the Lord who saved Israel from Pharaoh; therefore he alone is the right God, above all others, who can control the great trees so that they do not grow into the heavens. Thus the Egyptians are

Those who have been sure and presumptuous have shown arrogance toward the poor Israelites. He who therefore knows God has known Him well and rightly; and thus He wants to be praised and known, so that one may know that He is such a God who can help all who are in need and desire His help; who also humbles all trustworthy and high people [1 Petr. 5:5].

Now this is what he praises about God, how he is above all gods and can by no means tolerate the arrogant and arrogant next to him; therefore he was not one with the Egyptians. For the Egyptians were arrogant and too brave and oppressed the people of Israel; no one can help them but this God. And with this God we also want to keep it, who is such a God that he can help and save from all distress, and humble the hopeful. But where are those who believe both? They despise both. For those who are proud, arrogant and proud do not think that God will see or avenge them; they want to know that God is merciful and forgives with punishment, so that they have room for their wickedness, and that their evil deeds often go away for a while [Ps. 64:6]. For God sees through their fingers, that is what makes them so bold; that is why they do not believe that there is a God. For they carry out their ungodly nature as they see fit [Ps. 14:1, 53:2].

(10) Now what happens on this side with us, who should believe and suffer? Here, too, we do not believe that God will turn great lords and merchants into little ones or none at all, or rich people into poor and beggars, or wise men, wise men and scholars into fools, or saints into disgrace. Yes, we also do not believe that God has an eye on us and asks something of us. If I lack food, or am in danger of death, or come into disgrace and ignominy, from that moment I think that I am finished, and that there is no one left who can help me. Or, if it otherwise happens that the heart is sad and one is in misfortune, then no one believes that God is with us; yet God preaches about Himself and says that He is present with us in distress; as Ps. 91:15: "I am with you.

I am with him in trouble, I will help him out and save him. He also proves it honestly, as in the case of Pharaoh, whom he can throw into the Red Sea and free the children of Israel from his tyranny. Who else would have helped this people? There was no one who ever took care of them or thought to save them.

(11) Therefore, remember this also: "Whatever happens to me, God is at home. Now if I know God, and know that there is a God, then think and be sure that he looks upon you; for this is his way, that he looks upon us, inquires after us, and takes heed, and is anxious that he may help us. For he is such a God, who sings, says and writes these things of himself, that he exalts the oppressed and the lowly, and in turn overthrows the mighty from the throne, or presses the trustworthy to the ground [Luc. 1, 51. 52.]. But because we do not believe, we are not saved; but those who believe, he faithfully helps, even if it takes a while, but he comes at last [Hab. 2, 3], and does not lack who alone can endure him, as the holy Scriptures very diligently exhort to this.

(12) He had such light in his heart that he sang with joy, as if to say, "I praise God, who helps the miserable and overthrows all the high and proud. Let anyone who wants to show himself to be a Christian sing this song or chant after him,

Now a question arises: Are there more gods than one? You heard above [Cap. 12, 12] that since the firstborn were all slain, God had passed judgment on the gods in Egypt. Now the Egyptians were a foolish people, full of gods; though they were also the wisest people under the sun, for which I hold them wholly. For Joseph and the children of Israel brought in a great light, for in Israel alone the right God was known [Ps. 76:3], and the same they also preached and made known. As the 105th Psalm, v. 22, says: Joseph taught the wise men in Egypt and taught them about God.

14. but later they are from this knowledge of god and the bright light like

who fell away, and became much more blind than any other; as it is thus wont to happen that after great, bright light also great darknesses are wont to follow. That is why in Egypt they used to worship cows and oxen, calves, dogs, cats and birds, as well as the sun and the moon. And in the following chapters we will hear how the children of Israel learned this from the Egyptians, and how they erected a golden calf and danced around it. But what are these gods? It is the same for us. If we have lacked the right God on one side, then we have lacked him altogether, and he who does not fully grasp him has nothing of him; only that we do not set up such idolatrous images as they did.

(15) But if I believe that God is reconciled and satisfied by the masses, and do not accept the man Jesus Christ, who was born of the Virgin Mary, and suffered and died for me, is this not God's fault? I call with my mouth the right name of God and of the Lord Christ, but in my heart I have forgotten him. For my thoughts are not righteous in my heart, and I take my own conceit and follow it, of which the holy Scripture teaches nothing, but rather fiercely refuses and despises it; and this not with the cutting of the throat (as one is wont to say), but with the highest loss, namely the salvation of the soul; and thus I have blasphemed and desecrated the divine name, and made myself another god. For it should please the Lord Christ what is beloved to me, since it should rather please me what is beloved to Christ; for he is to master me, and I or others are not to master him. But so the devil gives me the conceit, and presupposes me, that he daubs the name of Christ and God upon it; and so one is deceived. On the other hand, the holy scripture teaches me that this pleases him, and that this is God's eternal will, to believe in Christ and to rely on his suffering, death and bloodshed, as John 6:29 says: "This is God's work, that you believe in him whom he has sent," and not to set up any work on which I place my comfort; then I will meet him.

(16) And so the whole world in our time has been in idolatry. It has fallen into this, so that at first they have wavered a little and stumbled, and then they have grown more and more into greater error, until all the earth has become full of idols, as the prophet Zephaniah says in the first chapter, v. 4 ff.

017 So it was with Jeroboam, when he prepared two calves, one in Dan, and the other in Bethel, and worshipped and sacrificed there, and there was the same worship that was in Jerusalem; and he smeared the name thereon, saying, Israel, here is thy God that brought thee up out of Egypt [1 Kings 12:28, 29]. This king Jeroboam knew well of the true God who is in heaven, and who had helped the children of Israel out of the house of Egypt; nor did he take this name and put it on his idolatry, saying, "The same God is honored here with these calves, he is served there, and the service which they did with these calves should please him, when God had said in his word, "In Jerusalem I will be honored and called, where the mercy seat is" [2 Kings 21:4]. 21, 4.]. But all this did not apply; therefore they came and went on, and established special services here in one city and there in another, and followed this example of Jeroboam, that they built altars in all the pleasant valleys and green pastures, and made the land all full of worship, so that one could not think of any more. But it was all said: Behold, this is the God who brought us out of Egypt and gave the promise to our fathers. There the name remained, but the heart and the opinion were wrong. This is now the name of God blasphemed and profaned, for the wicked devil has been under the title and name of God.

(18) Thus all idolatry comes and flows from unbelief and blindness, that we do not recognize God. Thus our monks' idolatry first began in the desert, when they did not want to associate with people and fled into the wilderness, and one of them did not want to eat this or that, did not want to have fellowship with other people, others wanted to wear this or that clothing, and with such things they did not want to give in to God.

serve God. After that, we descended so shamefully that we believed we could get to heaven through letters of indulgence or on paper, and then we placed little lights and candles before the idols, wanting to be saved by them.

(19) Is not this a gross mockery? If someone wanted to mock the Egyptians, who worshipped calves, oxen, cats, garlic and onions, we did it as badly as they, yes, worse. For there was no other thought than, I will do this or that work, I will build a church, then God will be gracious to me. What devil told you or commanded you to do this? Yes, you say, it seems good to me. Yes, dear, does it seem good to you? But you should learn it from God, which would be good, so you want to teach it to Him. These are thoughts that man learns from his lord and god, the devil. For there is no God either in heaven or on earth who can be reconciled with bell ringers with lights and butter letters or letters of indulgence. But you dream yourself of such a God out of the devil's inspiration, and use this to disgrace and dishonor the right, 1) true God.

The true God is not of such a mind that he lets himself be paid with light and wax, but he sends his Son from heaven, who becomes man, sheds his blood for me on the cross, and dies; he dares to do this so that I may be saved. This is the real, true God; the other gods are all just evil devils, even though you smear the name of God and his word on them, and because of that, God's name must become dishonorable among the devils.

(21) A jdolum, or idolatry, is nothing else but a human delusion and thought, imagined by the devil in the heart, yet bearing the name of the true God; thereby the devil deceives. When a man hears this, he thinks: O, this work pleases God, who made heaven and earth. Therefore he goes up, but he does not know that the devil is underneath. So the letters of the pope are full of God and his word, but what is underneath?



being? Nothing else, but the devil. For here they have been silent about the death and bloodshed of the Lord Christ, and each man has boasted of his obedience and good works.

(22) After this, idolatry is also cast out in outward works, that we have taken cords, candles, and caps before us, even as the Egyptians worshipped dogs and cats. And if the world should stand still for a while, you will see that the pure, true knowledge of Christ will perish again. Though the name of Christ shall remain, yet there shall arise among them sedevils and sects, and shall deceive the people with such things as are nowhere found in the Scriptures, as that they shall direct the people unto good works, and shall then become much worse than they were before.

23 Nothing else pleases our Lord God, except the one work of Christ. Therefore, just as it happened to us before under the papacy, so it will happen to us again; when this bright light of the gospel fades and goes out, we will again worship the plates, scabbed hair and ropes of the barefoot monks, and say: O, this pleases God well. But it is idolatry and belongs to the devil.

24 Now Jethro says here: All the gods could not do what this God does; that is, if you were to gather all the services of the other gods together and melt all the idols into one heap and lump, they would not help men at all if you took them all together in one heap.

(25) The monks, when they comfort one in distress, say: Have patience. But pagans can also have patience, and their way has also been to comfort in this way. Therefore, the doctrine of such saints of works does not comfort a conscience that is in Egypt, and they cannot all together counsel a weighed-down conscience in poverty, in fear of sin, or in distress of death. They can call upon their God and help him [1 Kings 18:24 ff], but he cannot help them out of a single sin, even if they come to him.

(26) Know therefore, dear man, when thou liest in sins, what thou oughtest to do, namely,

that you know you have such a God who wants to help you, for this is how he is disposed toward you. You will not be able to help yourself. It is important to know this. The monks do not know this, but say: Have remorse and repentance for your sin; and teach impossible things, not the knowledge of the Lord Christ. But how is the soul helped by this, if I am told a hundred times: If you have sinned, think and repent and sorrow for your sin?

27. But it does not help, the conscience does not become calm, secure and satisfied, but more and more despondent and stupid, and does not think otherwise, because God is angry, and stands behind us with the club, and wants to have us dead, until such time that he comes who speaks thus: If thou wilt be secure in thy conscience, do thus unto him: Let thy good works and the good works of all men fall away, and learn to know God, and doubt not that this is God's way and nature, that he will help them that believe on his Son JESUS CHRIST. Accept this with firm, certain trust. Then, by the help of the Holy Spirit, a person will accept it and will certainly find it to be so.

28 Therefore our God is greater than all other gods; it is no more important than to know Christ. And if the conscience is rightly instructed, a good work will follow. If the understanding in the heart is righteous concerning God, so that I know what I should do for God, then I also confess Him rightly with my mouth and serve Him rightly. Otherwise, if the heart is wrong, the works are also wrong. But here a Christian directs his words and works to serve many, so that it is not a secret treasure, but becomes common to everyone. Now follows the third part.

**On the morrow Moses sat down to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from the morning until evening. But when his brother-in-law saw all that he was doing with the people, he said, "What are you doing with the people? Why sitest thou alone, and all the people stand about thee from the morning even unto the evening? Moses answered him, "The people come to me and ask God for advice. For where they**

**they come to me to judge between each one and his neighbor, and I show them God's law and His statutes.**

29 Moses learned from Jethro his brother-in-law how to govern the children of Israel, because he saw that he had so many people as subjects, six times an hundred thousand men of war, who had come out of Egypt with Moses. Among so many there was indeed much quarreling and strife. Now the burden of doing everything is too heavy for one man alone; therefore, since Moses wants to hear all the matters himself and take it upon himself to decide, the people are neglected, and one hinders the other; therefore he says to him:

**V. 17, 18: It is not good that you do this. You are foolish, and so are the people with you. The business is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone.**

030 He saith, Thou, Moses, dealest not wisely, that thou layest all things upon thee, and judgest nothing; so that the people are impatient, and nothing is finished: but do so unto him:

**V. 19-22. Obey my voice, I will counsel you, and God will be with you. Take care of the people before God, and bring the business before God, and establish for them laws and statutes, that thou mayest teach them the way wherein they shall walk, and the works which they shall do. Look around you among all the people for honest people who fear God, who are truthful, and who are enemies of avarice; set them over a thousand, over a hundred, over fifty, and over ten, so that they may judge the people at all times.**

(31) He wills that, according to the opportunity and ability of each man's mind and skill, the people in the regiment shall be provided, and persons shall be set before them to judge in their matters. Now what is too much for him who rules over ten, bring it before him who rules over a hundred; and if it is too hard for him, bring it before him who is set over a thousand. And here the people were first numbered by thousands, of which the prophet Micheas [Cap. 5:1] also says, that therefore every thousand should be numbered with the chief of them.

and captain were counted. But what no one among them could tolerate or settle, that was to be sent to Moses as the high authority and supreme judge.

32 This piece also belongs to us. Until now the people of Israel had come out of Egypt, and neither the spiritual nor the temporal government had been appointed or decreed; but now that this people lies in the wilderness, and is safe from their enemy, the government comes on, and Moses undertakes to order this people with temporal and spiritual laws and commandments. And Jethro the Gentile preempts Mosi, giving him counsel and instruction as to how he should rule and do right.

(33) You have often heard what is the temporal and spiritual government. In the spiritual realm, only our Lord God reigns, and Christ is the head of the believers. These believers are not seen, just as the Lord Christ is not seen [John 18:36]. But the Lord Christ does not arrogate to himself the temporal government, for there he has otherwise given heads and people who have it in their hands, and they administer according to the measure and right of equity. So in the spiritual kingdom servants and ministers are the preachers, who do not rule, but the word of God is the regent, and the preaching of the headship of Christ [Acts 20:28, 1 Cor. 3:11].

34 Thus it is described here how the people of Israel was brought into an outward order, and how the outward worldly kingdom was ordered. He does not first of all understand the spiritual regiment, but the physical kingdom, regnum animale, as St. Paul [1 Cor. 2, 6] calls it, of which also the Lord Christ [Matth. 22, 21] says: "Pray to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." There the Lord Christ also sets the temporal rather than the spiritual rule. And because of this, necessity must first be ordered by the secular sword. For there must first be peace on earth, otherwise one cannot preach that there is time and space for it, that it may be quiet and good peace. If there is peace, that one should have spears, guns and swords in one's hands, then one cannot do much with the preaching of the divine word.

35. Therefore God also has six days.

to work on, but on the seventh day to hear the word of God alone. This day he has especially ordained for peace, so that on that day alone one hears God's word. And that is why God still wants to have the rule in the world, so that everything will go on quietly and deceitfully, so that one can live peacefully, wait for his own, raise children, and above all, hear and learn God's word. For this reason, the sword is first used, and the people are brought into a worldly order and ordered how they should govern and keep to submission.

Such a rule is proposed by a bad man, who had no testimony from God that he should do it, although God confirmed it afterwards; but Jethro goes out freely and teaches Moses, who was full of the Holy Spirit, how he should rule, since the antitype should happen, and teaches Moses to the Gentiles how he should rule. But it is done to show how God has put the world kingdom into reason; and there he has given wit enough to govern bodily things. Reason and experience teach us how to govern wives and children, how to drive cows out and in, and what else concerns physical food. All this is a gift and present to reason, given and bestowed upon it by God; one must not ask the holy Scriptures for advice about this, but God has also thrown such a gift into the raptures of all the heathen.

37. And God will say: O, the worldly government I have already made and ordered. Where? In Genesis, Cap. 1, 28, when it was said: "Grow and multiply, and fill the earth, and have dominion over animals, fish and birds," 2c. bring the earth under you. God gave power and all resources to the worldly regime as soon as he had created only man. In addition, I am allowed by pure spirit to govern a horse differently from a sow or a cow; item, that I make a barrel of beer differently from a barrel of wine; this is taught by reason and experience. Such things are subject to our five senses, so that they can be governed by reason.

ment is captured in the pieces that are among us.

38. But it does not reach into these things that God has not subjected us to, but over the conscience. As there are many foolish princes who want to exercise their power and authority over heaven, and govern the conscience, even what one should believe or not believe; since the worldly kingdom should only deal with what reason can grasp. Reason deals with that which is beneath us, and not with that which is above us. For I can govern an ox that it must go as I will. A house must also be built and stand as I like it, or I break it down again and build it differently. Therefore, the worldly regime only deals with things and goods that are subject to external, physical things. And worldly people with their reason can be wiser in bodily things than spiritual people.

39. pagans have been found much wiser than Christians; they have been able to arrange and bring to their end world affairs much more efficiently, 2) and skillfully than the saints of God. As Christ also says in the Gospel [Luc. 16, 8.]: "The children of the world are wiser than the children of light in their ways." They know better how to govern external things than St. Paul or other saints. Hence also the Romans had such glorious laws and rights. For reason taught them that murderers should be punished, thieves should be executed, and how else to distribute inheritances; they knew all this and did it in a fine and orderly way, without the advice and instruction of the holy Scriptures or the apostles. As St. Paul, in the epistle he wrote to them, does not instruct or prescribe anything in this regard, but reminds them to obey the orderly rule given by God [Rom. 13, 1. ff].

40 We are to learn that God confirms and wants worldly authority, even if he does not appoint it according to our thoughts, or that he uses pagans for this purpose. For he will have ordained the authorities, not that they alone should be feared and honored (as they are also honored).

2) runny --- common, hurried; aligned - expedient.

1) fraudulent - compatible.

(Rom. 13, 1. ff.), but that one may live quietly and peacefully, and preach about God's word, divine name and kingdom. Therefore, where there is authority, our dear God often gives grace, peace and space for preaching His word.

41 When, in the time of the apostles, he gave the Roman Empire. Although it was a godless empire, and was harshly opposed to the Christians, they ruled by reason, and were feared by everyone, kept good peace; there was peace everywhere in their time, the world was open. This was an earthly, reasonable kingdom. But no matter how wise they were, they did not see what God was using them for, namely, that his dear apostles should go up and down in this empire and preach the gospel safely. So the Gospel was read quickly, in a few years, throughout the entire Roman Empire, just as God's word runs fast [Ps. 147:15]. It is a hurried word, in a flash it tears and rushes by all means; and when it is gone, then the devil comes, and also wants to preach.

(42) This is a part of this chapter, where the temporal government is ordered by commandments, rights and laws, how he should set wise, God-fearing people over offices. And we have heard that God first of all establishes secular authorities among this people without any special command from heaven, and how he also otherwise lets people use their natural reason. For this reason he also gave reason and five senses to men. And what the authorities here do, judge and adjudicate according to the laws of the world, God has done and adjudicated. As Moses says: "The people come to me and ask (not me, but) God for advice, and then I show them God's law and statutes.

43 Now Jethro also indicates to him, and we will look at it recently, how those should be skillful who are to govern and be placed in offices, which should be the conditiones or affiliations of a pious authority or judge. Of this Jethro says: "Look around you, among all the people, for honest people, who fear God, truly, and who do not give in to avarice.

Enemy, set them over them." These are the qualities, nature and virtues of a pious authority. As they are repeated in the first chapter of the fifth book of Moses, v. 16, 17, where Moses commands the judges to interrogate their brethren, and to judge rightly between them, not to regard any person in judgment, and not to shun any person; for the office of judgment is of God. And 2 Chron, nineteenth, v. 6, 7, king Jehoshaphat saith unto the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye hold judgment not unto men, but unto the LORD, and he is with you in judgment. Therefore let the fear of the LORD be with you, and take heed, and do it. For with the LORD there is no unrighteousness, nor respect of person, nor acceptance of gift."

44 In this eighteenth chapter, the Holy Scripture leaves out nothing that serves the cause, or that would be lacking here, and paints the persons with proper colors who are to serve the worldly kingdom. From this one might well take a model of what kind of people should be used for the spiritual ministry or for the care of souls [1 Tim. 3:1 ff]. For since God wants to select such people who are only to command and rule over body and goods and other external things, how much more does He want to have such people, and much better ones, who would judge in spiritual matters and preside over the church purchased with His blood [1 Tim. 4, 6. ff. Tit. 1, 5. ff. 2 Tim. 1, 8. ff. 2, 1. ff.].

(45) But how doth he baptize them, and how doth he make them to be rulers of the people in temporal and corporal things? Not only does he describe those who are in authority in the flesh, but he also secretly touches on the vices and sins that are common among these people and that lead to obscenities. 1)

46 First, they shall fear God. For if a ruler, prelate, prince and lord, mayor or judge does not fear God, he will not perform his office well; he will not remember, when he wrongs someone, that he has wronged God by doing so.

1) to go tootes --- to root in.

would be angry. For whoever else sits in an office, and is to judge and govern others, then many a quarrel and strife come to the people's attention, that the people disagree and disagree, and give your judge or mayor enough trouble. If he is to judge and pass sentence, he will always enrage a part of the people, and he will be charged with it; and then it will commonly happen that he will have to push the great merchants and the rich noblemen, his good friends and brothers-in-law, or those who are otherwise respected before others, before the head and enrage them.

47 For the same scholars and great lords always want to be right, and they also want people to conclude and judge as they please. If they do not, they become the judge's enemies, and a ruler must risk his property, favor, wife, honor, life and limb to be harmed. Whoever does not have courage and may dare, does not belong here. For if he fears E, it is done for him. For if he helps one to the right, he has the other as an enemy; then this and that is lost to him. But away with this ruler, he cannot be pious. But if he helps your boy to stay, and oppresses the poor, then one is a good ruler, lord or judge in the world.

Therefore let him learn and keep the fear of God, and think: If this rich, powerful and strong man or lord becomes my enemy, then strike lucky, I have with me in my office and profession another who is much stronger, more handsome and mightier than he, and if this one has on his side all the devils, princes and kings, who are all worse than he is, what do I ask for it, if he is with me who sits above in heaven? [So one shall conclude the quarrels, that I say: Dear GOD, I ascribe it to you, whether it cost me my life over it. Then God says: "Hold fast; I will also hold fast. So it goes through, or must break, and one fears our Lord God more than men. But where do you find such rulers? Where are they?

49. Moses, in the fifth book at the first chapter, v. 15-17, also says well that judges

and authorities shall be such men, saying, He hath set them over thousands, and over hundreds, and over fifties, and over tens, and officers among the tribes, and commanded the judges, saying, Take heed, judge aright: for the judgment is of God; look not to any person in the judgment. Yes, it is a hard addition; no one does it unless he has a special grace and gift. For there are all kinds of things that hinder a judge, such as fear, favor, money, and force; so one must have firm courage, like a rock of stone.

(50) Of this also the heathen have said, Magistratus ostendit virum, if thou wilt know whether a man be a hearty, confident, and undaunted man, charge him with an office, and thou shalt soon see what he is. The common man does not know what it is to govern. But if one should lead an army, have the ensign in his hand, and stand in front at the head, then all art, reason and courage will be too short for him, his courts will shake and his heart tremble; and if he is not seized with this virtue, he will forget God altogether.

(51) If wishing should help (according to the world's way of speaking), then one should wish that everyone would want to rule for a year; and if one would be an enemy to someone, then he should grant him that he should become a regent. Young people always think they are wiser than other people, and think that others have ruled foolishly, or do not yet do it the way it should be done; but they wanted to do it much better: they want to hit eleven pins and shoot them down at one throw, since there are only nine of them on the bosseleisch 1). But once they try, they often do it the worst. It is such a thing about ruling that no kingdom is righteous unless the fear of God is with it; and if one is found who has this gift, he rules well, and it is a gift of God; just as a pretty face is also a gift of God, which he casts into the Rappuse.

52 Otherwise, if anyone knew what it was to govern, he would run away or crouch in a corner, for he must consider that he will have everyone for an enemy. Therefore speaks

Jethro all here, that officers should have this virtue, that they fear God, and not be afraid of men. For if I should fear God, why should I be afraid of man? But if one were to count all the princes and rulers who fear God more than man, how many do you think they would number? I would write all their names on a finger; or, as he says, he would dig the names of all pious princes on a petschaft ring.

Now, this is how the rulers should be, and therefore it is also written that the authorities should be beaten and drawn over this last. To be sure, whoever has a piece of it, let him thank our dear Lord God for it. For otherwise the world is not worthy to have such magistrates. God gives it, but no one keeps it; just as the other laws of God are not done and fulfilled. It is indeed a commandment that one should have such authorities who fear God, but no one seeks or follows them. David was such a ruler, as were a few pious kings in the kingdom of Israel. For David feared God, and was not like him, neither shall he be like him in the earth; he is the crown of all princes. There were still men in his court, even his own son Absalom, who were hostile to him, and they drove him out of the kingdom, so that David was always sitting like on the hill [2 Sam. 15:13 ff].

For he that would be such a ruler must suffer all disfavor, and be exposed to many dangers. He who cannot bear this, let him stay away. Otherwise the common people will see that a great thing is sitting on top; but take it in your hand, and see what it is, especially if you want to rule according to it, that you fear no man. If such an office were offered to a Christian who understands it, he would flee from it and not accept it. If any man turn to the murmurings or wraths of the rich and mighty, let him not be an officer. For this will certainly happen to you; if you are such a ruler, you will be displeased enough.

55. therefore god also wants you to have

for the authorities, as St. Paul also says in the first [epistle] to Timothy on the other, v. 2; item, that they also be held in honor. For it costs much to be overlords, both in spiritual and temporal government. But I am speaking of the righteous. Whoever wants to be a pious ruler will have so much unpleasantness, worry and trouble under his eyes that he would rather carry stones or be a farmer. But if a man wants to be a rogue and a knave in the government, he may take his wages away from here; there he will find it well, as he should have it and get it [Luc. 16, 25].

(56) This is a virtue, namely, to fear God, which rulers should do. But they are found few who do, respect and consider such things.

The other virtue is to be truthful, to love the truth. For this follows from the fear of God, where one has God before one's eyes, and where one insists and defies Him above, then one is also truthful, where one will do what is right with heartfelt love and desire, and will carry it out faithfully. Otherwise there are all kinds of deceitfulness, sham and deceitfulness in the world, so that people are led around by the nose; item, a waxen nose is turned on the right, and before one looks around, one has made evil out of good; and again, even what is wrong is turned to right [Ilsa. 5:20]. Solomon speaks much of this in the book of Proverbs, which he, as a great king himself, learned from much experience. So a ruler should be inclined to what is right and true, and help what is just and right-like, and again condemn what is found to be unjust, putting aside all respect for persons.

(58) The third virtue is to be hostile to avarice. The first virtue is against God, but the other two virtues are more against the people. But where do you find such gentlemen? I believe that if one were to separate and segregate the miserly in the world, one would find few princes who were not miserly and who did not exploit, exploit and exploit their subjects. In the courts, disloyalty, financial greed, 1) selfishness, and avarice now rule in the

1) Finance - intrigue, fraud.

Princes and their officials. For they have room and cause for it, and embellish it with this cover and pretension; because sitting in the office of authority gives birth to and bears many temptations. But they do not take this into account at all, that they are honored and held in high esteem. They are given their property, tax, interest and pension, so they are also greatly feared. Therefore they get a proud, hopeful heart for the sake of honor, wealth and power, so that they say: "I have to do what I want, and do not think that they also have a God sitting above them in heaven [Eph. 6, 9].

(59) First of all, a man becomes bold and audacious out of arrogance, breaking and bending the law according to all his pleasure, so that he makes himself think that he is mighty; then, so that his hands are greased and silvered, that is, money and gifts are brought and carried to him. Therefore also in the 5th book of Moses at the sixteenth, v. 19, it is said that the gifts of the wise blind eyes. It must be an honorable heart, and rightly God-fearing, which should not let itself be deceived with the world's goods, and things should not be transgressed, but should prefer the poor's good cause and the rich man's injustice 1) [Dan. 5, 17].

(60) It is otherwise a great opportunity and occasion in the regime to do wrong, especially when one is stingy and does not respect God. Although there are other causes for doing wrong than anger, envy and hatred, if someone has been too close to a ruler or has done something against him, he will soon take revenge. Therefore

1) Eislebensche: erfürzichen.

These are the main reasons why people in authority pervert the law and do not act in accordance with it, as when they do not fear God, are not truthful, and take money or gifts. But if it is to be right, then such a man belongs here, who does not stand there after honor, authority, property or money.

(61) This is a fine rule, what manner of men the rulers should be. Not only does it say that they should not be stingy, but also that they should be hostile to avarice; that is, they should be so honest that they are not only lenient for their own person, but also defend others who want to let avarice ride on them. They shall not take poison 2) and gifts, but shall act justly, to serve and please God, the truth. But look around you, you will find few such rulers; just as Moses also found few of them.

Nevertheless, this must be preached to the rulers, so that they may know how to be skillful, especially that they may fear God. Whoever does not have this grace, let the office stand. For one will always see and find fault with the people. But this is certainly true, if they knew who they were and considered their ability, one would be offered a principality, and he would refuse it and not want to accept it. One would have to beg and plead with him; nor would he refuse the regiment. But if one runs, runs, begs and pleads for it oneself, it is not good, it is even a bad sign; it also never helps people to improve, as experience shows and teaches.

2) Gift---gift, gift.

# B. Interpretation of the Ten Commandments

from the 19th and 20th chapters of the second book of Moses, preached at Wittenberg by D. Martin Luther.\*)

1526. Printed in 1528.

In these two chapters you will hear how God gave the Ten Commandments to the people of Israel and practiced them as follows. 1)

1. but I will 2) faithfully warn and admonish all those who want to teach other people, and lead and preach the word of God, that they take care with all diligence and seriousness, that they teach Moses rightly and present him to the people; namely, where he gives commandments, where he demands and drives something, that they let him remain a master, teacher and lawgiver of the Jews, and do not drive him on the Gentiles or Christians, so that their conscience is neither 3) entangled nor confused. For he concerns us no further than to agree with the natural law. We have our Master, Christ Jesus, who has set before us the things which we ought to know, to keep, to do, and to abstain from.

(2) It is true that over the laws Moses also writes beautiful examples, both of faith and unbelief, of the punishment of the wicked and the ungodly, and of the exaltation of the faithful. Above all these, which are the best in Moses, are the kind, lovely promises and assurances, which we are to accept, to which we also belong, which concern and afflict us, as, of the seed, in which all the Gentiles are to receive the

Blessing 2c. [We have an example in Luke, Cap. 17, 14, of the ten lepers. Now that Christ calls them to go to the priests, and they show themselves to the priests, does not concern me, for he speaks according to the law of Moses, which does not bind us. But the example of their faith concerns me, that I, like them, believe Christ, and, like the certain Samaritan [Luc. 17, 18. 19.] ascribes cleansing and blessing to Christ, praises, glorifies and gives thanks.

(3) Now enough has been said about this above, in the preface [to the first book of Moses] (4) in breadth and length, and it is well to be remembered, for there is power in it. For many great, excellent men have been lacking in it, and also now and many great preachers, who do not take proper care, push themselves hard in this place, do not know how to preach Moses rightly, want to make a Moses out of Christ, a law book out of the Gospel, works out of the word; harness the horses behind the chariots, do not know themselves what they are talking about; are mad and foolish, rush and rage like mad dogs; shout and chatter to the people: God's word, God's word; seduce the poor people, and push them into the pit. There have been many learned people, saints and fathers

1) Here Luther will have read the text of the 19th and 20th chapters of the second book of Moses.

2) "but" is missing in the Wittenberg.

3) Walch and Erlanger: again.

4) We have taken the bracketed words from the old edition of Walch. The Jena edition refers in the margin to the "Lessons" which we have included in Col. 2 of this volume. - In the Wittenberg edition, our writing follows immediately after the sermons on the first book of Moses.

\*This interpretation belongs to the same sermon cycle as the preceding scripture, as can be seen from ? 22 of this scripture, belongs to the same sermon cycle as the preceding scripture, and will immediately follow in time. The peasants' revolt is mentioned several times as something past, e.g. Cap. 20, §120. 20, §120. In print, it first appeared in 1528 at Wittenberg with Hans Weiß under the title: "Auslegung der Zehen gepot. By Mart. Luther gepredigt zu Wittemberg, Aus dem. xix. und xx. Chapter of the other book Mosi, together with an instruction on how to read Moses. Mart. Luther. Wittemberg 1. 5. 28." Another edition was published without indication of time by Georg Rhaw at Wittenberg; a third at Erfurt in 1529. In the collections: in the Wittenberg (1556s, vol.V, p. 203; in the Jena (1566), vol. IV, pp. 486ff; in the Altenburger, vol. IV, p. 580; in the Leipziger, vol. III, p. 609; and in the Erlanger, vol. 36, p. 1. We give the text according to the Erlanger edition, which brings the original print, comparing the Wittenberger and the Jenaer.



did not know how far Moses would go, how he should be taught. Origen, Jerome, and their like, have not known how far he serves.

Faith alone is valid before God.

Now let us examine the text, in which we see a fine example, which God sets before us as a mirror, how man is so unskilled to appear or act before God, when he alone has the commandments, reason, human wisdom, prudence, sense and wit, and free will, as when he commanded them [Ex. 19:10, 11] that they should wash their clothes three days before they go up the mountain, be holy and ready for the third day. And Moses added another thing, that they should be holy and clean enough without, that they should abstain from their wives.

(5) We who know, hear and have learned the gospel know that whether the garment is clean, defiled, stained or unclean does not serve for the certain and inward holiness that is to exist before God; yet God wanted them to be adorned and clean at the same time, to walk in beautiful clean garments. Such outward purity was their holiness at that time. They abstained from their wives for three days.

But in the new testament things are different. There Christ reaches deeper, namely into the heart, leg and marrow; there outward cleanliness is no longer valid; the shadow is over, the right body has taken its place. God no longer asks whether the garment is defiled or not, whether the body is clean or unclean, smeared or not smeared. Paul had chains on his feet when he was in prison, Apost. 16, 24, could not almost wash his clothes in the dungeon. The martyrs were full of wounds, bloodstained, drenched with sweat, went in with rags and bad clothes.

7) Christ was presented with an adulteress who was 1) caught in the act, John 8:3 ff. (not to mention that she should be with her husband), yet he does not strike her from him; the adultery does not hinder, but he absolves her and sets her free. Likewise the Jewish lady

1) Thus the Jenaer. Wittmberger and Erlanger: an.

At the well, Joh. 4, 9. 26. 27. who was considered unclean by the Jews, as she herself was surprised that Christ desired to drink from her, and the disciples were also surprised that He spoke to her as to a Gentile: yet He did not despise her, but spoke kindly to her and comforted her, and held a beautiful discourse about the future Messiah.

8. in the old testament, in which everything happened in one figure, he wanted to teach, force and restrain the youth and the coarse people by such outward holiness and purity, and thus show and guide them into inward holiness.

(9) But in this is the right knot, that God wants to show that before Him there is no help nor any holiness, be it as great as it always wants to be. For what he gives, he will give out of pure grace; he will keep the prize alone. The Jews were not so holy, strong and mighty that they could hear God speak, but were completely despondent, thought they would die, fled from God, and said to Moses, "Speak to us, and do not let God speak to us, or we will die.

This is their free will, this is their purity and holiness. When God begins to speak, they are overtaken by fear, they are completely in despair and distress; they flee from God, in whom they should seek all comfort, and run to a poor sinner who, like them, is flesh and blood; they seek more friendship, comfort and love from a man than from God. What kind of holiness and purity is this, which does nothing good to God? If it were righteous, it would keep the sting, not shy away from GOD. But this 3) holiness speaks to God impudently: I do not want yours, I do not like to hear you, I want to hear Moses, I prefer Moses.

11 To hell with such holiness! Man's heart should seek more good from God, should seek more help and comfort there, than from all angels, holy men and creatures; as a righteous Christian does. But the holy hypocrites flee from God, not wanting Him. What is this but speaking to God?

2) of some kind, any kind.  
3) Thus the Jena. Wittenberg and Erlangen: the.

You are a cane-master, judge and executioner, who comes behind with a club, want to strike it to the head. If I can't stand God, who is so kind, who is our Savior and Beatificator, what devil can I stand?

There nature is depicted to us, how it is condemned and flees from God. Where is now the free will and the human powers? Where are the laws of man and the preachers of works who speak to man? Do your best, we must also do ours, send yourself to the grace of God, and you will become a child of blessedness? Yes, yes, it is unready and unskillful with our ability; when it goes to the meeting, it does not hold the sting.

With this text we may push all free will to the ground. How would they reconcile with God, whom they do not like to hear, fleeing from Him to a man, providing themselves more loyalty and love to a sinner than to God. What a fine reconciliation this is to me! If a son did not want to hear his father, who would be kind to him, but turned to a servant who was a bad boy, sought more friendship from the servant than from the father, without doubt, it would greatly annoy the father and hurt him that the son would forget all his father's loyalty and turn to a bad boy. So it is here also. But this shows that nature and free will cannot and cannot stand before God, for they are afraid that he will strike them with a club and consider him no other than a devil, an executioner and a master of sticks, who could do nothing but be angry.

14) From this we conclude 1) that where the Holy Spirit does not model the Gospel promise to the heart, man considers God to be a devil, an executioner, a cane-master and a judge, and does more good to the worst of boys than to God. Where such a heart flees from God, and cannot stand Him, only freely conclude that it blasphemes God, and is of the devil as it stands and goes. It is not to flee, but to come near, for he is a father. Whoever then flees, he is chased into hell, and is the devil's game.

1) Erlanger: resolve.

15 Now Moses writes here that it was done by the most holy ones, who prepared themselves three days before. If it were done by a sinner who was full of sins, it would be all right; but the holy ones abstained from their wives for three days beforehand, which was not unjust; they did what they liked, washed themselves, and prepared themselves in the best way, with all kinds of works, fasting, and whatever they could do. The same dear saints who were not tainted with fornication, pure from their own wives, adorned in the best and highest way that reason can, could not hear God, despaired and desponded of their own holiness. Therefore, this is an excellent text, which brings all holiness to the ground 2c. Thus it is indicated that we boys are in the skin where we are best and holiest 2c.

(16) So also our clergy, the holy people, have blued themselves with great holiness, and driven themselves, that they have become mad and senseless; and yet there is no more stupid and desponding people than they. [They vowed chastity, wore hard shirts, slept badly, fasted so that their breath stank, crawled into sackcloth, did this and that. But all this did not help them. Let us take St. Bernard as an example, whom I like to dress before other monks. For if ever there was a pious monk, it was St. Bernard. When he once lay so hard ill that he had ventured to die, 2) he had now kept virginity all his days, tortured himself with fasting and vigils that his breath stank; so that his brothers did not like to suffer him, he led a beautiful life, and did many beautiful sermons, was full of good works. When he saw the judgment of God, he said, "O Lord, I have spent my life wickedly and my time shamefully.

What have you done, dear St. Bernard, since you have been a monk, have preached beautiful sermons, have not been an adulterer, have taken nothing from anyone? Who will take away St. Bernard's works? The judgment of God. For when this is revealed to man, all man's righteousness has no place, may not stand; as David Ps. 143, 2. desires that God not be with him.

2) audacious --- devoted, prepared for.

I will enter into judgment, for before him no living man shall stand, nor be found righteous.

If then St. Bernard did not pass the judgment of God, how would other monks and priests pass? I hold St. Bernard higher than all monks and priests on earth; I have not heard nor 1) read his like. Therefore, God wants to indicate that all works are lost before His eyes, namely, if they are done in the opinion that one wants to stand before God with them.

19 Thus also St. John the Baptist with all his holiness must be a disgrace to all saints of works, because he testifies that he has it all from above, and points to Christ who takes away sin, Joh. 1, 29. 3, 27. not his holy life. I do not say about the works that are done for the benefit of the neighbor, and from

But that one should not come before God's judgment with such works to propitiate and befriend God, as the saints of works who roll up, bring their works, are hung therewith as with great sacks of hops, may speak to God: Pay me; as if he were a dawdler selling his kingdom of heaven.

20 Now this is written not only of the Jews, that they were not allowed to go, but also of all saints of works, who are well equipped with works; nor will they be dismayed when God's judgment approaches. How much less may those be added who are laden with sins. Much is said. He who has no more than good works, let him go to hell, he will gain nothing; it must be something greater than our holy life. The text of the 19th chapter follows. 2)

2) In the old editions, the last words form the heading of the following.

1) Wittenberg and Jena: and.

# The nineteenth chapter.

**In the third month after the children of Israel came out of Egypt, they came that day into the wilderness of Sinai. For they departed from Raphidim, and went into the wilderness of Sinai, and pitched there in the wilderness toward the mountain. And Moses went up to God.**

Moses is here a mediator who carries the words of the people to God and the words of God to the people. This is also indicated by Paul, Gal. 3, 19, where 3) he speaks of the law: "And is delivered (spoken) by the angels through the hand of the mediator." But now we have God Himself as a mediator, as St. Paul says 1 Tim. 2, 5].

**V. 3. And the LORD called unto him from the mount, saying, Thus shalt thou say unto the house of Jacob, and proclaim unto the children of Israel 2c.**

2. this is the preface and the entrance to the people, so that god may have a

Gedingt does with the people; as if he wanted to speak: Dear people, before I deal with you, I will first talk to you whether you want to accept and keep this. As with us, if one wants to make a law in a city, one calls the people, asks the congregation whether they want to accept the law. The Lord does the same here; he does not want to force them to accept it, but if they accept it, he wants them to keep it, as follows in the text:

**V. 4. You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to me.**

3 Now it is true: I have not only brought you to myself, but I have also carried you on eagles' wings, you have seen the good deeds, you have seen the miracles, how I brought you out of Egypt, fed you in the desert, preserved you, protected you, provided you with shoes and clothes. Now you have the choice whether you

3) Wittenberger and Erlanger: so.

4) Geding Uebereinkunft, contract.

to have such a God, or to choose another. Now follow on:

**V. 5. If therefore ye will obey my voice, and keep my covenant, ye shall be my possession before all nations 2c.**

(4) This saying should be covered with red ink, that one may answer the spirits of the wicked. He says: He wants to have them as a people, as property. Say you to the red spirits: Put the glasses on your nose, look at the text right, he does not speak the words to the Gentiles, but only to the people of Israel. He says, 1) Israel is his people. If I am of the people of Israel, then I will do what Moses says. But the words make a difference. Many have been deceived with Moses; whoever can still resist, let him resist; it is high time. May God grant that the high and proud spirits may learn to understand Moses correctly; but they are running. May God grant that they do not tear down any further.

**Will you now obey my voice and keep my covenant.**

5 That is, you will accept and keep my law, which I will give you.

**So you shall be my possession before all nations, for the whole earth is mine. [And ye shall be unto me a priestly kingdom, and a holy nation.**

6 That is, I will adopt you as a special people, whom I will govern outwardly with laws, and no other people; as also David speaks in the Psalter, Ps. 147:19, 20: "He sheweth Jacob his word, Israel his statutes and his judgments. He will not do this to a nation, nor will he let them know his judgments. For at that time he let all the Gentiles go as they went; though at times he drew out of the Gentiles some, as, in Arabia, Job, and Naaman the leper in Syria 2c. But he never separated such a multitude as he did with Israel. Therefore saith he, If ye will keep my covenant, then ye shall be my possession, and I will be your God and Lord, and will dwell in the midst of you: though the earth be mine, yet will I be your God and Lord.

I will choose you, I will do something special with you, and you shall be a priestly kingdom and a holy nation to me. Thus God said: Moses, go, tell the people, teach them what they want to do. This was the counsel and theiding, 2) whether they would become one in the matter.

(7) What a fine orator and speaker is God! First, he tells them of the good deeds he has done for them; then he asks them whether they will accept him, recognize him as God, and keep his covenant. He tells them how he led them out of Egypt. This is the first good deed.

The other, that he led them on wings like an eagle; which Moses also indicates in his song in the fifth book Cap. 32, 3) 11.: "Like an eagle wakes up its nest, 4) and hovers over its young. He spread out his wings, and took him, and carried him on his wings." It is a special way of speaking: As the eagle teaches its young to fly 5) so have I dealt with you. I brought you out of Egypt, fed you in the wilderness with the bread of heaven, gave you water out of your rock, drove out the serpents, kept your shoes and garments intact, preserved and protected you from your enemies, rode with you as a father with his child; this I did to you, that I taught you to fly, that is, that you should follow me and believe me.

(9) Therefore, if you are moved by this example to accept me as a god, I will accept you as a priestly kingdom, that is, you shall all be priests and kings. St. Peter 1. Ep. 2, 9. carries out this saying, and points it to all Christians. All Christians are kings and priests, of which you have heard enough in other places and read in 6) books.

2) Wittenberger and Jenaer: "teiding", Erlanger: "Theding". According to the latter reading of the original, the assumption is obvious that "Geding" is to be read. Cf. 2 at the beginning and § 21. Otherwise, Theiding Rede would have to be taken here, as in the St. Louis edition, Vol. VIII, 978, § 23.

3) Wittenberger and Erlanger: Cap. 33.

4) Instead of: "wakes up his nest" the Bible offers: "ausiihret his young"; here the same is explained immediately following by: "teaches his young to fly."

5) Erlanger: lernet.

6) "in" is missing in the Erlanger.

1) Wittenberger: does not speak.

**Be king.**

**V. 6. You shall be a priestly kingdom to me.**

(10) But why does Moses apply this saying to the Jews alone? Answer: This saying was given to the Jews before they received the law: If ye will keep my commandments, and not break my covenant, then shall ye be kings and priests. So that they were not yet a law-keeping people; they were like those who believe according to the law, to whom no law has been given. Whosoever therefore believeth in God without any law shall be a priest and a king, whether he be Jew or Gentile, before or after the law.

(11) But they are not such great kings as the kings of the world are. For these are not true kings; they are only penny-pinchers and painted kings against the faithful, for they reign only temporally and outwardly. But the believers are righteous kings; not that they wear a golden crown on their heads, carry a golden scepter, walk in silk, velvet and golden pieces and purple, but, which is much more glorious, they are lords over death, the devil, hell and all misfortune. The worldly kings alone can handle gold, silver, money and goods, have wealth and power, strangle and torment the people, plunder, abuse and scrape their subjects, but they cannot help themselves; they cannot ward off the slightest ulcer on a finger, or that their belly, head and limbs do not hurt. Much less can they ward off sin, death, the devil, hell, sickness, misfortune 2c. Are therefore kings, as pennies are florins, and painted kings on the map are kings.

For to the true believing kings, who are in the kingdom of Christ, shame is an honor, hell is the kingdom of heaven, death is life, the devil is a brave man, sin is righteousness, misfortune is happiness, poverty is riches 2c. For they are lords over all things, asking after no one, because they are God's children, and have God for a friend, yes, dear Father [Rom. 9, 26.], with whom they find riches, great treasures and all goods, and the abundance of the same. Therefore

No sin, death, devil, hell, hunger, thirst, cold, heat, sword, nor all misfortune harm them; yes, in all this they overcome far, and find in all this the contradiction: in poverty riches, in sin righteousness, in disgrace great honor, in hunger and thirst all abundance, as has been said. Thus, because they have such inward riches, they pay no attention to worldly splendor, despising the golden crowns, purple, silk, gold, silver, money and goods. A golden crown, purple and jewelry belong to the kings at cards, it is all too bad for the children of God.

13. God is not to be portrayed as sitting in heaven on a golden chair, in purple and golden robes, with a golden scepter and crown, but as a Lord who sustains all things, fulfills all things, is present in all creatures, creates and does everything in all things, has everything in his hand; who is a Lord over sin, death, devils, hell, all misfortune and evil. So all those who trust and believe in him are kings. Therefore they have the same authority with their father, inherit all his goods, but still in hope, Rom. 8, 17. 1 Joh. 3, 1. 2.

14th Now therefore the words of Moses, when he saith, If ye shall keep my words, 2c. ye shall be priests and kings, shall not be understood of worldly kings, but of inward and spiritual kings in the faith, which are in the kingdom of Christ, wherein they are all kings, having equal authority with the most high King JESUS CHRIST, in which 2) kingdom every man is king for himself. If therefore ye shall keep, saith he, my covenant, ye shall not be temporal kings, but spiritual, and priests, that is, bishops and popes. God forgive me for mentioning the name here, I should not mention it!

**Be a priest.**

15) What then is a priest? In which mouth God puts His word, as Malachias [Cap. 2, 7.] speaks: 3) Labia sacerdotis custo-

- 1) Wittenberger: "Heirs of all his".
- 2) Jenaer: which.
- 3) "speaks" is missing in the Erlanger.

diunt scientiam [the priest's lips preserve the teachers; item, he offers and asks for the others. Such a priest in faith may come before God, plead for the people, speak their word, and present their best to God, then go forth from God to the people, presenting to them God's answer and command. And such a priest's word shall be as valid as God's word itself, because he does not lead his word, but God's word, which is an honor above all honor, as St. Peter says [1 Ep. 2, 9].

16 This then is the summa summarum of this saying: He that hath my word, and believeth it, is a priest; if ye then be my people, ye have faith. He therefore that hath faith is king and lord over sin, death, the devil, hell, and all calamities; for faith alone doth put you in such goods and glory. He that hath faith hath all things, is able to do all things, overcometh all things [Rom. 8:37, 38], neither temporal nor eternal, neither can the gates of hell hurt him [Matt. 16:18].

(17) Then he who has the word of God is a priest, and he who hears him hears God Himself. Thus, to be a priest and a king is nothing else than to have faith and the Holy Spirit, to preach the grace of God to others, and to come before God in good faith, as a child to its father. It is a small thing to preach, to ask and to plead in a right faith; but it is a great, mighty thing in the sight of God that a man, a poor, miserable sack of maggots, should come to such honor.

He promises them such honor when they keep his covenant. In addition to the spiritual kingdom and priesthood, he also appointed a physical kingdom and priesthood, of which Moses spoke later 1). Here he deals only with the spiritual priesthood and kingdom, and with the people who kept such a covenant. But those who disbelieved and did not obey his words were not affected by this saying, but were under the kingdom of the flesh. Nevertheless, at the same time God had some who were subject to the spiritual kingdom and priesthood as well as to the 2) physical kingdom and priesthood.

1) Wittenberger: also afterwards.

2) "dem" is found only in the Jenaer.

019 But when the gospel began, he abolished the fleshly priesthood, and the spiritual priesthood was preached throughout the whole world by the apostles. As David was a spiritual and physical king, yet he was subject to the physical priesthood, and yet he was a true spiritual priest; of which priesthood he wrote many beautiful psalms.

20 Therefore every Christian is a king to himself, and a priest to others. The priesthood is higher than the kingdom, it extends further. For the priest ministers the word not for himself alone, but for others; but the faith, by which he first becomes king, he has for himself alone.

### **These are the words you are to say to the children of Israel.**

(21) This is the thing and the covenant that God has given to His people. Now the answer of the people will follow, how they will become one.

### **V. 7 Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded.**

22 It is said above, at the end of the eighteenth chapter, how Moses had appointed captains from the council of Jethro his counselor; of whom he has appointed some over a thousand, over a hundred, over fifty, and over ten, whom he here calls the elders, and are the rulers of the council. But he does not call them the elders without cause, for the elders were taken for heads. For the young are foolish, 3) unskilled and inexperienced for the regiment; although they are sometimes pious, they are still unskilled and unfit for the regiment. For it is not enough to be pious for the regiment. A donkey is also pious. It takes skill and experience. One can find a pious man, but he can hardly count five. He who is to rule must not lack reason, wisdom, prudence, sense and wit, if he is not otherwise to do great harm in the regiment. For the regiment is subject to reason.

23. the Gentiles also experienced and used this, both Greeks and Romans, as then

3) Wittenberger: foolish and.

of both their languages. For in Greek and Latin the rulers who are to preside over the others are called presbyters and senatores, the elders. As if they wanted to speak: Age shall rule, youth shall be ruled; as also St. Peter [1 Ep. 5, 5. 1) exhorts the elders that they should preside over youth, and the young that they should obey the elders and be subjects [1 Tim. 5, 17.].

24 Although 1) God at times gives a young man more wit and understanding than an old man, Timothy and Solomon, the natural order is that wit is with the old, ignorance with the young. And God 2) also considers the world, that the old are more sensible than the young, therefore a common saying goes: One should not rub against old boilers, otherwise one sows crud. And another: If youth were wise and old age strong, it could not be paid for with gold. Youth is strong, and old age wise, sensible and witty; therefore youth should be obedient to old age, so that they need the strength rightly; that is the right way.

(25) Hear an example of a wagoner and horses. The horses, even though they are stronger, must obey the wagoner, and when they do, the wagon goes on its way. For it is much more up to the carter, even though he is weaker than the horses, than to the horses; he is the cleverest, he shows the way and the path. But where the horses do not listen, run over bushes and sticks, they break themselves, the wagon and the driver. In the world, too, things go well when youth is obedient to age. For youth runs easily with its strength; where it is not led in a bridle, everything goes to ruin. Therefore, the world is not well governed, where one wants to pass through with the head, 3) burdi burdi, only through, like the sow through the pen, 4) It does not turn out well. As it is happening now with our great princes.

1) Wittenberg and Jena: Wiewohl aber.  
2) We consider that this reading of the editions is hardly correct. Instead of "And God" would be to be read: And so" or: "And such".  
3) In the old editions: unsun.  
4) Jenaer: Kobe. Wittenberger and Erlanger: Kober.

26 Moses called the elders, because it was too much for him to interrogate such a large people, namely six times a hundred thousand men. 5) Therefore he divided the regiment among the chiefs, who were to present it to the people and bring back an answer from the people. Therefore, he divided the regiment among the chiefs, who were to present it to the people, and again bring an answer from the people.

**V. 8 And all the people answered at once, and said: All that the Lord has spoken we will do.**

27 Drive on nicely, dear fellows, it is too high and too much presumptuous. This is how it happened: The captains, each one in particular, asked their subjects if they would accept the covenant, and when they all agreed at the same time and agreed to the matter, the captains came back to Moses, and at the same time they all told him how the people were willing to accept the covenant. Then the covenant began, and Moses carried it before God as a mediator.

**V. 9. And Moses told the people's words again unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, I will come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear my words which I speak unto thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses declared unto the LORD the words of the people.**

28 Moses spoke to the people: You have now joined yourselves, you will hear the LORD himself speak; he will come in a thick cloud, that is, with lightning, 7) thunder, and cruel tempest. Now follows the text:

**That the people may hear my words that I speak to you, and believe you (Mosi) forever.**

(29) How this was done will follow hereafter. The people heard God and Moses speaking on the mountain. God spoke, and Moses answered him; and the people heard the speech and the answer.

**That it believes you.**

030 This is that thou, Moses, mayest obtain a name and a reputation before the people, that they may know that thou thyself didst receive it from me.

5) Erlanger: was.  
6) "nun" is missing in the Wittenberger.  
7) Wittenberger: "and thunder". - Since there are many such insignificant variants in the Wittenberg, we will not note them hereafter.

and not conceived from their own heads and presumptions. So they have become one in the matter; now it starts as follows:

**V. 10 The LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and sanctify them today and tomorrow.**

This is the third message of God through Moses to the people. But what the holy is, is dealt with enough above, at the beginning of this chapter. Continue in the text:

**V. 11: That they wash their clothes and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come down before all the people on Mount Sinai.**

32) That is, that they should be beautifully dressed and adorned in their best clothes; as is also shown in chapter 33, vv. 4, 5, where the Lord, angry because of their stubbornness, commands them to take off their jewelry and to put on common, everyday clothes: this they did, and they suffered, and no one wore his jewelry, because the Lord was angry. But here the Lord commands them to appear before him adorned and decorated.

**V. 12 And put signs round about the people, and say unto them: Beware that ye go not up into the mountain, nor touch the end thereof.**

033 Now this is a piece: when they are sanctified and adorned, put marks with barriers about the mountain, that they go not too far. But let it not be understood that the people hasted almost to go up into the mountain; for they feared, and would rather have been over all the mountains: but before the LORD came down, and descended into the mountain, they went. For when he came down in fire and thunder, there was no need for him to forbid them not to go. So they fled as the devil chased them; they trembled and were almost dead from great terror, and would rather have been over a hundred miles than stood at the bottom of the mountain.

34 Now this is the opinion of this text: Thou shalt sanctify it, and shut it up, before I come down into the mountain: otherwise the people would be so forward as to see what was in the mountain. So I will sanctify the mountain three days; on the third day I will sanctify it.

I will prevent them from coming near. For when they hear the voice, and the thunder, and the lightning, and the trumpets, they will not come near: otherwise the people 1) would have been so bold as to go up before the time. So he put a fear in them, that he would have the mountain honored as a place or place where God should come. Just as if a householder were told: Keep your house clean, for three days a prince will come to you, then he would keep his house clean, and prepare a beautiful dwelling place for the Lord, and make sure that no pig, horse, ox or animal enters. So God would have kept the mountain holy for him, so that no one would enter before him.

**V. 13: For whosoever toucheth the mountain shall surely be put to death. No hand shall touch it, but it shall be stoned or shot with a bullet 2); whether it be animal or man, it shall not live.**

35 He rebukes them so severely that they do not approach the mountain, that he forbids them, that whoever approaches will be stoned 2c. All this is done to make them timid and fearful. Are these the holy people who have thus adorned themselves, adorned and sanctified themselves, washed their robes, and in other outward holiness made themselves most excellent? Why do they not go there? They do not ask for anything.

**When the horn sounds, let them climb the mountain.**

(36) Then remove the marks and the barriers, and let them come and go up. Earlier he frightened them with words, now he will do the outward signs. There you see how the Lord drew in the people in an outward way and drove them, so that they also had to be astonished before the mountain, which was nothing else but stone and earth. Now follow how the people come near and God descends on the mountain 2c.

1) "Volk" is missing in the Wittenberg; in the Jena it stands as a conjecture in the margin.  
2) In the old editions: "schos".



**V.14-25 Moses came down from the mountain to the people, and sanctified them, and they washed their clothes; and he said unto them, Be ye ready for the third day; and let no man draw nigh unto a wife. And it came to pass, when the third day was come, and it was morning, that there arose thunder and lightning, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the sound of a very great trumpet: and the people that were in the camp were afraid. And Moses led the people out of the camp to meet God, and they came down to the mountain. And all mount Sinai smoked, and the LORD descended upon it with fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, so that all the mountain was sore afraid. And the sound of the trumpet was strong. Moses spoke, and God answered him loudly. When the LORD had come down to Mount Sinai, to the top of it, he called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. And the LORD said unto him, Go down, and testify unto the people, lest they break forth unto the LORD, and see him, and many fall from them. And the priests that come near unto the LORD shall sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break them. And Moses said unto the LORD, The people cannot go up into mount Sinai: for thou hast testified unto us, saying, Put signs round about the mountain, and sanctify it. And the LORD said unto him, Go up, get thee down: thou and Aaron with thee shall go up; but the priests and the people shall not go up, to go up unto the LORD, lest he break them in pieces. And Moses went down unto the people, and told them.**

In this text we are told how it happened when Moses brought the people to hear the voice of God from heaven, as was said earlier. Now there is a special part here about the priests, of which the text speaks, that they should sanctify themselves beforehand, so that God does not break them: You and Aaron, says the Lord, go up; but the others are to remain below.

038 If any man ask, How is it that he remembereth the priests, when the priests were not yet at that time? For it will follow in the third book Cap. 1, 5. 3, 2. ff. how God chose the tribe of Levi and Aaron to be Levites and priests.

The priests should be those who were not yet ordered at the same time. How then does he call them priests here? Answer: This must be understood in this way: In the first book of Moses you often read that priests were before the old testament, that is, the law of Moses was given to the Jews, as also now and in the new testament priests are, namely, who have the word of God, understand, and preach to the others, as Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob also were, have preached 2c.

39] But they have not been smeared priests, like our papist monks and priests, who are shorn, wear plates, enter in robes and long skirts, say mass, sing vigils, read and mumble their seven tides; do not care much about the ministry of preaching, which is their right office alone; only think that they are and remain great lords. But that the poor souls perish, suffer hunger at the word of God, they do not care much about it; [they] eat, drink, and do not live like the common man, thinking thereby to be of a holier and higher status and merit before God than other people who do not follow their monkey game.

40 But Adam, Noah, Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob 2c. were not such idols and moles, but lived like other people, ate and drank like other people, wore clothes like other people. But because of this they were called priests and prophets, that they preached the word of God, led the people, taught and admonished 2c. So such priests remained among the people, who led the word of God and such priesthood, until the hour when they ascended Mount Sinai, and one of the twelve families of Israel, namely the house of Levi, was chosen and appointed by God to lead the outward priesthood, Deut. 3, 6. which priesthood is so much better than the papal priesthood, that it has a command from God, and a reason from the divine word, but that one does not have a letter.

41. But the right office of the priests is that they lead the word of God; this was before the Old Testament, in, and also after. The other way, which Mosi's and the pope's priests use, is only an outward larva.

and children's play; however, the former is appointed by God to the figure of the right priesthood, but the latter is a mere monkey play.

042 And when they were ready, and had washed and arrayed themselves, as Moses commanded them, on the third day, there came a great and terrible weather upon mount Sinai. You know that it is frightening to all people when a great, violent weather comes suddenly, as if it wants to tear down everything, heaven and earth collapse, one thunder and lightning follows the other. The world becomes too narrow, one does not know where he is safe, where he should flee to. The Jews were terrified because they were in the desert and had no houses. In addition, the storm came quickly and unexpectedly, with thunder and lightning, and with such fire as is written in the fifth book of Moses, Cap. 4, 11, that the fire reached to heaven, as it is wont to do when such great storms come. In addition, there was a great darkness, clouds and 1) darkness, and thunder, and a great downpour. In sum, it seemed as if heaven and earth were about to fall in a heap, so that they thought, and could not help thinking, that they would all perish at once. He adds something greater, and says:

**And a note of a very strong trombone 2c.**

(43) They heard that it was something more and greater than a bad weather, and that there was a great, thick smoke and steam around the mountain, like smoke from a furnace, that is, a black cloud, like black pitch smoke. Then think every man for himself, what fun there was in such a cruel weather, with thunder, lightning, smoke and trumpets. There was laughter to bite. This was the glory of God, when he showed his power in his future on Mount Sinai.

44 Now Moses leads them to hear God speak for themselves, but there was no heart, no courage, no love, no desire for them to go to God. And the text, namely, when he says, "And the people that were in the camp were afraid," is well to be remembered, for Moses has made him

not written in vain. For God wants to indicate with it how we are sent against Him. It is a dear, pious God when he is silent and keeps still. He also speaks through the tongues of men, but there is neither fear nor fright; indeed, they are mocked, beheaded and drowned who speak the word of God. But if God should speak again in this way, then no emperor, king, prince or lord would be so powerful, his heart would falter and fall away, [he] would not be allowed to tremble.

45. Therefore, once God lets Himself be heard, no one's heart can stand before Him. The three disciples on Mount Thabor, when they heard God's voice, fell down as if they were dead [Matth. 17, 6]. And the Jews, who wanted to hash Christ in the garden, were overthrown with one word of Christ [John 18:6]. Our dear papists also boast much about free will, and good works and merits. They boast well, because God does not speak; but if He should speak to them as He did to the Jews, they would probably run back, crawl into a corner, and forget their boasting.

The Jews were pure and ready, as has been said, but when they were to go up, they were frightened and terrified. They were outwardly ready to the best of their ability, more than all the papists, monks, priests and nuns could prepare: yet it was impossible for them to stand before God. Is this not a great shame and a miserable plague, that we should flee from God, who gives us life and limb and everything we have? Where do we want to go, if we do not want to run to Him, yes, to whom we cannot escape? as David indicates in the Psalter, Ps. 139, 7-12: "Where shall I go before Your Spirit? and where shall I flee before Your face? If I go to heaven, you are there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there also. If I take the wings of the dawn, and abide at the uttermost sea, yet thine hand shall lead me there, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, "Let darkness cover me," the night is also light around me. For even darkness is not dark with thee, and the night shineth as the day; darkness is as the light" 2c.

47 Therefore, you see what the man for

1) "and" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Jena.

is a creature, that where he is without faith, there is only anger and hatred in him against God. And this is an important text, which shows brightly how man is skillful against God. He flees Him, is an enemy of God, blasphemes Him. Because he is afraid of Him and fears Him as a severe judge, he cannot think of anything good to do to Him. Therefore we conclude from this text that all men are enemies of God, cannot stand him, hate his law. And even though they speak it with their mouths, they want to do and accept what God gives, like the Jews here, it is only hypocrisy, the heart never experiences it. And as the weather roars outwardly, making them afraid and despondent, so it was even worse in the hearts of the Jews; their hearts were writhing as if they were to be strangled and perish every hour.

Mount Sinai shows, and God through the mountain, what the heart feels when the Law is opened to it and it is moved by the judgment of God. Ask a man who is without faith and is now to die, what thoughts he has and what is before his eyes? He would certainly answer: Nothing but death. For just as the Jews saw lightning, thunder, smoke, downpour, so that their heart stood as if they were about to die, they were not safe for a moment, there was no other image before their eyes but death, they saw their executioner from heaven, they thought God was a cane-master and executioner, standing behind them with a club, and wanted to strike them on the head; so also a heart that is left to itself thinks 2) God is an executioner and cane-master.

49. A dying man, who is without faith, has nothing but thunder, lightning, hell, hellish fire, the wrath of God before his eyes; feels nothing but death. Why? God speaks to him and holds the law before him. There he recognizes what he has done, and the conscience knows what it has come to, because God has opened the law to him. There is no rest, but only fleeing, trembling and fidgeting; like Adam in paradise, when he heard God speak, Gen. 3, 9. 10, he would have gladly fled over a hundred miles, over all the mountains, if he had

The whole paradise was too narrow for him, but he could not escape God.

(50) We know it, but we do not believe it, for we have not experienced it. But those who have experienced it, who have sometimes been in misfortune, in great hardships of water, fire or death, know how to tell what kind of heart such a person has against God, how it does not trust him at all, but flees from him as from the wretched devil. From this powerful text we are to conclude that there is nothing good in man.

(51) Where, then, is the doctrine of preparation for grace, since they speak: We shall do as much as is in us? They speak of the matter as a blind man speaks of the color, they do not know what they are talking about; for if they prepare and send themselves in the best way when it comes to the meeting, the world will be too narrow for them. To prepare oneself from one's own strength cannot stand before God, cannot hold the sting. When death snorts under our eyes, it all falls away, stands like butter on the sun. We must be taught differently how to go to meet God and stand before Him. And (as it is written in 1 John 2:28) 3) it is very important that we may stand and not be ashamed when he comes. I would be a bad Christian if I wanted God to remain outside with the last day, when Christ Luc. 21, 30. comforts His own with the last day, as with the summer.

Now, what do works, caps, plates, spiritual status help us? If I sweat blood and torture myself to death, it will fall away; if death comes, it will not stop the fear and wrath of God. What is it then that I torture myself long and to death, if I am not corrected? Nothing helps, neither our word nor our work. It is Christ alone whom I must recognize as a brother and friend, and say to God: Lord, I know of no one, neither in heaven nor on earth, to whom I may have a comforting refuge, but to you, through Christ. I must strip myself naked, from all friends, works and deeds.

1) Erlanger: People without faith, the now.  
2) Wittenberg and Erlanger: has.

3) "geschrieben steht" and immediately following: "gar" is missing in the Erlanger.

service. Lord, I have no refuge but in thy divine bosom, wherein the Son sitteth. If I do not have hope, it is lost.

This text has been put under the bench. Had it been pulled out, we would have known what man is capable of before God, and the doctrine of works and free will would not have been so torn down, which cannot hold a candle. Therefore, the devil dares to use it; and if it does not help, or if it persists, when it comes to the meeting, then God grant a good night to all priests, monks, plates, caps, works, merits, and all good life. For it must be another and much higher thing that leads me to God than a lousy cap or plate. In short, there must be such a courage and heart that does not fear the wrath of God, sin, death, the devil and hell; and where it already fears and is terrified that it will finally break through freely. But no cap can give me such courage; there must be something higher and better than the merit and work of all monks and nuns.

(54) I have admonished you, and do so again, that ye consider the text well, for it is mighty; and the true Christians also know what it is able to do, how mighty it is, as David, who also was therein, hath well known.

55 The epistle to the Hebrews, Cap. 12, 20. 21, shows from this place of the other

1) Instead of "so" should probably read "there".

V. 1. And the Lord spoke all these words.

001 Now when Moses had commanded the people that which the LORD had commanded him, that they should stand at the bottom, when he had set up the signs, 2c. he held his peace, and God spake unto the people alone. You can see how it must have been a bright, great voice, not the voice of a bad man, which such a great people might have heard. For

Book of Moses, that Moses was also terrified, together with the other Jews. For as the epistle there tells us, he said at Mount Sinai, "I am afraid, and tremble." 2) And the terror was because there went out a smoke as of a furnace, and a sound of a trumpet was heard in terror 2c. Summa Summarum: There is no saint who would not be frightened by this, because he would be completely perfect and accomplished.

(56) This then shall be our work, that we may come to it by faith and the word of God, that we may grow stronger and bolder day by day, the longer the more we learn to know Christ, not only with the ears and tongue, but that it may come into the heart also. For the greater the knowledge, the less the fear; and the less the knowledge, the greater the fear. There is condemned all our being, with works, masses, vigils 2c.

57) And the next thing that follows, how the Lord called Moses to go down and testify to the people, 2c., is not yet the ten commandments, but a preface; and though the people did not understand the language, yet they heard the voice; and when God spoke to them, the thunder and the lightning and the trumpet kept silence, that they might hear and understand the voice; but the fire and the thick cloud stood for and for, that the voice of the ten commandments might be heard.

2) Erlanger: I am fearful and trembling.

## The twentieth chapter.

There were six times a hundred thousand men, without wives, and children under twenty years old. They occupied a large area, probably two or three miles, at the least a mile; in addition, Mount Sinai was a very high mountain. One of us can hardly bring his voice over six thousand people; if it is even strong, over ten thousand; but it was clear, resounded over the whole Polk,

and could be heard by everyone; therefore it must have been a mighty, strong voice. They saw nothing but the clouds of water and the fire from which they heard the voice. Now this was the voice, as follows, namely the ten commandments.

**The first commandment.**

**V. 2-6: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods beside me. Thou shalt make no graven image, nor any likeness, either of that which is in heaven above, or that which is in the earth beneath, or that which is in the water under the earth. Do not worship them or serve them. For I, the LORD thy God, am a strong zealot, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children that hate me unto the third and fourth generation. And do mercy unto many thousands that love me, and keep my commandments.**

**The other.**

**V. 7. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him innocent who takes His name in vain.**

**The third.**

**V.8-1. Remember the Sabbath day, that thou hallow it: six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God, in the which thou shalt do no work, neither thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is in thy city gate. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. Then the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and sanctified it.**

**The fourth.**

**V. 12. You shall honor your father and your mother, that you may live long in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.**

**The fifth.**

**V. 13. You shall not kill.**

**The sixth.**

**V. 14. You shall not commit adultery.**

**The seventh.**

**V. 15. You shall not steal.**

**The eighth.**

**V. 16. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

**The ninth.**

**V. 17: Thou shalt not lust after thy neighbor's house.**

**The tenth.**

**Thou shalt not lust after thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that thy neighbor has. 1)**

This is the sermon that God Himself preached to all the people of Israel in the cloud and fire, on Mount Sinai, with a bodily voice; although an angel, by command of God, led the voice, as is written in another place, with glorious splendor, in the place of God. But the people saw nothing, but heard the voice 2c.

We will briefly go over the ten commandments. First, it should be noted that the Ten Commandments do not concern us Gentiles and Christians, but only the Jews. The text testifies to this and compels us as it speaks:

**V. 2. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.**

This is true and clear enough that we Gentiles were not brought out of Egypt by God, but only the Jewish people Israel. That is why Moses points the Ten Commandments only to the people who were brought out of Egypt by God. But that we also recognize, worship and honor the God whom the Jews honor, the one who led them out of Egypt, we have not from Moses or from the written law, but from other scriptures and from the law of nature. This I speak

1) In the Wittenberg and Erlangen versions, the last two commandments are in reverse order.

But again, to ward off the false spirits who would force Moses down our throats to keep him with all his commandments. But let us not do this, and let us not accept him with the slightest shake, 1) for so far as he agrees with the natural law. We want to read him as another teacher, freely and without constraint, but we do not want him to be our lawgiver. For we have laws enough in the New Testament; therefore we do not want to have him in our conscience, but keep that purely for Christ alone. So it is clear that the Ten Commandments were given to the Jews alone, and not to us. In spite of all the red spirits, that they say otherwise with truth!

**The sign that the Jews shall take hold of God.**

Now God, the Lord, as is his divine nature, gives the Jews a sure sign, so that they may take hold of him, grasp him and recognize him. This is what he does in all his dealings with us; he does not leave us gawking toward heaven, for he does not want us to serve him out of our own choice and discretion, as nature and reason are wont to do, leaving behind God's command and choosing their own worship; but God wants to be served, grasped and known, according to his own word and command. That is why he gives us signs, so that we may grasp him with certainty. To the Jews he gave the sign, he put the word in their mouth, so that they should call upon him. Which one? I call upon you, my God and Lord, who brought us out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Item, other words more, as follows: You who led us miraculously through the Red Sea, through the wilderness, fed with the bread of heaven, watered from a hard rock, led us through the Jordan into the Promised Land 2c. This was their word, their signs, by which they knew God.

**The Christian's sign to take hold of GOD.**

(6) Whereby do the Christians recognize and take hold of him, because the Jews' sign is not valid for them? Do they not also have a sign or word, God?

1) In the old editions: Title.

to seize with it? Yes, they also have their own sign and word, namely this: O God, Creator of heaven and earth, Who sent Thy Son, Jesus Christ, into the world for me, to be crucified for me, to die, and on the third day to rise again, to be taken up to heaven, to sit at Thy right hand, and have all things in his hand, and send his Spirit, that we should wait for his coming, to judge both the living and the dead, and so attain with him 2) the eternal kingdom, our inheritance, which thou wilt give us through him.

7 For this purpose, O Lord God, you have given us and instituted baptism and the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, your Son 2c. For he has bound us Christians to these sacraments of his and revealed himself to us in them; if we take hold of him there, we have certainly met him. But all other things, which are not commanded us, we are to leave aside, for we would otherwise fall far short of him. This is the title we are to use, just as the Jews used to use their title when they were brought out of Egypt, out of the house of service.

8 Against this title Jeroboam king of Israel first contended, and afterward all the Jews. The same Jeroboam made calves of gold, and set one at Bethel, and the other at Dan, intending to bind God to them, and to seize him: for he said, 1 Kings 12:28, 29, "Behold, thy God, O Israel, which brought thee up out of Egypt." But it was the devil. Why? And was his opinion that he meant the right God? But God cannot suffer it; indeed, there is no God either in heaven or on earth who wants to have such a self-chosen service. So, this king paints God in his heart, and chooses his own sign from his own goodwill, in which he wanted to take hold of God. God does not want that, but he paints himself, and gives a sign to the Jews, saying: "If you find me, I will be sought and called: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of service"; then you shall take hold of me, there I am sure, there you will find me. But that thou shouldest take me in the calf, in the

2) "him" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Jena.

the altar, to this place, you will err; you will not find me either, indeed, you will miss my far, for I am not there.

(9) So it has also happened to us; we have a sign that we cannot fail to 1) meet God. But this is the sign, as reported above [§ 6]: O Lord God, heavenly Father, who for me gave your Son to become man, to die, to be buried 2c., in the same name I call upon you 2c. I cannot fail, [I] must meet, my prayer is also surely answered, if I can say and believe otherwise from my heart. For in this way he has commanded to call upon him 2), so he will let himself be found by the sign, seize and grasp, and give what we ask, we ask otherwise in Christ's name and in faith.

10. But if I made a special sign for myself according to my own liking, like Jeroboam and other godless people, and said: O God, my Lord, I call upon you to see that I have built a church, founded a mass, an altar, put a chasuble in the church, worn a plate, put on a cap, prayed my seventh, 3) matins, firsts, thirds, texts, none, vespers and completers with great diligence, whipped myself with scourges, walked woolen and barefoot, wore a hare rope and shirt, slept on the bench, on the ground, fasted, prayed, suffered great poverty, kept virginity, obedience and poverty, have been a monk, nun or priest: what shall he say to this? [He] will not court you much about it, but say to it: Have I thus painted myself to thee? Did I command you to recognize me by such works? I do not know you and your works, I did not give you the sign, it is the devil's sign and image, there is no God either in heaven or on earth who is so minded, who would be gracious to you because of such self-selected and self-chosen works; I did not command you, I did not command you.

so want to be seized. Which devil has called you? Then the plate, the cap, the monasticism, the piety all fall to the devil, 4) cannot stand the judgment of God, melts like the snow. God says: I have given you a sign and a measure, hold fast to it, let the other go, it is not valid before me; you have devised your own way yourself, the devil has given it to you.

(11) We Christians have been just like the ancients, who devised their own way of serving God; one took this sign, the other another, as he dreamed; they went and said: It is an old thing that God brought us out of Egypt; but at Bethel and Shiloh is the right place of worship, and there we will meet with God. Yes, they met their God, the devil. Over this they built churches and altars on the mountains 2c., thinking that they had met it. Then the prophets cried out against it, saying that it was wrong. Then the quarrel arose: Away with the heretics, only strangled and beaten to death. Then many a prophet had to lose his life. This is what happened to us: our dear papists invented many a little sin, one after the other, none of which was commanded to them by God. If we preach against them, they become mad and foolish, accusing us of being heretics, seducers, and seditious, forbidding good works; we shall all be strangled and put to death.

012 Now the Jews were to have kept their signs and their commandments, that God might have apprehended them; and that they also might have apprehended him, they were not to have devised new signs and measures for them. But now the same sign is over, [it] has been granted until Christ. But we Christians should not pray in this way, nor should we carry the sign upon us; it is now finished. The Jews would pray thus: O Lord God, who hast brought us out of Egypt 2c. Now if he had said to me, I have brought you out of Egypt, I am right in praying, O Lord, you who brought me out of Egypt 2c.

1) Wittenberger: künden; Jenaer: können, Erlanger: kunnten.  
2) In the old editions (according to Latin construction) "himself" instead of: him.  
3) Seven tide ---- Irorus ounonious; the names of the "seven tides" follow here in full: Mette 2c.

4) The words: "hat dichs... zum Teufel" are missing in the Wittenberger.

(13) Now, if I do not want to fail, I must grasp the word that has gone out into the whole world: I have given my Son for you, who shed his blood for you, died and redeemed you, and reconciled you to me, making me your friend and father.

(14) I may pray thus: Heavenly Father, who created all things, who brought the children of Israel out of Egypt [Ex. 12, 51], through the Red Sea [Cap. 14, 22], through the deserts and through the Jordan, redeemed them from the hand of Pharaoh, fed them with bread from heaven [Cap. 16, 15], watered them with water from the rock 2c. [Cap. 17, 6. 7.], but all this is not my business. Who did great wonders with Noah [Gen. 7, 5. f. Cap. 8, 15. f.], neither is it my business. You who let Peter walk on the sea [Matth. 14, 29], who commanded the lepers to show themselves to the priests [Luc. 17, 14], does not concern me either. I must call upon him and take hold of him with the word and sign that concerns me, namely, "O Lord, you who have redeemed me through the blood of your Son Jesus Christ. The word concerns me, it penetrates the heavens, with the word I certainly meet God, with it he has tied himself. So he tells the Jewish people in a special way that they should take hold of him in this work, by which they have surely met him. Therefore Moses put in the first commandment: "I the LORD your GOD, who brought you out of Egypt" 2c. You Jews should remember this work and recognize me. The sign has been granted until Christ, and no further.

(15) For this reason I want to warn all preachers here. For I see that it is necessary for them to learn the right custom of Moses, and to let the people swear by Moses, and to let him be no more than an example, and where he is an evangelist and prophet. Now if a preacher urges you to Moses, ask him if you were brought out of Egypt under Moses. If he says no, say, What is Moses to me, because he speaks to the people brought out of Egypt? Moses is finished, for his ministry lasts only until the time of Christ.

(16) So this text strongly enforces that the Ten Commandments are given to the Jews alone, and not to the Gentiles, as is also enforced in the third commandment. For the Gentiles were never brought out of Egypt. We have another work and another teacher, who does not, like Moses, force and frighten, but offers grace, comforts, gives and helps and saves, namely, Jesus Christ.

17. in Adam's and Abel's time the sacrifice [Gen. 4, 4.] went, that was their sign. But it is none of my business. Noah had his word and command of the rainbow and other things [Gen. 9:13, 14], [which] is not my business. Abraham had the circumcision [Gen. 17, 10. f.], which was given to him as a sign of his faith [Rom. 4, 11.], but it does not concern me. Isaac and Jacob had their command. Moses, Aaron, Joshua also had their word. But I was not told to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, the wilderness and the Jordan; yet this is God's word and command. Forasmuch as he saith not, I command thee, and thou shalt do this, I will not accept it. David had a word that Christ should be born of him, as is often indicated in Scripture [2 Sam. 7, 12. 19.] and Paul highly exalts it in Rom. 1, 3. and Christ is called a son of David in the Gospel [Matth. 9, 27. 12, 23. 15, 22. 20, 30.] now and then; therefore it does not follow that I must be Christ's father according to the flesh. It is God's word, as the fanatics and the red spirits chatter. It is true; but it is not said to me. Moses also had a command to build the tabernacle [Ex. 26, 1. ff.] and to establish the priesthood [Cap. 28, 1. ff.], but I and you are not commanded to do so.

(18) So through and through; see in all the Scriptures all God's words and commands, and do not point them out to yourself until 1) you are sure that [it] has been said to you; do it then, do not ask what is held up to others and commanded. Yes, you speak to the spirits of the wicked, God spoke it to Moses, therefore I must also do it. Rather, say: There is no power in it, the word does not extend further than to the one to whom it is commanded. God means



the fish swim in the water, as it is written in the first book of Moses [Cap. 1, 20. ff.], the birds fly in the air, the worms crawl on the earth, the sun shines; there is also God's word. Will you therefore become a fish, and dwell in the water? float in the air like a bird? Will you become the sun, the moon and the stars? See how it will be for you. Will it not be seen that Moses is given to a peculiar people? Therefore do not show him to the whole world, but to his people.

19 Thus we have [the] reason why God bears this name: "I am your God, who brought you out of Egypt"; for he takes care of them as his special people, whom he has chosen as his own. But it is no longer valid, because now I do not call upon God, who brought me out of Egypt. So that the spirits of the swarms may be answered and their mouths shut, who want to force Moses upon us. Let them go with their Moses, and let Moses remain a lawgiver to the people of Israel, and do not charge him against the Gentiles and Christians. For in the New Testament he has come to an end, and his laws are no longer valid; he must hide from Christ.

20) But that we Gentiles have a law, this is taught to us by our own conscience and reason; as also St. Paul Rom. 1, 19-21. says that the Gentiles also have a knowledge of God; for "God has revealed this to them, that they see God's invisible essence, that is, His eternal power and divinity, as it is perceived in the works, from the creation of the world; but they have not praised Him as one God" 2c. With which words St. Paul indicates that all pagans have knowledge of God, namely, that he created all things, gives all things, feeds all things, sustains all things; therefore their own conscience urges them to give glory to God and thank him for all benefits.

21 Therefore, even though Moses never wrote the Law, all men have the Law written in their hearts by nature. But God also gave the Jews a written law, that is, the Ten Commandments, for abundance; which are also nothing other than the law of nature, which gives us

is naturally written in the heart. What Moses wrote in the Ten Commandments, we naturally feel in our conscience. "For the Gentiles," says the apostle [Rom. 2:14, 15], "who have not the law (that is, the written law of Moses), and yet by nature do the things which are in the law, the same, because they have not the law, are themselves a law unto them, that they may prove that the work of the law is written in their hearts, as their consciences bear them witness, as also their thoughts, which accuse or excuse one another." 2c.

22. Now even though both Jews and Gentiles have a law, they have nevertheless lacked God. For the law cannot be sufficient without God's spirit and faith, because God has decreed all things among unbelievers, that He might have mercy on all [Rom. 11:32], and all the world sinned in Adam [Rom. 5:12].

(23) Now God has honored and benefited the Jews by giving them the Ten Commandments orally and in writing, for the sake of becoming a man of the Jews. But we Gentiles, to whom God has not given a written law, should nevertheless honor, praise and thank him. For he is our God as well as the God of the Jews [Rom. 3, 29], as we will say later.

### **I am the Lord, your God.**

(24) These words alone, separated from the others, namely from those: "He who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," 2c., we must strike them out and pay careful attention to them. For they concern us all, the whole world in general, and every man in particular, Jew and Gentile; not because Moses wrote it, but because God created, sustains and governs all men 2c. As Paul also says Rom. 3, 29. 30: "Is God the God of the Jews alone? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, indeed, also the God of the Gentiles; for there is One God who justifies circumcision by faith, and the foreskin by faith.

25 And these words, "I am the LORD your God," God speaks to all the people.

not otherwise, but as if there is only One Man. He does not say: I am the Lord, your God, but: "Your God. The little word "your", see well, because the greatest power lies in the little word. So now he says: "I am the Lord, your God", as if he wanted to speak: I will take care of all of you, and of each one in particular, as if there were only one, and no one else on earth. And this I do, that ye may the more diligently apprehend, perceive, and keep my words, lest any man say, God hath given the law, hath highly and abundantly offered to be gracious unto men, and to be their God, to do unto them as a father doeth unto his child; but it may not be my business, who knows whether he meaneth me also; it is the business of the multitude only.

(26) For this is the way of men, that they throw the word of God to the wind, not accepting it, only gazing at other people, not thinking that it should apply to them. Now God wants to intervene here and prevent them from opening their mouths and watching what others do, but wants to make them certain that He means each one in particular when He says: "I am the Lord, your God"; I mean you and no one else, as if He were speaking: See not what others do, but hear thou what I say unto thee, and see how thou receive and believe it; see not others, I will deal with thee, I will deal with thee, and thou shalt deal with me.

27. Therefore I have often said that one who wants to be saved should be of one mind, as if there were no other man on earth but he alone, and that all the consolation and promise of God now and then in the holy Scriptures should concern him alone, even if it were written for his sake alone, so that the devil would not deceive him when he is about to die, and would open his eyes, and many thousands of men wise, who have all lived and done as he has, and yet are condemned, would say to him: What wilt thou now presume to be saved, because thou art surely lost? Wilt thou be better than others, who have not done otherwise than thou, and yet are like-

gone to the devil? Do you think you want to run away from him? Thus the devil can lead one into despair, as if there were no God to take care of him, to help him, and to save him from all distress.

Therefore, one should grasp the word that there is a God who is able and willing to help, as the same knowledge of God is naturally written in the hearts of all men, as Paul says in Romans 2:15, namely, that God, as the text indicates, is your God who created you. But when it comes to temptation, it is hard to persevere, to recognize God rightly, to believe and trust in Him, so that even the pious, who have the Holy Spirit, above the natural knowledge of God, hardly break through; it is such an excellent puff, when the devil thus drives us along, as I said, in the temptation, that he also makes work for the pious, and if it were imposed on him by God, overthrows them. If those who are under God's protection are so severely challenged, how will those who have only the natural knowledge of God, which is completely dark and faded through sin, survive? The devil leads them wherever he wants, because they do not respect God's word, it is a dream to them; the devil has possessed and blinded their hearts.

29 Thus it is well to note what God says here to the first: "I am the Lord, your God. "Thine, thy God," who takes care of each one in particular, more than a father of his own child. But few grasp it, few believe it. God is much too great, unbelief thinks, that he should look at me; should God, the high majesty, let himself down in such a way that he should have respect for me, a poor sack of maggots? yes, he lets it happen, he sits up in heaven, lets the 3) angels serve him; what am I against God? A poor water bubble, which breaks 4) by itself. But faith does not doubt that God, who created all things, heaven and earth, and all that is in them, will take care of 5) us. For there is the word:

1) In the old editions: as he speaks.

2) "not" is missing in the Wittenberger.

3) Erlanger: three.

4) In the old editions: their.

5) Erlanger: he himself.

## I am the Lord, your God.

30 Therefore he is my God and yours, that he takes care of everyone in particular: feeds me, helps, saves, 1) and cares for me, gives me everything I need in body and soul, deals with me like a mother with her child, acts and behaves 2) with me as if there were no other man on earth but me. This was well seen and understood by St. Augustine when he said: "Lord God, you rule everything in a strange way, you deal with everyone as if you had nothing to do with anyone else but with him; you bring everyone through his whole life. One is born poor in this city, goes to another city, there he becomes abundantly rich. Another has enough, goes to another country, there he becomes a beggar. He gives to one and takes from another, and it is so strange that no one can say that he has led his life out according to his ideas and thoughts; it all goes differently than we think.

(31) There are many devils around us who could kill us every hour, but God is there to prevent evil from happening to us, otherwise all the princes and lords of the whole world would not be able to protect us from the devil's power. For he is a lord and god of the world, and has a thousand ways in which he would harm us, by fire, water, air, sword 2c. But God is stronger than he, defend him, so that he will not break my leg, ruin my eye, harm me, not even a hair's breadth. Otherwise the devil would be too powerful, would soon give me a defeat; there I would lie, and all my armor and weapons could not save me from him for a moment, if God did not stand over me. And where [it] God decrees, he devours the one with fire, the other with water; to the one he does otherwise, to the one so.

32) But God preserves us from him, and cares for us in a thousand ways, using parents also, so that the mother sees to it with care that the child suffers no lack, watches, sleeps the less, so that the devil does not bring the child. 3) This is a small

1) Wittenberger: redt; Erlanger: rett.

2) Erlanger: eloquent. - gebaren - to act, to proceed.

3) Thus the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers. Erlanger: "But that she does not kill the child." These words must be found in the original edition, because Walch's old edition has both readings next to each other.

care, as opposed to the care that God has for us; fer] cares for the child more than the mother herself. But no one sees this, no one even believes it; and yet it is certainly true that God cares for us in this way and resists the devil and all creatures, so that the devil could kill us. He who takes such great care of one man, takes no less care of them all in particular, so strangely that one even thinks he has to send with him alone. We will see this in eternal life; here we see it in faith alone. But few believe it, and yet it is certainly true. Therefore God is thus famous:

## I am the Lord, your God.

If God would have us understand it as He speaks and proves it daily. I will take care of you when you work, when you sleep, 2c. that no one will harm you until the hour of your death comes. So the little word: "I am the Lord, your God," is not to be applied to the Jews alone, but to all people in the world, for he cares for them all, except that they, like the Jews, were not brought out of Egypt. One says: God is with in the ship. It is true and finely said. If he is not there, it sinks, and all care is lost, if he does not care, guard and watch, Psalm 127, 1.: "Where the Lord does not guard the city, the guard watches in vain."

**V. 3. 4. Thou shalt have no other gods beside me. Thou shalt make no graven image, nor any likeness, either of that which is in heaven above, or that which is in the earth beneath, or that which is in the water under the earth. Do not worship them or serve them.**

This is the other part of the first law, in which God forbids us to have strange gods. [He] himself indicates in the text who the foreign gods are, namely, that they should have no image, neither heavenly nor earthly 2c. That is, you shall not paint the sun, the moon, the stars, or any image of man, beast, or fish.

## From the dilators. 4)

This text has been led by the spirits of the devil, and they have wanted to drive it upon us.

4) Thus the Jenaers. Wittenberg and Erlangen: This is the title of the pictures.

Therefore, let us deal with it, first, in the controversial way, then in the simple way. Our red spirits, Master Klüßling, who have even eaten the Scriptures, speak: Do you hear the word of God, which says to you: You shall not have foreign gods? So they frighten people with this pretense that they are using the word of God; they force them not to suffer the images, because God has forbidden it; they think it is a good thing to storm idols. But what shall we say to this? It is God's word, we cannot say no to it.

(36) Dear Christians, you have heard that when they come in with their Moses, wanting to bind your conscience with his laws, say to them: Dear Lord, put your glasses on your nose and look at the text properly. We know well that one should be obedient to God in what He says, and that we belong to God as well as the Jews. But a distinction must be made between the words of God and the words of God. When God speaks something, I should pay attention to whether it concerns me. Therefore, dear journeyman, if you want to force me with God's words, tell me a text that concerns me, otherwise I won't mind you telling me a lot from Moses. For Moses with his word was not sent to us; and even if Moses had not come, we would nevertheless have had this natural knowledge written in our hearts through God, that there is one God who makes and sustains all things. For the Gentiles also worshipped God without Moses' teaching, even though they lacked God, just as the Jews did.

(37) Therefore, you may soon answer thus: "My dear fanatic, Moses to one side, Moses to the other. If you want me to hear you, tell me a word that concerns me, or I will consider you a deceiver and an apostle of the devil, because you preach what is commanded to others, not to you. If I were to accept and keep all the words of God, I would also have to build a box, like Noah; for God's word commanded him to build a box [Gen. 6:14]. Now there is 1) God's word; so go and do as Noah did, build a box. Item, Christ

[Matth. 17, 27. 1 told Peter to go to the sea and cast a line, and when he saw a fish coming out at first, he would find half a florin in its mouth, which he was to give to him and to himself. There is also God's word. But, dear enthusiast, go and do as Peter did; let us see how you will fare. Such blind minds are our red spirits, clumping into the Scriptures like a peasant into his boots. How would I get them all to put God's word on me? They prove earlier that God wants to have the words preached to me.

Therefore, God's words must have the addition, that I may know to whom they are spoken. The angels also have God's word, but what is it to us, because it is not spoken to us? Therefore we keep the word that is spoken to us. Christ drove Peter back; when he asked of John, "What shall this man do?" Christ answered, "What is it to thee, follow me" [John 21:21, 22]. I did not tell him, but you; you; you, you follow; he will also get his decision. I do not say it to him, but to you. That is why I said that God attacks each one in particular, as if he had no one else to do with but him. Now when he interprets a word to you, accept it, and keep your command, and let another wait for his command. They are hopeless drips and real swine, they want to be great doctors, they write great books, yet they know no difference of the word of God. Abraham received circumcision from God as a sign of his faith, as Paul also indicates Rom. 4, 11. There is God's word. But it is over with the circumcision of Abraham, it stands alone as an example of faith, but does not bind and force me.

(39) So I say here, that the idolatry and the overthrowing of idols may not be enforced from this text. For it 2) is said to the Jews alone, and not to us. Show me a text, so that God has forbidden me the images; not that I should be fond of the images, but that we should know for certain what our faith is founded on, so that we do not build on the sand, and our adversaries can

1) Wittenberg and Jena: that.

2) Jenaer: it.

answer. For a preacher, yes, also every Christian, should and must be certain of his doctrine; not build on a delusion, or deal with human conceit, but be quite certain of the matter, that [it] is thus, and not otherwise [Col. 2, 2.], which Paul calls Plerophorian; so that he could stand in all temptation, and answer the devil and all his angels, yes, God Himself without all wavering.

(40) Therefore they must bring up another reason to prove that images must be stormed. For if they were challenged, and had no other reason, they would have to flee back, could not stand, and would accomplish nothing. Therefore I say, fo one must be certain of the matter, if one wants to teach others 1) with God's word. So Peter also teaches [1 Ep. 4, 11] that no one should speak, because he speaks it as God's word, which God has called and pleases Him; and "if anyone has an office, that he do it as from the wealth that God provides" [Rom. 12, 7]. But they cannot muster anything that God has commanded, storming and overthrowing images.

(41) Secondly, I say that the images must be torn down and cut off, that the hearts must be torn away and turned away. For what does an image hinder me if my heart is not attached to it? But then the heart is not attached to it, if I do not believe in the images, do not rely on them, and do not call upon them in a special way, as if I wanted to show God great honor and service with the images, as has happened until now. For up to now we have made images of Our Lady, St. Anne, Crucifix 2) and the like, and had the opinion that [they] were better than other wood and stones; indeed, that we would do God a great favor if we honored them; thus we had confidence in them. So they deprived us not only of money, but also of our souls. Now it is not necessary to break the arms and legs of such images, to smash them, for the heart would still remain unclean, but it is necessary to bring the people with the word that they have no confidence in images, as if they could help them, or as if they wanted to

1) Erlanger: the others.  
2) Erlanger: St. Anne Crucifix.

To do God a special service with it; for the heart must know that nothing pacifies nor helps it but God's grace and goodness alone.

(42) But that the iconoclasts taught these things, they let stand, but go rather, and provoke the people to storm the images. Then the heart remains full, full of idolatry, thinking no other way than that it would do good, and please God, to storm the images, and proceeds to judge the others who do not, when there is neither a word nor a command from God. But if the people were taught that nothing helps in the sight of God but His grace and mercy, the images would fall from them and come into contempt. For they would think, "If it is not a good work to make pictures, then the devil will make pictures and painted panels; I will henceforth keep my money or invest it better. But the spirits of the red men must do something special, otherwise one would not think anything of them.

(43) The Jews have a commandment that they should not have images, but they have stretched the commandment too thin. For God rejects the images that one sets up, worships, and puts in God's place. For they are two different images. Therefore he makes a distinction and gives a rule as to which images are forbidden, namely, those that are set up as if they were images of God, as the text is very clear. Therefore, those who say, "All images are forbidden to the Jews," 3) are muzzled.

(44) The Jews are also too superstitious to make this text too strict, as our mad sophists do with Sundays and holidays, who soon make it a sin to sell herbs or do anything else of little consequence on Sundays. If they want to make it so tight, it would be better to sleep the whole holiday; otherwise one cannot be without work, as the Jews and Sophists interpret it. For it is work to put on a skirt, to take off shoes, to walk, to stand, to get up, to eat and to drink. But if one wants to interpret the Scriptures and the Word of God in this way, what will come of it? But this is the opinion

3) "da" is missing in the Erlanger.

with the celebration that they should not do any work that would prevent God's work.

So also here no image is forbidden, because those, thereby the service is prevented. So now here no other image is forbidden, because God's image, which one worships.

(46) They forbid children to sit on benches and tables, lest they fall; they forbid them to go to water, lest they be drowned; they forbid them to hold bread knives in their hands, lest they be stabbed; thus they forbid children, which nature does not forbid. For because the children are weak and without understanding, they would be harmed if they were not resisted. So God also guided the rude Jewish people with such commandments, forbidding them the outward images, so that they would not abuse them, would not fall into idolatry. But those who have understanding and are full of the Holy Spirit are not allowed to follow such commandments.

(47) If I were to be forbidden to take a knife in my hand to cut bread, lest I harm myself, or to walk on water, for yesterday a child would have drowned in the water, or to climb a bench, lest I fall, it would be a foolish, ridiculous commandment; I would say: Thou fool, lookest on me for a child, shall I first be swayed? So do our enthusiasts, pretending to be such foolish children, and still want to be taken for great teachers; but they may well go to school for a while. Moses was a disciplinarian of the Jews, as Paul says [Gal. 3, 24], who were a coarse, carnal people, to whom it was necessary to give outward commandments of images, so that they would not be offended by them. And it could still happen today that such commandments are given to the coarse people; but we Christians, who have God's word, are not allowed to do such jiggery-pokery, we do not belong to Mosi's school, we have a better master.

(48) Therefore, the Jews, as a rude and foolish people, were forbidden the images only because they wanted to honor God. But the Jews are nevertheless so

1) In the old editions: "heutes tages". Cf. 1 Sam. 17, 46, where in the Weimar Bible: "Heuts Tages" is found.

Foolishly, they do not throw away the good guilders and fat pennies, of which they have a lot, even if Mary's or St. John's picture is stamped on them, so that they, if all pictures were forbidden to them, would also have to avoid these. But this is just fool's heiding. Christ is probably as wise and learned as the spirits of the swarms; nevertheless, he is not afraid of committing sin, since he attacked the interest penny on which the image of the emperor, who was a pagan, stood, since he also asked [Matth. 22, 19. 20.] what the image and the inscription were, he did not say to the Jews: Fie, that this and 3) that concern you, why do you show me such an image, which God has forbidden you? you shall certainly not attack it. That is why you attack it on the wall, that not all images are forbidden. But if we were to follow the enthusiasts, we would have to coin no money, look into no water, look into no mirror, and put away everything that has only an image; indeed, we would have to put out people's eyes if we were to have no image at all, for we see images on money, in water, in the mirror. Are these not fine preachers? Therefore, you see clearly that God does not mean all kinds of images.

(49) Answer, then, the enthusiasts: Dear, what does the first commandment hold? What is its opinion? It does not teach about external things, such as plowing the fields or making shoes, but how to honor and serve God, both internally and externally. If you want to teach well and interpret the Bible correctly, you have to find the right opinion. Now, the first commandment teaches that I should have one God, serve and honor him alone; all the words in this first commandment apply to the sense and understanding. Therefore, the images are forbidden here that are needed contrary to the meaning and understanding of this commandment, namely, that one should not have confidence in images, but should look to God alone for all good things, and avoid everything that hinders us from this confidence.

50: Now by this text: "You shall have no other gods beside me", only the divine images are forbidden; 4) in addition to that the

2) In the original edition and in the Wittenberg: da er auch gefragt ward.

3) Erlanger: or.

4) Divine ones that represent God.

Jews, and not us. For this is said to the Jews alone. The words are well to remember. He does not say, "You shall have no other image before you," but says, "You shall have no other gods beside me," or before me. What does it mean to have gods? Wooden, stone, and silver images, which are gods, as follows. For men are caused to become idolaters; and though they do not worship wood, stone, silver, and gold, yet they have confidence that it pleases God to set up images in his honor; which then is contrary to the opinion of the first commandment, "I am the LORD thy God, thou shalt not" 2c.

51 Therefore take heed to the meaning of this commandment: I will, saith he, be thy God, I will save thee. I will help you, and that out of pure grace; [you] must not serve me, you must not establish a service out of your own conceit; you must not have the glory before me, that you buy something from me by your merit; I will not look upon your service. If I am to be your God, I will give you everything for free, body and life, wife and child, fields, meadows, wealth, honor and goods, forgiveness of sins and eternal life. These are divine works and gifts which I give thee; and thou canst neither give me nor do anything for them, but only give thanks unto me, praise me, and glorify me; not for that 1) which thou shalt yet receive, but for that 1) which thou hast now received. For thanksgiving is only for what you have received, not for what 1) you are yet to receive. What now wants to lead you against this opinion, that take away.

The iconoclasts, however, drive to, tear down the images externally. I did not almost want to dispute that. But they add: it must be, and it pleases God. In this way, they do not do anything different, except that they pull the images out of the eyes and put them in the hearts of the people, reversing the opinion of this commandment. Thus they deny God, and still boast, they tear down the images according to God's command and word. The devil on their head; if they tear down one, they will raise up twenty in the hearts;

1) "that" is missing from the outputs.

and of the same false confidence that the mob thinks it is doing God a favor by outlining the images, 2) they do not say a word.

(53) Now this is the right understanding, that Gentiles and Jews have the Lord for a God who gives everything for free, (2c) let it be said by Moses, or whoever wills it. Over this God commanded the Jewish people through Moses, that they should not have images to worship God. The other images are also not forbidden to the Jews, although they have been so foolish, and have interpreted that it is not proper for them to have any image at all. Thus, in sum, the first commandment requires righteous faith and trust in God, and nothing external is commanded in it. But no one can have this, if the Holy Spirit gives it 3) into the heart first.

**The promise and urging of the first commandment.**

The third part of the first commandment is a comforting promise. We have heard, first, the opinion of what God wants to be understood by it, when he says: "I am the LORD your God," item, that we should have no other gods beside him. Secondly, he also explains what he means by this, when he says that they should not have other gods beside him, namely the images that are worshipped; and that he holds this against the Jews alone, and not against the Christians and the Gentiles; and thereby wants to avert from them all cause by which they might come over to a false faith. Now, thirdly, the prophecy and the promise have remained behind. For God does both in the Scriptures, forewarns or terrifies, and comforts; terrifies the transgressors and the ungodly, comforts the faithful who keep His commandments, and speaks as follows:

**V. 5 For I the LORD thy God am a strong zealot, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation that hate me.**

55 In this piece it is to be noted that God here, first of all, is threatening, and secondly, is comforting.

2) Thus the Jenaer. Wittenberger: "bild umkreisten"; Erlanger: "umbreißen Bild".

3) In the editions: "jnen".

[He] sets beforehand that he is a strong zealot, who searches for the iniquity of the fathers 2c., after that he sets mercy afterward, and says: And do mercy to many thousands who love me 2c. For this is God's way and nature, as He also proves by deed from time to time in Scripture, that He first afflicts, terrifies, and makes the heart despondent, then He comforts and restores the heart; first killing the flesh, then making the spirit alive. This is what he is wont to do; therefore he does not change this order here 1). Whom he wills to raise up, him he first thrusts to the ground; whom he wills to make alive, him he first kills; whom he wills to make righteous, him he first makes a sinner; and whom he wills to make rich, him he first makes poor; whom he wills to have heaven, him he thrusts forward into hell; so that terror always precedes, consolation and joy follow after, as the Scriptures now and then indicate.

56. also Hannah, the mother of Samuel, 1 Sam. 2, 6. 7. speaks: "The Lord kills and gives life, leads into hell and out again, the Lord makes poor and makes rich, humbles and exalts" 2c, Item, 5 Mos. 32, 39.: "No God is beside me, I can kill and make alive, what I break, that I heal". This is his glory and title, which he alone wants to lead. He is angry and strikes first, then he is kind and heals, gives his comforting gospel, with it he comforts again, and offers his grace and friendship. The devil, however, reverses this order of God and makes it equal to absurdity.

(57) Secondly, it should be noted here that such a prophecy and promise does not concern us Gentiles and Christians either (for the way must be cleared for the evil spirits everywhere); for we have other prophecies and promises, but these concern only the Jews, not us, as we have been told in other passages above (§ 12 ff.). For Moses is a teacher of the Jewish people, therefore his words are all directed to concern the Jews alone. Although the commandments of God are written in the hearts of all people, the hearts are so much influenced by the devil, that they are not

But God now reminds the Jews of the commandments imprinted in their hearts, gives them a written law above the natural light, and even gives it to them orally, so that they may see it as it is written in their hearts.

### **The law, of course, is in the heart.**

(58) If the natural law was not written and given by God in the heart, one would have to preach for a long time before the consciences would be struck; one would have to preach to a donkey, horse, ox or bark for a hundred thousand years before they would accept the law, even though they have ears, eyes and heart like a man; they can also hear it, but it does not fall into the heart. Why? What is the fault? The soul is not formed and created for such things to fall into it. But a man, when the law is held up to him, soon says, "Yes, it is so; I cannot deny it. He could not be persuaded so soon, unless it were first written in his heart.

(59) Because it was in the heart before, although dark and completely faded, it is awakened by your words, that the heart must confess that it is so, as the commandments say, that one honors, loves, and serves God, because he alone is good and does good, and not only the pious, but also the wicked. Although the devil strongly defends that man neither feels, knows, nor performs; indeed, man is not able to do anything without the work and light of the Holy Spirit.

(60) Now this is a bright and clear indication that these words, so that God here prophesies and promises, concern only the Jews, as is now indicated. But this is certainly true, so that everyone should be sure that this commandment applies to the Gentiles or Jews, and that it applies to whomever it pleases: "Whoever does not fear God, he punishes; but whoever honors and fears him, he is gracious to him and honors him again, as it says in 1 Sam. 2:30: "Whoever honors me, I will honor; but whoever despises me will be reviled." But he did not proclaim this prophecy verbally to the Gentiles,

2) Erlanger: "das selbs".

1) "here" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Jena.



but only to the Jews; as the 147th Psalm, v. 19. f., says: 1) "He shows Jacob his word, Israel his customs and rights. He does not do this to the Gentiles, nor does he let them know his rights.

**I am a strong zealot.**

(61) That he now says, "I am a strong zealot," is also said to the Jews, not to us. For here he threatens with a bodily punishment, that he will punish the father in this way, if he acts against his commandment, so that the child must also be punished, even to the third or fourth generation. But he does not punish the soul in this way, but only physically and externally. As when he punishes a man's house, farm, fields and meadows, money and goods, as he did to the pious Job, whom he also attacked in the flesh [Job 2:7], though in a different way than when he punishes the wicked, of which he speaks here. Item, when he shows goodness in a thousand members, that is also bodily, and is so much: I will do you good in children and children's children, not only to the fourth, but in many generations and members, so that the house will remain in a good nature 2) and the generation will last through and through, as David's generation lasts through many generations until Joseph and Mary, even until Christ [Luc. 3, 23. f.].

62. again, the wicked generation shall 3) be cut off, as happened to Jeroboam's and Ahab's generations, whom God thus cut off, that of them it is written, 1 Kings 14:10 and 2 Kings 9:9, "he will cut them off, even him that pisseth against the wall, and will sweep out the descendants of Jeroboam, as one sweeps out filth, until [it is] all over with him." And of Ahab it says, "he will make his house like the house of Jeroboam" 2c. He can do such honor to those who honor him; despise and fail those who despise him.

In the New Testament, however, this punishment is abolished. For we see how God leads, and lets the worst, most desperate boys become rich, live in all courage and have the best luck, so that even the pious are annoyed and offended by it. Again, the righteous he lets flay and scrape, well torment and torture, sends them all misfortune.

1) "speaks" is missing in the Erlanger.  
2) Wittenberger: Ways.  
3) Erlanger: should.

on the neck, so that she thinks that everything goes against the stream, as David nicely indicates in the 73rd Psalm, v. 9. ff. But David sees there the end of both, the ungodly and the godly, that God will thus fatten the ungodly to the slaughter, and the Christians he will keep in check with such misfortune that they will not depart from God, will not lick 5) and become too horny. Therefore no one should refuse to carry the cross, because our Lord and Master, Christ, carried it himself [Matth. 10, 38. 27, 31.]. Now the disciple is no more than the master, and the servant no more than the Lord [Matth. 10, 24].

In the New Testament, however, we have other predictions, namely, eternal death, the wrath of God with the last day, hell and eternal damnation, Marc. 16, 16: "He who does not believe will be condemned"; Joh. 3, 18: "He who does not believe in Christ is already condemned". 6) Joh. 3, 36.: "He who does not believe in the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him"; item, Rom. 2, 5.: "You are storing up for yourself a treasure of wrath for the day of wrath and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God" 2c. Item, again we have also in the New Testament not bodily but spiritual and eternal promise, Joh. 3, 16.: "He who believes has eternal life"; item, Joh. 7, 37. 38.: "He who thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth on me (as the scripture saith), of his body shall flow rivers of living water"; item, Joh. 4, 14.: "The water that I give shall become in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

But in Moses it sounds different: he wants to keep the promise to them, even if they are outwardly pious. And this is the opinion: If the Jews guard themselves against the images and live in the fear of God, then he will accept them and provide for them in body and soul. In body they shall have enough; and if they know him as a true God from the heart, the soul also shall be saved.

66. this text, since God promises them,

4) "der" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Jena, 5) locken - to strike out arrogantly behind.  
6) Erlanger: but.

Many prophets have exalted themselves in their writings and prophecies, so that they also foretold future misfortune to the people because of their sin; and 1) they promised happiness and blessedness, 2) if they turned away from their ungodly life and converted to the Lord. 3) Again, many false prophets have been strengthened in their iniquity and false pretensions, have not understood the text correctly, have quarreled with the godly prophets, as several Psalms show, especially the 144th Psalm, in which the prophet David complains about these false prophets, saying, v. 11 ff: Their mouths speak uselessly, comforting the people when they should terrify them, saying, "Our sons grow up like plants in their youth, and our daughters like hewn-out oriels, like palaces," and all the corners are full, house, boxes, chests, cellars and floors, they have fine cattle, sheep, many friends, children, in the field all things are well turned out, and sing 4) all that stand and walk, "Blessed are the people who thus prosper."

This was the preaching of the false prophets in the Old Testament, which they based on this text, deceiving the poor people, promising them peace, and yet was peace, blessing, and yet was malediction. Then the godly prophets preached against it, wanting to lead them to a right understanding, but the false prophets sat down against them, as happened to St. Isaiah and Jeremiah, and then the false prophets said: Behold, what is written here? God will do good from heaven to those who keep His commandments, and will do evil and punish the wicked. But to us he does good, giving house and home full, money and goods enough, and beautiful children to boot; all because we keep his commandments. Again, he punishes with poverty and misfortune those who do not keep his commandments.

68. the entire book of Job goes through and through: there Job judges the 5) his

Friends, and quarrel with him, saying [Job 4, 7. ff. 36, 6. ff.]: Do you consider God an unjust God, who punishes the pious? Turn it around: He does good to the pious, but punishes the wicked. The false prophets also judged in the same way; when they saw that someone was in trouble, that a wheel had fallen over a leg, or that someone's arm had fallen in two, or that some other misfortune had befallen him, they quickly judged: "He deserved it, God is punishing him, he is a wicked man. And this was a common rule, drawn from this text; so the people followed the same deceivers, judged also like them; when they saw poor or sick people, grind, sinners 2c., they said: Do not touch me, I am pure, God is favorable to me, he punishes you because of your sin.

69 The apostles were also under this delusion when they asked Christ about the blind man, Joh. 9, 1. 2: "Lord, who sinned, this man or his parents? Simon also, who had invited the Lord to his house, when the poor sinner washed the Lord's feet, judged also by the outward appearance, turned up his nose at the woman, she stank before his eyes, and grumbled against Christ, and said to him himself [Luc. 7:38, 39], "If this man were a prophet, he would know who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner." So Christ was not only not the right, true Messiah for the holy Pharisees and scribes, but also not a prophet. Yes, shall this beggar be Christ? Put the glasses on his nose, he is of the devil; for he teaches against Moses, has to do with the leprous, blind, lame people, and, what is worst of all, mixes with whores and boys, with whom he goes around, eats and drinks with them; fie of the loose man! In sum, they thought that God gave to the pious what they wanted and to the wicked what they deserved, and they wanted to conclude from this, because they were doing well in body and in temporal good, that they were the ones whom God was doing so well for the sake of their piety. But they were far from it.

70 What then is the deficiency? That is what is lacking; they have not quite understood the text.

6) "it" is missing in the Erlanger.

1) Jenaer: also.  
2) In the original and in the Wittenberg: Verheißung.  
3) Erlanger: And.  
4) Erlanger: senget.  
5) "den" is missing in the Jena.

stood. It is true and never lacking: What God promises, be it temporal or eternal, He keeps [Ps. 33:4], He also gives faithfully; but they have looked at the text diligently and understood it fleshly. This is true, those who know, love, honor and believe God, as their dear God and Father, by a pure, true and uncolored faith, are sure of all God's promises. But here it is not brightly and clearly expressed and written that He will provide for the belly and not let it suffer any need, that He will feed in the midst of hunger, even if there is not a penny in store, and that He will protect in the midst of enemies without all sword, spear and armor, and make merry and healthy in sickness and temptation.

(71) But the Jews thought thus: If you serve God, you do not have to worry about bread from heaven, no roasted dove will fly into your mouth. It will happen like this: 2) You will have beautiful wives and children, a large household, a safe house, live in comfort, and have provisions for ten, twenty, or thirty years, and will not have to wait for hours from heaven, if you have nothing in your fist. In sum, there will be no lack, but superfluous enough of all things. So they wanted to be sure, and freshly concluded, where there was enough, and a large supply: There is God, that is a blessed man; but where there was lack, behind and in front: He is not pious, he is maledicted, and a jack in the skin, God is not with him. Yes, even the great saints lacked in this piece.

72) But this is not what God wants here, but this is His opinion, that He will be merciful and not let His own suffer any lack, whether there is a supply or not, whether the bag is full or empty, and even if there were not a grain on the ground, and the wine and the beer had completely run into the cellar, and the hail had killed all the grain, there would be no lack.

Heller iin bag would be, nor would there have to be any shortage, neither hunger nor thirst would harm.

So God wants them to be attached to Himself and not to the present, perishable good. They did not want to understand it this way, but understood that such promises of God would be fulfilled if they did not suffer any lack, did not try any adversity, but lived according to all will and desire. That is, not needing God and never asking for Him. Yes, such people wanted God to wait for them in heaven and let them wait for their money and mammon on earth. This does not mean to believe, but to feel; not to wait for God, but to have it in one's fist beforehand. So the false prophets went on, chattering to the people, where they were blissfully happy: There, there is happiness and salvation, there dwells God. So the verdict had to be constantly true among them: Whoever has sinned, God punishes him so that he suffers evil, and whoever does right, He gives him abundance.

74. But God proposed a bodily promise to this physical, rude people; but they should have understood by it the spiritual promise. He wanted to accustom them to Himself and teach them that they should wait for Him, that He would surely feed them and provide for them for time and eternity. So he mixed both promises, bodily and spiritual, into each other, although it is not clearly and brightly read and expressed. But he tied the spiritual promises to the bodily ones in such a way that they could not be separated from each other. They were to wait daily for bread from him, and to be sure that he would feed them for and for; but they did not want to be in the mind, relied on their holiness, thought that God must give them their need for the sake of their piety; thus they made of God an idol, which they should not need very much. For he who has no lack is cheerful and does everything according to his will, he does not need God's kindness, comfort and help, therefore he would wait for his angels up there, so they would wait for their guilders down there. That is to say, trusting and serving Mammon, and not God, have

1) Thus the Jenaers; Erlanger: "alone regarded"; Wittenberger: the text alone bodily understood.

2) pause --- bulge, be thick.

3) Erlanger: let them.

so want to serve two masters and limp on both sides.

God can also give a boy a box full, but it does not follow that he is pious, because he wants to pay him here. Again, he makes it difficult and bloody for a pious man; however, he is not his enemy because of this, yes, he means it paternally well with him. For this is the highest sentence, that God does not punish, but keeps quiet, and lets one live according to his will in the day.

76. he who lives without God is not glad of a penny, and enjoys little of all his goods, for he has an evil conscience, as the Scripture says Isa. 57:21: "The wicked have no peace"; and they are like the rich man in the Gospel, of whom Lucas writes in chapter 12, vv. 16-21, saying: "There was a rich man, whose field was fine, and he thought of himself, and said, What shall I do? I have not where to gather my fruits. And he said, This will I do: I will break down my barns, and build greater ones, and gather therein all that I have grown, and my goods; and I will say unto my soul, Dear soul, thou hast a great store of many years; have now rest, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, and what shall it be that thou hast prepared? So goeth he that gathereth him treasures, and is not rich in GOD." Such people have no heart for God, therefore they are always afraid of death, they are not safe, not only inwardly, but also outwardly; they fear that their house will burn down, that thieves will come and steal their guilders; there is no happy heart, no joy, no rest, neither day nor night. It seems as if they are rich, in good spirits, as if God is favorable to them; but it is the opposite with them. But what joy and good life is this to me, when one is never of good cheer, cares without ceasing, and thinks only how he will keep and increase mammon. That is why Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 9:9 that there is nothing better in this life than for a man to be happy with his wife and to do away with all worries. But no one, not even a king, can do this if he is godless, for he fears death,

his enemies 2c. [From] such fear nothing can save him 2c.

But God wants the heart to be right on the inside; let it be right on the outside, as it always can be, whether there is a supply or not, as Ecclesiastes chap. 9:7-9 says: "Go, eat your bread with gladness, drink your wine with good courage; for your work pleases God. Let thy garments always be white, and let not thy head lack ointment. Use life with thy wife whom thou lovest, as long as thou hast the vain life which GOD hath given thee under the sun" 2c. No wicked man can do this; as has been said, he is always in trouble. For GOD is not in his heart, [he] fears his enemies, thieves, moths, lest they bite and devour his God, and, as the Scripture [3 Mos. 26, 36.] says, he fears a rustling leaf. For he that hath God for an enemy hath all creatures for enemies.

78. But it is true that God not only gives some saints the spirit and courage within, but also showers them with riches without. Thus He gave much wealth to the pious Abraham; He made David a mighty king; He made Job richer than all those who dwelt in the east; but they also had the Holy Spirit, accepted it as a gift from God, were in good spirits, and their hearts were not set on riches, but on God; as David himself admonishes all the rich, Psalm 62:11, saying: "If riches come to you, do not set your heart on them.

Thus, all other pious fathers and God's friends were like them, placing their hope not in temporal goods, but in God. Their heart was thus: Why do you insist on wealth, honor, health, etc., it all does not remain, today or tomorrow you must leave everything and go. So they were rich, both outwardly and inwardly. But there are so few of them, but the others have so much.

80. item, one also finds many [rommer people, who have great lack of food, but a good, sincere heart to God, and are those who hold fast to His promise that He will feed them, they trust in it with all their heart, and God also does it with

So they have better courage and conscience with a penny or a penny, even with an empty bag, than a prince, king or emperor with all his goods and wealth, and a morsel of bread and a drink of water tastes better to them than all their tasty morsels and the best wine to great, rich lords.

81. What does that do? God, who says: I will provide for you, cast your care upon me, I will feed you [Ps. 55, 23]. Item sMatt. 6, 33.]: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." And though it be not present in your sight, yet it shall be abundantly given unto you, more than they that have it a hundredfold in store. This St. Paul well knew, therefore he may write it of himself and other Christians, 2 Cor. 6:10: We are "as those that mourn, yet always rejoice; as those that are poor, yet abound in riches; as having nothing, yet possessing all things"; and to Philipians the fourth, v. 12: "I know not how to be, yet I know how to lead on high; I am in all places and in all things skillful, both to be full and to hunger, both to have left, and to be in want."

(82) Many wicked are also found, to whom all misfortune comes, and they have scarcely enough food in the house; but they cannot be in such good spirits as the godly, but begin to reproach, curse and blaspheme, and become impatient and foolish, saying: Has the devil brought me into this life; what does God take me for, that he has not given me even so much as my neighbors? He has created me in an unrighteous time. Where are they lacking? They are lacking in that their heart is unclean, that they have no faith, know nothing of God, in sum, are without God, as Paul says Eph. 2, 12.

This is the right understanding of the words of Moses: "I am a strong zealot, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation, and doing mercy unto many thousands that love me, and keep my commandments. He promises the Jews bodily welfare. But he wants it to be understood that he wants to bind them to himself, as if he wanted to say: "If you have nothing in the box, in the cellar or in the bag, then you will have nothing.

you shall have it with me. Why, "I am the LORD thy God." If I am your God, I am able to give you without any store; my hand is not shortened [Deut. 11:23, Isa. 50:2]. Some have their treasure in money and goods, some in me alone. What is it to thee, whether thou hast a store of money or of goods, 1) or not: it 2) is so certain to thee with me, and more certain than if thou hadst it in a heap? For the stock you have with you can burn, drown, be stolen, or be eaten by moths and worms and perish. But with me it shall surely remain; and though thou hast nothing, yet art thou rich and provided for, because thou hast me, and in me all things.

84 Again, a wicked man has nothing; and though he is rich in sight, yet he has want, he has misfortune enough; and though he has all things in store more than too much, yet he is poorer than poor. For what harm does Lazaro's poverty do him? What good is the rich man's great wealth? [Therefore no one is rich, if he is called emperor or pope 2c., because he is rich in God [Luc. 12, 21].

So these are the promises: If you serve God and recognize him as God, you shall have enough, whether you have it in store or not. But it is presented to them rudely and childishly. For as the law led them outwardly like a disciplinarian, so God also promises them outward prosperity; it is a child's school and child's teaching.

The New Testament, however, turns it around and looks at the spiritual and inward, holding faith before it, and says: If you believe and are devout, you shall have enough, Matth. 6, 33: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," so the belly is well provided for. Both testaments have this, but the Old Testament begins with the body, and yet the spiritual is hidden underneath, namely, that one must have enough in faith. It is the same thing in the old and new testaments, but it is a different order. The new

1) So the Jenaer. Wittenberger: bei dir Vorrath; Erlanger: an ihn Vorrath.

2) Wittenberg and Jena: es.

seethes on the spiritual, drags the physical with it afterwards. As: I believe God could feed my belly, even if I have nothing in store; and if I trust Him for one day, I trust Him also for one, two or three years 2c. And so the inward faith brings with it, by which the soul is rich, that I also believe that I will have plenty as far as the body is concerned.

Abraham was promised [Gen 12:7, 13, 15] that he would take the land of Canaan, and yet he did not take it by one foot, Acts 7:5. 7, 5. But he trusted in God and believed that he would take it, so he died there and believed to his end that 1) he would take it, and yet he did not get there in body. But in faith he took it, for it was given to his seed. For God promised him that he and his seed with him would take the land. So under the bodily promise a spiritual promise was included, on which Abraham also looked more than on the bodily promise, as the epistle to the Hebrews indicates, Cap. 11, 9. St. Stephen also speaks of this in the stories of the apostles, Cap. 7, 5. f. So this promise was not made to the Gentiles but to the Jews.

So also that he is angry in the third or fourth member also belongs to the law, indicates a physical anger and punishment, not an eternal one. But in the New Testament it is different: the child is not punished for the father. But it goes like this: Every man believes for himself, the father for himself, the son for himself, the mother and daughter for themselves; as also in Ezekiel [Cap. 18, 20.] it is written: I will abolish this, that the son shall not suffer for the father, neither the father for the son. Because he promised the Jews a bodily promise, he also pardoned or punished them bodily.

In the New Testament, however, the promise begins with the spiritual, because he promises eternal bliss. So also, the punishment starts with the spiritual punishment: "He who does not believe (Marc. 16, 16.) is condemned." He does not say: I will punish the

1) In the Jenaer the words stand here: "and had nevertheless no Erbtheil inside, also not one foot wide". The Erlanger reports that this is a note of Walch.

The son cannot be condemned for the sake of the father, but the father himself must be condemned. The judgment is a harsh one, not on the goods but on the person. If one counts the members, then it goes to the Jews, whom he punished bodily, as, at the goods, house, yard, field, meadows, wife and children, servant and maid; as is proven in the histories.

### God's natural work, benevolence.

90] It is also to be noted that in wrath and anger God counts and punishes only to the fourth member, but in love He proves His mercy, not only to the fourth, fifth, tenth or twentieth member, but to many thousands, and is a very fine and sweet saying. The pope also imitated God, wanted to become like him, cursed up to the ninth member. He had not learned it from God, but from his father, the devil, who can do nothing but lie, murder and curse. But God does not do it this way; He shows Himself that we should learn to recognize Him as a true God, who is naturally a thousand times more inclined to kindness than to anger.

91 Therefore his own work is to do good. But to be angry is the work of others, Isa. 28, 11. It is also necessary for us, that he should do more good than punishment. For we human beings can by nature suffer God to do us good for ten, twenty, thirty years; but when an evil year comes, with the storm, war, or pestilence, we want to despair; then God is no longer at home, there is only loud clamor. If God favors us for a year or ten, no one knows it, no one thanks Him for it. So our nature can suffer the good deed, but it does not want to suffer the punishment, grumbles from hours on, and would have deserved loud anger. God, however, gives us credit for showing more kindness than anger.

92. so also here; [he] punishes only to the fourth member; but his mercy he lets go to many thousands. If he would punish as severely as he shows kindness and mercy, who could remain before him? Therefore, if one wants to look at the goodness, no divine plague and punishment is too great.

also none to appreciate against his goodness. But we do not see it, we are blind. But when misfortune comes upon our necks, then we see what we have had. If God were so much angry and punished, as much as He is kind and merciful and benevolent, how could we bear it? Who would not despair?

We cannot give credit to God, who is so merciful, who shows us so much good, who showers us with so many benefits, if he sends us an evil hour; what would we do if he sent us so much evil time, sickness and all kinds of misfortune, when he graces us with good time, health and all happiness? Some people go along for twenty years, not having any offense; once a fever comes that lasts more than three days, they want to go out of their skin.

So it is clear and bright enough that God is more inclined to 1) mercy than to 1) wrath. You know how many thousands are slain from the peasants; there appears God's wrath and punishment. But this wrath is not to be estimated against the goodness of God. For on the other hand, many thousands have lived who would have deserved the same punishment, that God should have had them slain as well. 2) Now this has happened as an example and warning to others, and has been a fox's tail. And God shows what kindness he proves to us with it, that he does not let us all fall like this, who deserved it as well as the peasants. But we do not recognize it until the punishment comes home to us.

If he took my eye, broke my leg, cut off my arm, sent me a disease for eight days, so that I could not work for half a year, there would be weeping and wailing. But I do not want to forget that I have had good and healthy days for twenty years. Even if he takes away one eye, the other limbs are still healthy. So he does not punish the hundredth part, counting against the benefits he gives us. But when we die, it is all over with each other, for we owe him a death.

1) Wittenberger and Erlanger: "auf" instead of: zu.

2) So the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers. Erlanger: would also have had them strangled.

So, when he punishes, we shall know that it is only a fox's tail, for we shall not be repaid the hundredth part, as we well deserved.

## Question: why does the son suffer for the father?

96. this question, why the son suffers for the father, the prophet Ezekiel has dealt with, and says [Cap. 18, 2.]: "You have a saying among you in Israel, the fathers have eaten sour grapes 3) and our teeth have become dull." And Jeremiah [Cap. 31, 29.] saith, Our fathers have sinned, and perished; but we must repay their sin. And it is still the same today: we sin, and we deserve that our descendants should pay for it. But this is not to be understood that it is a punishment of the soul, that the child is condemned for the father's sake; as Ezekiel himself indicates in this place. "The souls," says God through Ezekiel [Cap. 18, 4.] "are all mine, the father's and the son's, but whichever sins shall die"; but it is to be understood of the bodily punishment. He punishes the children for the sake of the fathers, lets them die, who must die nevertheless otherwise, and punishes thus the fathers that he sometimes exterminates a whole generation. So he blesses the fathers in the children, that [it] much descendants enjoy (bodily) that the fathers have been pious.

97. When therefore he will punish a father, he taketh away his children, as he suffered David's son to die [2 Sam. 12: 18]. For he punisheth us in the goods which he hath given us, showing that the children are the very best and dearest of all goods; and if he spare not the children, which are the best and dearest, how much less will he spare the oxen, asses, sheep, and other goods?

98. but it is to be noted that God rather reaches out to the pious than to the wicked and desperate boys, so that a saying has been made about it: The worse the scoundrel, the better the luck. So he took Job's children and all his goods, punished him bodily; yet he promised himself good things to God [Cap. 13,

3) Jenaer: "Heerling".

15.f. Therefore he had to have enough, because in the end everything he had lost was doubled [Job 42:10].

99. let this be said recently of the meaning of the first commandment, in which he exhorts the Jews to remember that they have such a God, who brought them out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; that he might prove that he is mighty to keep them from all enemies.

### Epilogus or Summarium.

(100) So you have the first commandment, which has two kinds of understanding or usage. First, the external, crude sense, as when one worships stone and wood, as is clearly expressed in the text: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness, either of that which is in heaven above, or that which is in the earth beneath, or that which is in the water" 2c. This is the gross and foolish idolatry.

The other mind and abuse is when one does not inwardly trust God with the heart in a right faith, but hangs the heart on other things and relies on a thing that is not God. This is then the right, inward idolatry, and the right, living devil. And although praying to external images of wood, stone, gold or silver is a great abuse, it is only a child's play, and a sign of the inward idolatry of the heart, in which the whole world is stuck and is completely drowned. For no one can believe God and trust that the Holy Spirit enlightens the heart. There are many who abstain from outwardly worshipping the images, but there is no one who does not worship the devil in his heart, whose heart is not drowned in unbelief, that he does not trust God, does not believe Him to be true, puts his trust much more in his own good, wisdom, ability, piety and holiness, than in God's goodness and mercy. That is the right idolatry.

Therefore, the first, highest and most noble good work in this commandment is faith in 1) God. For in this work all works must go, and their goodness must receive influence from it, like a fiefdom. And where faith is not, the works have their head cut off,

1) In the old editions: in.

and all their life and good is nothing; as Paul teaches Rom. 14:23: "Whatsoever is not of or in faith is sin." From faith, and no other works, we have the name that we are called believers in Christ. For a Gentile, a Jew, a Turk, a sinner may do all other works, but trusting God firmly is not possible except for a Christian enlightened by God's grace.

(103) In this faith also all works become equal, and one becomes like the other without any difference, whether they are great, small, short, long, much or little. For works are pleasing to God not on their own account, but on account of faith, which is united and without distinction in all and every work, works and does them all, however many and varied they may be. Just as all limbs have their life, work, and name from the Head, and without the Head no limb can live, work, or have a name.

This faith does not only consist in believing, first, that it pleases God that I eat, drink, sleep or wake, 1 Cor. 10:31, or do other such minor works, but also, secondly, 2) when things go badly for me in body, goods and honor, 2c. that I nevertheless believe that God means it paternally with me, stands by me and will not abandon me. To believe this is the greatest art, namely, to have a good confidence in God, who is angry according to our sense and understanding, and to provide better things for Him than can be felt; for here He is hidden, as the bride says in the Song of Songs [Cap. 2, 9]: "Behold, He stands behind the wall, and looks through the windows, and peers through the lattice."

Thirdly, the highest degree of faith is when God does not strike and punish the conscience with temporal suffering, but with death, hell and sin, and immediately denies grace and mercy, as if He wanted to condemn and anger eternally, which few people experience, as David laments Ps. 6, 2: "Lord, do not punish me in Your wrath" 2c. Here to believe that God has a gracious pleasure over us is the highest work,

2) "zum andern" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Jena.



that may come to pass from and in the creature. This good will and good pleasure, in which our confidence stands, was proclaimed by the angels from heaven when they sang on Christmas Eve [Luc. 2:14]: Gloria in excelsis Deo,

"Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill toward men."

This is the meaning of this commandment: "You shall have no other gods": because I alone am your God, you shall put all your trust, confidence and faith in me alone, and in no one else. For this does not mean to have a God, if you call him God outwardly with your mouth, or if you worship him with your knees and gestures, but if you sincerely trust in him and put all your trust in him, whether in life or death, in love or suffering, as John 4:23 says of true worshippers. And this faith and confidence of heart is the true fulfillment of this first commandment, without which there is no other work that can do justice to this commandment.

(107) And as this commandment is the first, highest and best, from which all the others flow, go in it, and are judged by it, so also its work (that is, faith or confidence in God's mercy) is the first, highest, best work, from which all the others flow, go and are judged; and other works against it are just as if the other commandments were without the first, and there were no God. For this reason St. Augustine says that the works of the first commandment are believing, hoping and loving. For such confidence brings with it love and hope.

**The other commandment of the first tablet.**

**V. 7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain. The LORD will not hold him innocent who takes his name in vain.**

**Summa.**

(108) The other commandment teaches how a person is to conduct himself outwardly in words before men, or inwardly before himself, namely, to honor God's name. For no one can denounce God either before himself or before men according to the divine nature, but by his name.

**You shall call the name of the LORD 2c.**

In the first commandment you heard an urging and a promise if they kept his commandments. Here he puts only an exhortation and no promise. So the two commandments have the addition before all the others, that he will forbid with wrath, and will have kept them more than with any other. For the higher and greater the commandments are, the more easily, and the less, and the more shamefully, they are despised. The following commandments, such as killing, stealing, committing adultery, and bearing false witness, although they are also dangerous 1) and abused, are not as daily and mean as the first two commandments. For there are many of them who outwardly do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness; but here is no one who is not stained and defiled with idolatry in his heart, and does not take the name of God in vain.

Therefore, because it is so easily despised and thrown to the winds, God holds it in higher esteem, placing a charge that we should hold it in higher esteem. For He does not want it to be despised; indeed, He wants us to put more diligence and respect into it than into the others. For the others are easily kept where the first two are rightly taken. But we turn the page and hold least those we should hold most.

The commandment also has two abuses, like the first. The first is when one swears and curses uselessly by God's name and misuses it. 2) This is how the Jews understood it. Such swearing by God's name 2c. is now quite common and in daily use. For among all the members we have no more frivolous 3) member than the tongue, which therefore snaps, esteems low, that it thus frivolously names the name of God in frivolous things, which it should nevertheless hold in great honor. Therefore, because he is held in such low esteem, he adds a word of condemnation, saying, "God will not hold him innocent," 2c. It will not go well with him, he will see the punishment one day, he will grab him on the hood, so that he will rebuke and curse, and his

1) laughable --- gangly.  
2) Erlanger: misuse the name of God.  
3) Wittenberger: justified.

Name thus maltreated, he will not watch the length that one thus disgraces him.

This sin has been preached almost exclusively in this commandment, and has been practiced most of all, that we should not swear, curse, lie, deceive, conjure with the name of God, nor commit other abuses; all of which are gross, external things and well known to everyone. In which it is also understood that we are to prevent others from lying, deceiving, swearing, cursing, casting spells, and sinning in other evil ways with God's name.

The other abuse is so great that the first is child's play compared to the other, even though the first is horrible and great enough. This one, however, is so subtle and spiritual that no one understands it, not even the great saints; it takes a strong spirit to understand and see it. I will not say that one should get rid of it completely. For those who are in abuse consider that they are doing God a service by profaning and blaspheming His name in the highest way.

114. Just as many sin against the first commandment, especially those who have a pretense that they are the most pious and holy, throwing up their own works, putting themselves in the place of God, setting up an idolatry with their own conceit, under which they worship the devil, disregarding it and throwing it to the wind, even thinking that they are doing well and right, and have great pleasure in it; Yes, that is much worse, they want to have their deeds unpunished, they defend them by force; defiance that speaks against them; they do not think that God says he is a strong zealot, he does not let him grab the beard. And when they read it, they think that it does not concern them, and they swear to God that they are the dear children who sit in God's lap.

(115) So also those who have the greatest reputation for piety and holiness sin most grievously against this other commandment, namely, those who preach and teach under the appearance and name of the Word of God the doctrines of devils and the laws of men; preaching and teaching therefore according to their pleasure under the name of God, which they are not commanded to do, are quite insolent and obdurate.

in their proud sense, are not frightened by God's cruel insistence: "The Lord will not hold him innocent who bears His name in vain," which will pass over all such blasphemers; indeed, they still think they are doing right and please God, who will therefore also exalt them. Such spirits never come to recognize their sin; indeed, they consider it the highest righteousness, thus inwardly blaspheming the name of God under a holy appearance, which the world, reason and all human wisdom cannot recognize as evil.

The pope is completely drowned in this blasphemy. For he teaches under the name of God, which is against God, lays great burdens on men by his commandments; pretends that he does it by God's command, and yet the wretched devil told him to do it; thus he puts a lid on his teaching with the name of God: We command by reason of the almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and by authority of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, 2c. whoever is not obedient to us is not obedient to God. He also knows how to apply to himself the sayings that Christ applied to the right preachers, such as: "He who hears you hears me, and he who despises you despises me." Rhyme. Then everyone fears, emperor, king, princes and lords, fall clumsily in, 1) to hell and the devil.

Thus the devil is able to disguise himself as an angel of light [2 Cor. 11:14], and gives false doctrine to false preachers and false spirits, under a semblance of right, wholesome doctrine. They proclaim the name of God in the world, pretending to be good and crying out: God's word, God's word! So they drive their evil poison into the people under the glittering color, so that the righteous doctrine is completely eradicated, are completely insolent, enter without all shyness, 2) fear neither God nor the world.

Therefore, God speaks here, and dreadfully dreads such blasphemers. Beware, I will not hold it against you; that is,

1) So the Jenaer; Wittenberger: fall in, plump; Erlanger: "fall in plump," 2c.  
2) Erlanger: ahn allen Scheu.

I will punish and afflict thee with a terrible punishment. It is much more severe that he says, I will not give you credit for it, than that he says, I will punish you; as if he could not name the great severity 1) of the punishment. As if a householder were to urge his son or servant, saying, I will not give it thee, it is much more vehement and angry than if he were to say, I will strike thee; or, If I give it thee 2c. In such urges the negatio is much stronger than the affirmatio; the words of the urge are slight, but they will have a fierce, harsh and terrifying emphasis against [those] who blaspheme God's name in the way that is said.

119) This is the true abuse of the name of God, that one thus defends the false doctrine, and pretends that God wants it to be so, brazenly boasting: God's word, God's word, when God has not commanded it. And this abuse goes through and through in the whole world, namely with those who have the appearance and the name that they are learned and pious people, and pretend by the same appearance that their teaching is the right teaching. Therefore the common saying is true: In the name of God all misfortune arises. No greater misfortune has come into the world than that under God's name all idolatry and false doctrine is concealed, and such good appearances are made that they cannot be seen.

120 The peasants also got up in such a pretty shine. What moved them? What did they pretend? The name and glory of God. We want, they said, to defend, protect and handle the Gospel. As if God were too weak to defend His gospel, He should have such helpers to handle His gospel. So they took spears and swords at hand, thought they had God's word, thought they could justifiably kill the godless princes, because the Jewish people were commanded to do so in the Old Testament. So the name of God had to be their cover of shame. Who did it? The devil brought the prophets of murder, who persuaded them that they were doing the right thing; they should thank them. But

1) Walch and the Erlangers: size and gravity.

God did not forget his words and soon came with the punishment, as he said: "I will not hold him innocent who takes my name in vain. For he cannot suffer that one should thus jest with his name. He came suddenly upon them, and smote them over the heads; they lifted up the play against God, therefore the judgment came upon them. You have experienced the example and seen it for yourselves; remember it and do not forget it.

Thus it happens, and has happened, to all, as to those who take the name of God in vain. This is what happened to the heretics Ario, Manichaeo, Pelagio, 2) and to all those who took God's name in vain. God let them blaspheme for a while, abusing His name, but then suddenly He came upon them, and they fail so that their name now stinks in the whole world.

So also the pope has blasphemed God's name; although he has done it for a long time, the judgment has come upon him in the end, that now among the right Christians there is nothing more despised than the pope with all his monks and priests; it stinks like a wide-hop nest among them, and will also stink the longer the more, even among those who still hold him in high esteem. For it is true, and remains true, whoever dishonors and defiles the name of God must also be disgraced and dishonored.

This shall be a great comfort to us who teach rightly and know the name of God rightly, sanctifying and praising, not blaspheming and unholy. And even though we are despised, we are certain of our doctrine. But the sects and the spirits of the sects go along, boasting that they have the right spirit, soaring high, and yet nothing but blasphemy; chattering in, God's word, God's word; but they must come down. For the higher they are lifted up, the more they must be put to shame; and if it does not happen, let us scratch out the text here, and what is written here must be a lie.

God watches for a while, but he is a jealous man, he is envious, he cannot endure the length of it; therefore he finally throws in, and truly rudely. It is also annoying to a

2) In the Erlanger: "Ariano" and "Pelagiano".

to blaspheme and desecrate his name, namely God. If someone assaults a citizen in his hanse, blasphemes and reviles him, and wants to do violence there, who would like to suffer that? If someone were to seize such a person in the act and slay him, who would say that such a person had been wronged? For everyone likes to have peace in his house, and whoever wants to take it from him has lost his neck.

If we cannot suffer one another to reproach and blaspheme another, how much less will God suffer that His name should be taken in vain, and that He should be regarded as an idol? How could he do that? It is not his place to suffer. He is a true God, therefore he also wants to save his honor. No one should oppress him, but if he does, he will be thrown to the ground. So the commandment is naturally written in our hearts, that it is not right to desecrate God's name in this way.

(126) Now you have two abuses of this commandment; the first is outward and gross, so that one does not curse or rebuke. This one is so gross that everyone understands it, that even secular authorities punish it. If only they would do it! The other is more subtle, which has an appearance as if it were God's honor; as the false preachers, and those who accept their teaching from them, thus abuse God's name. God punishes both of them; both master and disciple go to the devil.

How is the other commandment fulfilled? The first commandment, you have heard, is fulfilled by a true, right, firm faith, and by a sincere heart and good confidence in God; so that a man looks to God to preserve him, to help him, to counsel him, and to give all good things, both temporally and eternally. This is the right way. But where this confidence is not there, it is not kept.

So, in this commandment, if one preaches the word of God rightly 1) the name of God is led rightly, and is accepted by the listeners rightly. And again, the name of GOD is blasphemed when the preachers do not

but deceive the people under the appearance of God's word and name. If the preacher is certain that he has the word of God and is preaching rightly, he does not submit to any honor that is due to God alone, but diligently does what he is commanded to do, does not lie or deceive, delivers the word clearly, without any falsehood, and fulfills the commandment. Item: Those who obey the preacher receive the word as if God Himself spoke it, grasping it with their hearts. 2c. This is the right use of the name of God, namely, to preach the name of God, to believe in it, to confess it, to praise it, to call upon it, and to leave life and limb for it; for all this follows from the first one.

Thus the greatest and highest work according to faith is to praise, honor, extol, preach, sing, and in all ways exalt and magnify God's name. And although it is true, as stated above [§ 103], that there is no difference among the works where faith is and works, yet this is to be understood, that if the works are measured against faith and its works, there is no difference among them. But if they are measured one against another, there is a difference between them, and one is higher than the other. Just as in the corpse the limbs have no difference from health, and health works in one as well as in the other, so the works of the limbs are differentiated, and one is higher, nobler, more useful than the other. So also here, praising God's honor and name is better than the following works of the other commandments, and yet must go in the same faith as all the others go in.

130) This is also to be noted in this and other commandments, that just as the first commandment states that we are to have no other gods, so it also states that we are to trust in One, that is, the right God, through 3) firm faith, and to have confidence, hope and love for Him; which are the works so that one may have, honor and keep one God. So also in the other commandment it is forbidden: We are not to use God's name uselessly. But this is not enough

1) Wittenberger: not.

2) Sodie Jenaer. Wittenberger: like it; Erlanger: like.  
3) Erlanger: by one.

but is also commanded under it: We are to use His name usefully, that is, to honor, call upon, praise, preach and extol. And it is impossible that God's name should not be dishonored where it is not properly honored. For even if it is honored with the mouth, bows, kisses, or other gestures, if such reverence does not take place in the heart through faith in God, it is only a pretense and glitter.

This commandment is also fulfilled when one calls upon the name of God in all distress and temptation. For this is why God still allows us to suffer in many afflictions, to be afflicted with the fear of death, to be challenged with evil desires, so that He may penetrate us through such trials and give us cause to run to Him, to cry out, and to call upon His holy name, as the 50th Psalm, v. 15, says: "Call upon Me in the time of trouble, and I will save you, and you shall praise Me. For a sacrifice of praise will I have, and the same is the way whereby thou mayest come to salvation. For through such trials man becomes aware and learns what God's name is, and how powerful He is to help all those who call upon Him, and thereby faith and confidence in God grows almost to the full. Of this David says Psalm 54:8, 9: "Thou hast delivered me from all distress; therefore will I cleave unto thy name, 1) and confess that it is so good 1)." Psalm 91, 14. God says: "I will deliver him, because he hopes in me; I will help him, because he knows my name."

This is the greatest and most difficult work of this commandment, to protect the holy name of God against all those who misuse it spiritually, and to spread it among all people. For it is not enough that I praise and call upon [the] divine name for myself and in myself, in fortune and in misfortune; I must also go forth, and for the sake of God's honor and name, invite upon myself the enmity of all men, as Christ [Matt. 24:9] says to his disciples, "All men will be enemies to you for my name's sake." Here we must Father

1) The Jenaer has here the reading of our Bible: "danken" ("thank") and "tröstlich" ("comforting"); both the Erlanger notes as remarks of Walch.

and mother and best friends, as Christ Himself says in the Gospel Luc. 14:26: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and child, and brother, and sister, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple"; and Matt. 10:35, 36: "I am come to stir up a man against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the cord against her sister-in-law; and a man's enemies shall be his own household."

Here we must also have the name that we strive against the authorities, both spiritual and temporal, and are scolded for disobedience. Here we must arouse the scholars, saints, the rich, the powerful, and everything else that is in the world against us; that is, God's friend and the enemy of all the world. And although those who are commanded to preach God's word are especially obliged to do so, every Christian is also obliged to do so when time and necessity require it.

When a man accepts the word of God, the gospel, he should not think otherwise than that in the same hour he will be in danger of all his goods, house, farm, fields and meadows, wife, children, father and mother, even his own life. If danger and misfortune come to him at home, it is all the easier for him, and remember, I knew it well before, that [it] would be like this. This is where the Proverbs come from, Matth. 10, 24. 25.: "The disciple is not above the master" 2c., item: "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call the members of his house"; item, Jac. 4, 4.: "Whoever wants to be the friend of the world will be the enemy of God"; item, Joh. 15, 19.: "They will hate you, because you are not of the world"; item, Matth. 10, 34.: "I have not come to send peace on earth, but the sword."

### From the oath.

135 Here it is also appropriate to speak of the oath. For by a right oath God's name is also used and honored outwardly, and by a wrong oath it is not honored.

136. is now here a question: whether one may also swear by the name of god in the

new testament? For in the Old Testament [Deut. 6:13, 10:20] they were commanded, if they would swear, to swear by the name of God; but Christ, Matt. 5:34-37, declares, "Let no one swear at all, neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by the city of Jerusalem, nor by the head, 2c. but let our speech be yea, yea," if it be yea, "and nay, nay," if it be nay. It has often been said of this, but for the sake of the young 1) and simple-minded we must repeat it.

137. It is the same with swearing as with striking to death. Death is strictly forbidden, as we know, in the Ten Commandments; but if it is done by command of the word of God, it is right and good. Thus, if a judge allows a murderer or a man who has beaten to death to have his head cut off or to be put on a wheel, he does well and rightly, and does not violate the fifth commandment of God, for God has ordered and commanded it to punish the wicked for the sake of public peace. Thus the dear saints Moses, Samuel, David 2c. slew by the command of God, and not by their own desire and choice. But he that taketh the sword without the command of God shall be judged with the sword [Matt. 26:52]. Now if I kill out of anger or malice, whether I am a judge or not, I am doing against the commandment of God: You shall not kill. But if the judge, for the sake of his office, has someone beheaded, hanged, drowned, or burned, it is not the judge who does it, but the judgment of God, yes, God Himself. For who else would be a judge, and hold such an office, if one were not certain of God's command, and had such defiance that it would carry out God's word and command, not he. If this were not the case, the conscience of a judge would have to despair.

But thus the judge can lift up his eyes to God and say: Dear Lord, I do not like to kill the man, because in your sight I am not more pious than he; but because it is your will and command that the public evildoers should be punished, that one may have peace before them, I am

I am sure and certain that I am doing the right thing, and that I am obeying you in letting him be strangled; yes, Lord, you are doing it yourself, for it is your command. Then God will do him justice and say: You have done right, you have obeyed my command, for I have commanded you. A judge must keep this defiance if he wants to stand before God otherwise.

(139) Just as death, beheading, wheel-breaking, and other such judicial acts should not be done of one's own will, desire, or choice, so it is with oaths. In short, oaths and swearing are forbidden, as is beating to death; but if the authorities require an oath from me, I shall swear. It is often found in Scripture that the prophets swore; item, Christ and the apostles, especially Paul, often swear. Why? Did he forbid swearing? Christ brought his teaching into the world by command of his Father, and to confirm his teaching, which was unknown to the world, and to excite and confirm the weak hearts of men, he used the oath. So also from time to time Sanct Paul swore.

140 Therefore, an oath is forbidden if it is made out of one's own conceit, wantonness, recklessness, and evil desire. But if it is done out of necessity, it is not forbidden, nor is it wrong. But then it is done out of necessity when the authorities require an oath in court 2c. As also happens when one pays homage to princes and lords and swears; and it is right. So also one may swear out of duty of love, namely, if one neighbor swears to another to keep faith with him, if the other desires it; not (as they said) in spiritual things alone, but in all things against one's neighbor, to make him sure, if he desires it, and will not give you faith otherwise; or that one may be reconciled to him, as the epistle to the Hebrews indicates, Cap. 6, 16, where it thus speaks: "The oath is the end of all strife, for a fortification among them." So Joseph swore by the name of Pharaoh, in the first book of Moses Cap. 42, 15. So the prophets swore by the life of kings. For such oaths are not forbidden, as the mad sophists quite

1) Wittenberg and Jena: "Jews".

Therefore, this is the decision: If it is called the authority, and your neighbor desires it, and benefits him, then swear that it is right; because you pledge him to God, and give God the honor that he is faithful, and will see such testimony. It is the highest honor one can give to God that one considers him faithful and true.

141 This is what is said about keeping an outward oath when it is done by command of the authorities. But if one swears without the command of authority and without the duty of brotherly love, but out of frivolity and one's own will, it is forbidden and unlawful, and contrary to the other commandment, which says that one should not use the name of God uselessly. Then (as Christ says Matth. 5, 34. 35.) "one should not swear, neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by Jerusalem, nor by our head" until necessity demands it. But then necessity requires it, if your neighbor has it and will not believe without the oath, and the authorities swear to it. For then it is the same as calling upon God to bear witness to the matter. If it is not wrong to call upon God over a drink of beer or a morsel of bread, it is also not wrong to use the name of God for the benefit of one's neighbor.

Now let this be said of the two customs of this commandment. The outward abuse is gross and low; but the inward abuse is so high and great, 1) that it is beyond all measure. Namely, with false doctrine and false worship, God's name is dishonored and blasphemed, but through right doctrine, which teaches the word of God rightly and clearly, God's name is praised and glorified. Therefore the sayings from the Psalter, Ps. 7, 18. belong: "I will praise", extol and honor "the name of GOD the LORD." Item [Ps. 99, 3.]: "We give thanks to thy great and wonderful name, which is holy." Item, Ps. 100, 4. 5. "Give thanks and praise to his name, for the LORD is good." Item, Ps. 113, 1-3: "Praise the name of the Lord. Praise his name from now until forever. From the going out of the sun to its going down, praise be to him.

the name of the LORD." And Solomon in his Proverbs [Cap. 18, 10.]: "The name of the LORD is a strong castle; the righteous runneth thither and is protected."

Such praise should not be done with the mouth alone, for monks, priests and nuns also praise God's name in this way, but only to proclaim and preach God's praise and glory, that he does not make us blessed because of our good works, merits and piety, but only because of his grace and mercy. So do not our ministers praise him. And that they not only preach and hear the same, but also confess it before the world and the devil, and leave life and limb over it. Oh Lord, there are so few of them who praise, confess and glorify the name of God.

**The third commandment of the first tablet.**

**V.8-11 Remember the sabbath day, that thou hallow it: six days thou shalt labor, and do all thy work: but on the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God, in the which thou shalt do no work, neither thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day. Therefore he blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.**

**Summa of this commandment.**

The third commandment teaches how man is to keep himself outwardly against God in works, that is, in worship.

**V. 8. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; six days you shall labor 2c.**

145 St. Paul and the whole New Testament have set forth the Sabbath of the Jews, so that it may be understood that the Sabbath concerns the Jews alone. Therefore it is not necessary for the Gentiles to keep the Sabbath, although it was a great and strict commandment among the Jews. The prophets have also indicated how this Sabbath should be abolished. Isaiah at the last Capi-

1) Walch and the Erlangeners: roughly.

v. 23 says: "When the Messiah comes, there will be such a time that one new moon will be on another, one Sabbath on another. As if he wanted to speak: There will be a Sabbath every day, and a new moon every day. So, in the New Testament, the Sabbath is inferior, according to the gross outward manner. For this commandment also has two senses, like the other commandments, an outward and an inward or spiritual.

In the New Testament, every day is a holy day for Christians, and all days are free. Therefore Christ says: "The Son of Man is Lord even over the Sabbath", Matth. 12, 8. Therefore Paul admonishes the Christians from time to time not to be bound to any day [Gal. 4, 10. 11.]: "You keep days, and moons, and feasts, and seasons. I fear yours, lest perhaps I have labored with you in vain." Item, to Colossians [Cap. 2, 16. 17.] even clearer: "Let no man therefore make you conscience of meat or drink, or of any part of the days," namely, the feasts, "or new moons, or sabbaths, which is the shadow of things to come." 2c.

147 Although the Sabbath has been abolished and consciences are free of it, it is still good and necessary to keep a special day each week to act, hear and learn the word of God 1). For everyone cannot wait all the days. Nature also demands that one day a week be quiet and refrain from work, both human and animal.

But whoever wants to make a necessary commandment out of the Sabbath, as a work required by God, must keep Saturday, and not Sunday; for Saturday is commanded to the Jews, and not Sunday. The Christians, however, have kept Sunday and not Saturday, because Christ rose on Sunday. This is a sure sign that the Sabbath no longer concerns us, or even the whole of Moses; otherwise we would have to keep the Sunday.

1) Taken by us from the old edition of Walch. Jenaer and Erlanger: "for the sake of the word of God"; Wittenberger: "for the sake of the word of God".

and is a great and strong proof that the Sabbath is abolished. For we find in no place throughout the New Testament that the Sabbath is commanded to be observed by us Christians.

Why then do Christians keep Sunday? Although all days are free, and one is like the other, it is nevertheless useful and good, indeed, very necessary, to keep a celebration on one day, be it on the Sabbath, Sunday, or another day. For God wants to keep the world clean and to govern it peacefully; therefore He has given six days for work, but on the seventh day servants, day laborers and all kinds of workers, yes, also horses, oxen and other hard-working livestock are to have rest, as this commandment says, so that they may recover with rest. And especially that those who do not have leisure at other times may hear the sermon on the feast day and learn about God through it. And for this reason, that is, for love and need, Sunday was kept, not for the sake of the commandment of Moses, 2) but for our need, that we might rest and learn the word of God.

Our papists, however, have unfortunately made it so that we have been harder on our holidays and have had more of them than the Jews. But it does not matter whether we celebrate or not, consciences are free; whoever does not want to celebrate, let him work anyway; we do not want to scold him or chase him away. But if he wants to be pious, to know God, he needs the holiday for the sake of hearing the word of God. But if he wants to be insolent and wicked, let him go to the devil, as those who do nothing else on holidays but eat, drink, and revel day and night.

This is the gross and external meaning of this commandment, which does not bind us, but is free to us, is in our power and arbitrariness, whether we want to celebrate 3) or not. If it is necessary for my neighbor, then I drop the holiday and serve my neighbor; but if he needs instruction from the word of God, then I abstain from the work. Therefore, the pope does not have the power to keep neither Sundays nor

2) Erlanger: will.

3) Wittenberger: should.



to celebrate other days [than] necessary to command. That is why we celebrate, because we need to learn God's word. That the Sabbath is a free holiday is indicated by Christ from time to time in the Gospel, and when he interprets the Sabbath.

## Of the spiritual Sabbath.

152) Here it must be known that Sabbath in Hebrew means celebration 1) or rest, because God rested on the seventh day and ceased from all His works which He had created, Genesis 2:2. Therefore He also commanded the Jews to celebrate the seventh day and to cease from all their works; and the same Sabbath is now changed into Sunday for us, and the other days are called working days. But Sunday is called a day of rest or a holiday or a holy day. It is probably translated as holiday, because we celebrate and stand idle on it. The Jews called it Sabbath, but we call it holiday.

143] After this, it has also become customary to call it a holy day; and here it is taken from the text, as it says: You shall keep the Sabbath holy, that is, you shall keep it holy, let it be holy to you. Now this was a gross, outward holiness with the Jews, that they did not work on it, ate and drank differently, dressed differently. Now this is a bad holiness before God, that I need different clothes, food and drink in honor of the Sabbath 2c.

The spiritual holiday, however, is the right Sabbath, which is kept when the heart celebrates the right Sabbath; which is the highest and most spiritual work of this commandment, which comprehends the whole nature of man.

This Sabbath Christ modeled for us in the tomb, where he kept the Sabbath rightly, where he lies in rest and celebration, abstaining from all works. He sees not, he hears not, he sleeps not, he wakes not, he eats not, he drinks not, he dwells not, stirs not tongue nor veins, neither hand nor foot, he stands not, so he walks not.

156 Anyone who wants to keep the true spiritual Sabbath must be completely dead with Christ. No one will keep it rightly, unless he is really dead. But we saw the right

Sabbath here to keep, when our old Adam ceases from all his works, reason, will, desires, lust, which all is dead, and shall hear in the right Sabbath. And everything that is in us shall be divine, as Paul says Gal. 2, 19. 20.: "I died to the law through the law, that I might live to God. I am crucified with Christ. I live, but now not I, but Christ lives in me. For what I live in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God" 2c. This is a proper celebration of Christians. Item, Gal. 6:14: "Through Christ the world is crucified to me, and I to the world." [One has died to the other. The world does not know what I do, and I do not know what the world does; none knows the other, all is dead and pure. But this Sabbath is finally kept only after we have died.

157. If then we live as Paul writes of himself, everything becomes divine, hands and feet, tongue, ears, eyes, body and soul, all thoughts; and whatever I do, I am sure that God will do it in me. When I do my handiwork and work, I know that it is pleasing to God, for it is His divine command. Therefore, if I am certain that it pleases God, it is not my works but God's, for I do them in obedience to God, and do what pleases God, and not what pleases me, do it with my will and with my whole heart. But if I do my own works, and my members, ears, eyes, tongue, hands and feet, heart and thoughts, are directed according to my will and not according to God's will, they are all works that go outside and against faith. Therefore these are the right works of the right Sabbath, which proceed from faith, in obedience and command of God: for God works the right Sabbath.

That is why God was so strict and harsh about the Sabbath in the Old Testament, by which this spiritual Sabbath was signified. For it all happened in one figure, Col. 2, 16. 17. The old Jewish Sabbath was only a shadow compared to the true Sabbath of the Christians, therefore God also had him stoned who picked up wood on the Sabbath, as is written in Deut. 15, 32. 35. But this was done for our sake, so that we might be able to live with

1) Wittenberger: frey.

To be diligent in our celebration and not to do or establish anything without God's word or against God's word, 1) but to do what we do by God's command.

But those who, with their own reason and conceit, fall into idolatry and preach unrighteousness, giving false doctrine under the name of the word of God and the appearance of the word of God, deceive the world and go out fresh, so that they will only be heard; thinking that they have done well, if they only bring something new into the world. But this text here admonishes us to stand idle and beware of such works that are not commanded by God; so, like swine, they plunge in, tear down images, and then boast that God told them to do it, that it was God's word, that it was done by God's command. But it is their own choice, and not God's work, as mentioned above.

[§ 35 ff.] is indicated in the first commandment. God says to us: Keep still, sanctify the Sabbath for me, let me work. If we now choose our work and leave God's command next to it, we are keeping the devil's celebration, not God's.

160 St. Peter, 1 Ep. 4, 11, says: "If anyone speaks, he speaks it as the word of God; if anyone has an office, he does it as from the wealth that God has to offer: Let all your words and works be founded in the word and command of God, and if you are not sure of this, let it be so that you are not harmful to yourselves or to others. Item, St. Paul, how often he indicates that all his works, preaching and teaching are from God's command; as he says Eph. 3, 7: "According to the gift of God's grace, which is given me according to the working of His power." Item, 1 Cor. 15, 10.: "By the grace of GOD am I that I am, and his grace toward me hath not been in vain, but I have wrought much more than they all; not I, but the grace of GOD which is in me." Item, 2 Cor. 13, 3: "Ye seek to know him that speaketh in me, even Christ." Romans 15:17-19: "I can boast through Jesus Christ that I deal in divine things. For I

should not speak anything where the same Christ did not work through me to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and work, by power of signs and wonders, and by power of the Spirit of GOD" 2c.

The holy people were careful not to interfere with anything, because they were sure that God was working in them beforehand; but when they were not sure, they kept quiet with all their doing, singing and saying. This is called the true Sabbath, which the whole world has kept and the devil's celebration has accepted. The pope and all his followers, monks, nuns and priests, have taught only the works of men, and have left the true divine and spiritual works aside, even despised them and considered them heretical, and have spent their lives in their own chosen works and beings.

162. even now, when the true Sabbath was restored through the preaching of the holy gospel, the sects rose up anew, established new works according to their own conceit, and thus tore up the true Sabbath, so that God might not have His work in us.

For if the true Sabbath is to be kept, the old Adam with his arrogance must be subdued and killed, so that nothing happens inwardly in the heart, except God Himself, so that each one may be certain in his state that his deeds please God. A married woman shall be sure in her state that her childbearing, suckling and childbearing are as pleasing to God as if He had spoken to her Himself and commanded her diligently. Thus a maid, when she sweeps the house, cooks, waits on the cattle, shall also have the defiance to keep the Sabbath right, and walk in God's command, if she faithfully carries out what she is commanded. So, in all ranks, one should keep the defiance that God has thrown them into such ranks and works, and each one should let his rank please him, however bad he may be. Then all ranks become equal in faith. For God does not see how great or small your status is, but whether the status pleases you and you accept it as given by God. Therefore, a shepherd can come before God just as well as a

1) "Word" is missing m the Erlanger.

the emperor, and his low, despised status does not hinder him at all.

Therefore, only God's word, command and work should be considered. Therefore, only God's word, command and work should be considered, and only that should be praised and commended; the other should be reproached for everything that goes beyond God's word and command. If a maid waits for cattle, a woman carries children, a man waits for his work, a servant feeds horses, a prince or lord cuts off the head of a bad boy, all of them, each in his own class, may defy God and say, "God has done it.

So also those who curse rightly and by faith can say: God curses you. For so the prophets cursed the wicked, yea, God did it in them. But in this way the prophets cursed: Lord, let them be put to shame, let them stand in disgrace, destroy and smite their counsel and counsel, and all their doctrine, drive them back 2c. So Moses also prays against Korah and his band [Num. 16, 15]: "Lord, do not look at their sacrifice", do not let them continue.

If you notice a work in yourself that God does not work in you, trample it underfoot and ask God to disgrace everything in you that He does not work Himself. And if you could save the whole world with one sermon, and you do not have the command, let it stand, for you will break the Sabbath, and will not please God.

The works that are needed to kill nature and the old Adam are fasting and mortification of the body 2c. Of which, how far and long they are to be used, is dealt with in the booklet of Christian freedom and good works. 1) Of the Sabbath also says the Epistle to the Hebrews in the third, v. 11, and in the 4th chapter, v. 5.

(168) Now this is to be noted, that such Sabbath works are to be done in faith and good assurance of divine grace, that all works may abide in the first commandment and faith, and that faith may exercise and strengthen itself in the same, for the sake of which all other commandments and works are written.

Therefore, see how a beautiful golden ring is made of these three commandments and their values.

1) This refers to Luther's Sermon of Good Works, Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. X, 1298.

The first commandment and faith flow into the third, and the third in turn flows through the other into the first. For the work of the first commandment is to believe, to have a good heart and confidence in God. From this flows the other good work, praising God's name, confessing His grace, and giving Him alone all glory. Then follows the third, worship with prayer, listening to sermons, writing poetry and contemplating God's good deeds, mortifying oneself and forcing one's flesh.

When the evil spirit becomes aware of such faith, God's honor and worship, it rages and begins to persecute, attacking body, property, honor and life, bringing upon us sickness, poverty, disgrace and death, which God also decrees and decrees upon us. Behold then the other work, or the other celebration of the third commandment; by it faith is tried almost as high as gold in the fire. For it is a great thing to have good faith in God, even though He inflicts death, dishonor, sickness, and poverty upon us, and in such a cruel image of wrath to take Him for the most gracious Father; which is done in this work of the third commandment. Suffering then urges faith to call upon God's name and praise in such suffering, and so, through the third commandment, comes again into the other; and through the same calling upon God's name and praise, faith grows, and comes into itself, and so strengthens itself, through the two works of the third and other commandment. And so it goes out into works, and comes back to itself through works; just as the sun rises to its setting, and comes out again 2c.

Thus we have the summa of the first three commandments. In the first is commanded how our heart shall mind God in thought; in the second, how our mouth shall mind God in word; in the third, how we shall mind God in deed. And this is the first and right tablet of Moses, in which these three commandments are described, and govern man on the right side, that is, in the things that concern God, and in which God has to do with man, and he with God, without the help of any creature.

# The other table of Mosi.

The commandments in the other tablet descend to the neighbor, and indicate how one man should behave toward another. Thus follows the first commandment of the other tablet:

**V. 12. You shall honor your father and your mother, that you may live long in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.**

**Summa.**

The first teaches how to behave toward all authorities who sit in God's stead, as they are to honor father and mother, lords and wives 2c. Therein this fourth commandment follows the other first three, which meet God Himself.

**You shall honor your father and your mother, that you may live long 2c.**

174 This addition, that he says, "that you may live long in the land which the Lord your God will give you," also indicates that the Ten Commandments are given to the Jews alone, and not to the Gentiles. For he speaks here to those to whom the land of Canaan was promised; now it is promised only to the Jews, as he teaches afterwards.

This commandment, says St. Paul Eph. 6, 2, is the first one that has a promise from God. He who is obedient to his parents and honors his father and mother will live long and remain in the land. Now you have heard above, in the first commandment, that it also has a promise and a promise, and the other a promise; how then does St. Paul say that the fourth commandment is the first that has a promise from God? Answer: Paul usually lists the commandments in the other table, and not in the first. So also Christ, when he speaks of the love of neighbor, introduces the commandments of the other table. When the scholar asked him what he should do, he said [Matth. 19, 16, 18.]: "You shall honor father and mother, not kill, steal, commit adultery, not bear false witness" 2c., not remembering the first three commandments.

This is the reason for the question: St. Paul is talking about Christians who are now sufficiently instructed in the faith and in what God is doing; and, as is indicated in the first three commandments, who are now already full of the right worship. As if St. Paul wanted to speak: You must not now do more than keep yourselves to your neighbor, as God has kept Himself to you. Now, the first commandments are not fulfilled by works, but by the Spirit of God in the heart. But the faith that they have in God in their hearts, they are to prove outwardly in their works, so that the works show how they stand before God, but so that these works are established by the Spirit in the heart. Thus the New Testament keeps the commandments of the other table; therefore Paul also calls it the first commandment, understood, of the other table, which has a promise, namely, if you honor your father and mother, you shall remain in the land; if not, you shall be cast out of the land.

177. You see how God holds this commandment of the Father and the Mother so high that He makes it almost equal to the first commandment, leading almost such words. For as the first commandment has a promise, namely: He that keepeth it shall obtain mercy unto many thousands of years, 2c. So also this fourth commandment, before the other commandments of the other table, hath its promise unto them that keep it, that they may live long, 2c. So he will have nothing more feared and honored after him than his father and mother.

(178) Secondly, he uses the glorious word, "Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother. "Honor" is not a small word; it does not mean: You shall love your father and your mother, be obedient to them, do them good, or the like, but you shall honor them. But honor extends further than love; therefore God thinks highly of father and mother. For honor is due to God alone. Now he shares the honor with father and mother; therefore there is no greater dominion on earth than the dominion of parents. But it has become common, therefore never respects it.

The world despises it, and soon grows tired and weary of it. Kings, princes and lords also have their honor, wear a golden crown on their heads, a golden scepter in their hands, golden chains on their necks; now they should also be honored, Rom. 13, 7. 1 Petr. 2, 17. and feared. But it is not the same honor as the honor one should show to father and mother.

For the authorities of princes and lords are not pleasant authorities, but fearful, for they are our Lord God's masters, judges and executioners, with whom he punishes the wicked; but father and mother are not so fearful, but quite pleasant. It is written in Rom. 13, 3. ff. about the authorities, that they should ward off the wicked, wild people, and handle the pious; therefore they take money, interest and womb. But father and mother is a gentle, fine, merry authority, they do not take from children, but they dare life and limb, strike into the entrenchment for the sake of the children's belongings, put for them neck and belly and everything they have. Worldly authorities only want to have; they cannot give anything, because the children are of their flesh and blood. The princes and lords cannot boast of such things, for we are not their flesh and blood.

But father and mother, they can boast. As soon as the child is born, it must be nourished by the sweat, flesh and blood of its parents. They toil themselves, care day and night, and there is only love, and no seriousness or anger. For if it were not so sweet, if father and mother did not love the children so warmly, how would they be brought up and nourished? They would have to rot in the dirt. But there is nothing but love, service and benevolence on the part of father and mother; they put their bodies and goods into it, bear care and anxiety; there is nothing but toil and labor day and night for the children; yes, everything must serve the children, property, house and farm, maid and servant.

Thus the authority and power of the parents is separated from the power of the worldly lords. With the parents there is no fear and terror, but pure love. With the authorities

it is not much love, but fear and trembling, Rom. 13:3, 4: "The mighty are to be feared of evil works." Item: "If you do evil, fear; for she does not bear the sword in vain. She is God's servant, an avenger of punishment on him who does evil." This power does not give, it takes from us, so that it could protect the good and punish the evil.

## God is recognized and finely painted in the image of the parents.

Here we should also learn that father and mother are very similar to God in their ministry to the children, and in them the divine and fatherly heart towards us is finely depicted. For in father and mother we can feel and experience how God is disposed towards man. Therefore He is not ashamed of the fatherly name, and Christ, His Son, calls Himself a bridegroom, Matth. 9, 15: "How can the bridegroom's children suffer, as long as the bridegroom is with them?" and Joh. 3, 29: "He who has the bride is the bridegroom" 2c., and calls the community of His believers the bride. And 2 Cor. 11, 2: "I trusted you to a man to bring a pure virgin to Christ"; and those who are born of His bride through preaching and faith are called children of God, Joh. 1, 12. Matth. 6, 9. Rom. 8, 16.

This is now finely painted in marriage. But in the eyes of the world, it is a frivolous thing that despises all these things, for it must remain blind and obdurate, so that it does not see the great wonders and great works of God. If we had nothing else from God but the great, glorious goodness of our parents, in which God shows His goodness, we could not thank God enough for it. But the world does not respect him; [it] is a bad thing to it such a fine, delicious work of God, to be father and mother, to beget children, to wait for them. Yes, our unspirituals turn up their noses at it, when one praises the married state, do not see that the command of God is attached to it. For God commands father and mother to wait for their children, so that we can learn and see, as in a mirror, how God treats us.

that is, as the father's heart is toward his children, so is God's heart toward you.

This is where the common saying comes from, and it is also true: that father and mother can earn heaven and hell from their children, if they preside over them for better or worse. For father and mother must take care and remember to provide the children with food, drink, shoes and clothing in the flesh, and also in the soul, so that they may learn to know God through His word; thus the hungry, thirsty, naked, imprisoned, sick, etc., whom father and mother must provide for, are the souls of the children. Then God makes a hospital out of every householder's house who has children, and sets him up as a hospital master, to take care of his children, to feed and water them, and to preside over them with good teaching and example, so that they may learn to trust God, to believe in Him, to fear Him, and to put their hope in Him, to honor his name, not to swear nor curse, to chasten themselves with prayer, fasting, watch, work, worship, and word, and to celebrate the Sabbath to him, to learn to despise temporal things, to bear adversity with gentleness and patience, and not to fear death, not to love life.

Behold, what great lessons these are. Behold, how many good works thou hast before thee in thy house, in thy children, who have need of all these things, as of a hungry, thirsty, bare, poor, captive, sick soul. What a blessed marriage it would be, if such a married people were together, and thus stood before their little children. Truly, their house would be a real church, a chosen monastery, yes, a paradise. For father and mother become like God here, for they are regents, bishops, pope, doctor, pastor, preacher, schoolmaster, judge and lord. The father has all the names and office of GOD over his children; and just as GOD cares for us, nourishes us, protects and shields us, teaches and instructs us, so also the father teaches the child, nourishes and provides for him.

In the same way, the child could not be closer to its parents, for it is flesh and blood, indeed, the nature of its parents. Therefore, a pious child has no greater confidence in any creature than in its parents, in whom it is so excellently depicted to us how

God is against us, and we are against Him. For as a child takes care of all that is good toward its parents, so a Christian takes care of all that is good toward God; and again, God takes care of a Christian as a father takes care of his child, and even more kindly. A Christian also knows that God cares for him more than all men and creatures, yes, more than he himself.

187 So that the children may know this about their parents, God has commanded them to honor their father and mother. They shall not look at the flesh and blood of their parents alone, for if they look at that alone, they will not find anything delicious in them, and will soon despise the parents; but they shall open their eyes and lift up their faces above flesh and blood, and they will find a wonderful thing in their parents.

For two things must be seen in the parents: first, that they are flesh and blood; second, the jewel that God has attached to the parents, namely his word. For He has thus put them in His word, as in a monstrance, and clothed them with His will. Thus, the parents must now be regarded as bearing the word and the will of God. Just as in the past the pope put the bones of the dead in precious monstrances, in gold, silver, silk, purple and precious stone: this had a great reputation because of such splendor; otherwise it would have remained in contempt, if it had not been so adorned. But the 2) is the right living sanctuary in father and mother. For God has placed his word there, in which is the whole divine majesty. And so it is his divine will that they should be honored; therefore they should not be measured by flesh and blood alone, but by the word of God.

People have run to St. James and other saints, to Rome, to Jerusalem, to Aach, to see the sanctuary; but here no one wants to run to the right sanctuary. Why? It is God's work, therefore one soon gets tired of it; the devil drives us away, flesh and blood do not like it. Because it does not glisten, that is why it is also valid before

1) "in" is missing in the Wittenberger.  
2) Erlanger: da.

of reason. There is one who runs to St. Jacob, who vows to Our Lady; another runs to the monastery, but none has commanded you, but wants you to serve your parents; there you find him, not for the sake of parents, but for the sake of His word.

190. But just as the children despise God's commandment in this, and prescribe special ways for them to serve God, so do the parents. One vows this, the other that; but no one vows to govern and teach his children well, in honor of God; abandons those whom God has commanded him to keep in body and soul, and wants to serve God in another place, of which he has not been commanded. No bishop resists such a perverse nature, no preacher punishes it; indeed, for the sake of avarice they confirm it, and every day they only think up more pilgrimages, elevation of saints, and other such devilish specters.

But if you want to find the right sanctuary, stay at home, whether you are a father or a child; do not run to St. Jacob, to Rome, to Aach, 1) to Our Lady, to the Holy Blood, to the monastery. Look at father and mother, there the word of God will teach you, if you honor father and mother, that you honor not flesh and blood, but God Himself, who has put His word on them. And you parents, if you preside well over your children, you do God great favor, as St. Paul teaches in 1 Tim. 5:4, 8: "Let a widow who has children or nephews learn beforehand that her own household is godly, and repay her forefathers in kind, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. But if anyone does not provide for his own, especially for his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever." If we were not so mad and foolish, and completely hardened, and possessed by the prince of the world, the devil [John 12:31], we could well realize and grasp that these are the right works that come from God's word and command.

These have been the good works of the world until now: to shut oneself up like a wild animal in the monasteries, to count the grains at the paternoster, to wear caps and plates, to put on hard shirts and gray skirts, and to do such monkey business. But no one has been able to see this delicious work of honoring parents and raising children, even though a true Christian is recognized from these works and their like, done in faith. But the world does not want works that are good, but those that shine and are adorned; so it runs to them, giving with both hands. But if a pious and obedient son has walked along in a red or green robe, honoring his father and mother, he has been nothing.

Now it would be necessary to show here how one sins against this 2) commandment, as briefly explained above; but it would be too long. To speak briefly of it: The pope has even nullified and abrogated this 2nd commandment. This is also how it happened with the Jews, as Christ indicates Matth. 15, 3-5. "For your own sins," says Christ, "you have abolished God's law. GOD commanded: You shall honor your father and mother; but he who curses his father and mother shall surely die. But ye say unto the children, that they should say unto their parents: Corban"; that is, if an adult child has money and property, and his father and mother were poor, they would not receive help from their child, then the Pharisees went to it, freshly concluded that it should be given to God and for worship, because it would be better invested than if it were given to the parents. That is nothing else than to prove God wrong.

This is how it happened with us: If one should give father and mother, it was a bad thing; but if one should endow anniversaries, masses for the souls, vigils, carry them to the priests and monks with heaps, help them to their lazy days, that was a spiritually good work, they were our intercessors, lifted us up to heaven. To hell with the good works! The children left their poor parents, who probably needed their help, and ran to the monasteries, pretending that they wanted to serve God. Yes, the devil. Because,

2) Thus the Jena. Wittenberg and Erlangen: that.

3) Jenaer: Essays. The Erlanger again refers to this as a note by Walch.

1) In the editions the comma after "After" is missing. Now there is indeed a vestment of the holy virgin at Aachen, but that there was a special Marian cult there, is not known to us. On the other hand we find with Luther particularly mentioned: gen Lorette zur Alarm, Maria zur Eiche, zur Maria gen Regensburg.

If serving God means leaving father and mother in misery against God's commandment, then it is a strange service to me. Therefore, all monks and nuns are against this commandment, of which enough is written in the booklet of monastic vows. 1)

195. about the punishment of the disobedient children it is written, Deut. 21, 18-21. If any man have a wilful and disobedient son, which will not obey his father's voice, nor his mother's voice, and when they chasten him will not obey them, his father and his mother shall take him, and bring him unto the elders of the city, and unto the gate of the same place, and shall say unto the elders of the city: This our son is wilful and disobedient, and will not obey our voice, and is a taciturn and a drunkard; let all the people of the same city stone him, that he die. "2c.

### What was the honor against the parents?

The first honor to show to father and mother is to be obedient to them, to follow their commandment, as St. Paul says Eph. 6:1: "Children, be obedient to your parents. The other honor, when we have been brought up, and have now become men and women ourselves, where father and mother are lacking, that they are poor, hungry, thirsty, naked, sick and weak, that we reach out to them, help them, serve them with food, drink, clothing and all kinds of necessities, and consider them the greatest sanctuary that is on earth. For honor is not in words and gestures alone, but rather in deeds. It would be a small honor if I took off my hat to my parents and still let them suffer hunger beside it. "Not with words alone (says St. John in his first epistle Cap. 3, 18] we should love, but in deed and in truth," that is, that the work of love should proceed with a will and from a right believing heart. That is, to love with truth and with action. Item, to esteem them great, and to think much of them, and to esteem us quite lowly toward them, that we may know that God is thus well pleased with us.

1) This is the text: "Luthers Urtheil von den geistlichen und Klostergeübden," Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. XIX, 1500.  
2) "against the parents" is missing in the Erlangen edition.

that we should be born of our parents, whether they be of high or low estate, rich or poor; even that which they call us, which is not contrary to God, that we should not think of it otherwise than that it is called and required of us by God. For it is so ordained of God that we have become their sons and daughters. Therefore, we should accept their words and works as if God Himself created them with us. Therefore he does not say, "You shall love them, but you shall honor them.

For honor is greater than love. Love is toward those who are like us; as when two love 3) each other, neither esteems himself higher than the other. But honor is toward a superior, and has a fear with it, lest we offend him whom we honor, and do to him also as to a lord, not for punishment, but that he may love him whom he honors. In the same way, we should not only love our father and mother, but also honor them, hold them in high esteem, and fear them as our overlords, ordained by God.

And no one is exempt here to pay such honor to the parents, be he ever so high. Yes, the emperor, pope, and all cardinals are not above the commandment, because they are not above God. Therefore the pope and emperor are under father and mother, according to this commandment. And Christ also confirms this in Matth. 22, 45, when he says: "If David calls him a Lord, then how is he his son?" As if to say, If he were his lord, the son would be over the father. This does not rhyme. The king's son must still take off his hat before his father, as Solomon also did; even though he was king, 1 Kings 2:19, he stood up and went to meet his mother and worshiped her.

Therefore the parents' authority and rule surpasses all other authorities, the pope's, emperor's, kings', princes' and lords'. It is the highest estate, soaring high above all estates, and the others are but pieces and patches against it; indeed, all estates come from it. But because we all have father and mother, the rank has become a mean, despised thing; not much is thought of it, as

3) Erlanger: an einander Lieb.



God's works happen; if they become mean, one soon tires of them, seeks only what is new and strange.

Now, such honor should not only be done to the parents by bowing the head and taking off the hat, although this is also strange now, but with all the heart. For God does not say: Your hand, mouth, tongue or knee should honor father and mother, but "you". But what is "you?" "You" does not mean your hand, tongue, heart, body or soul, but all of this in heaps with your whole being and nature, how you walk and stand, body and soul, sense and wit, what is on, off and in you.

201. How, if they command something against God, shall I obey? No, God is excepted; we shall not obey if they command against the commandments of the first tablet; they shall have the preference. Then shall the son say unto his father, We have a God more than thou. I will gladly be obedient to you, as long as it is not against God, as Peter says Apost. 5, 29: One must be more obedient to God than to men. It would be fine if it were so in the world that children honored their parents, but if the children do not want to obey, God commands the parents to be ruthless. And where they are not strong enough, God has given them a helper to punish the naughty, naughty children, namely, the secular authorities; as God commanded in the Old Testament, Deut. 21, 18-21, as indicated above [§ 195].

**God indicates through the Ten Commandments  
what He thinks of the race.**

Now we can see what God thinks of us, that he gives us such commandments that we should not have strange gods, that we should not use his name uselessly, that we should keep his Sabbath holy. That we may know that we are suspect in his sight; yea, he thinks no more of us than that we are desperate wretches in skin, full of idolatry, blaspheming and profaning his name, and breaking the Sabbath. For if he thought us pious, what should he command us to do? But he lets such a rumor

go out from us, makes us sing and say that we are such fine, pious children, who do not know their own Father, their God and Creator, yes, despise him, [and revile and disgrace [him] in the very highest.

It is annoying that he spares no one, that he does not spare the Pharisees and scribes, nor our monks and priests, the holy, pious people; lets the judgment go straight over kings and emperors, popes, cardinals, princes and lords. 2c, sings and says of them that they do not know God, that they do not love God, but that they are desecrators and blasphemers, yes, that they are also murderers, death-rowers, and rascals in the skin; why does he not spare the holy people? He does not desire it. He does not say it to me and you alone, but to all people: "Honor father and mother." He knows what is in us.

Therefore he comes before us, frightens us with his commandments, so that he shows what he thinks of us. It is a great defeat; we may well become ashamed. If someone said to me: "Dear friend, honor your father and mother, do not break your marriage, do not steal; dear friend, do not hit your father and mother; I should soon accept it with displeasure, I should say: Are you mad, who do you take me for? Now God does not think us better. Shouldn't we be displeased with God, that he deals with us so seriously, considers us disobedient, murderers and thieves 2c.? Oh, dear Lord God, do you not think more of me than that I should be such a one as sleeps with another's wife, standing by another's goods 2c.? If we were serious about what God meant by this, we would find 1) nothing else, but that God considers us desperate boys. As we all are, we do not keep His commandments, none excepted; for God has decided us all under sin, Rom. 11, 32. Gal. 3, 22.

So the Ten Commandments are a mirror in which we see what kind of people we are. Yea, saith thou, I will keep the ten commandments well; I will not take from any man his own, neither will I kill, neither will I lie with my wife, neither will I deceive, neither will I lie 2c. Well, dear one, we are not talking here about outward doing or not doing, but that you do what is right.

1) Erlanger: find.

the commandments of God require, or refrain from what they forbid, with a whole, pure heart. Thou mayest say, I will honor my father and mother; yea, thou mayest honor them, but not farther than it pleaseth thee, and because it is good for thee, and [thou] profitest by it. But when father and mother are ruined and have nothing, and you are rich, when they are sick and you are well, then it is when you are to provide them with clothing, food and drink, when you are to bear their old age, weakness and unwillingness, that you will realize how you will honor them from the heart. Then the common saying will be fulfilled, that a father can more easily feed ten children than ten children can feed one father.

There is an example told of a father who gave his children all his goods, house, farm, fields and meadows, and all his provisions, and said to his children that they would feed him. When he had been with a son for some time, the son was tired of him and said, "Father, when will you go to my brother? When he had been with the other son for a while, he got tired of him and sent him to his sister. She soon had enough of him. So the good old father was completely worthless and badly taken care of. When he was about to die, he sent for an old box, put a sealed letter in it, and called all his children to him, as if he wanted to give them a will and a treasure. The children came and were all obedient. But they did not mean the father. When he died, they found a letter that said: No father shall hand over his property to his children, or give up his staff, because he can hold it himself. Therefore it is lost. As these have done, so do all.

Therefore no one keeps this and other commandments, nor can anyone keep them. For if we could keep it, God would not have commanded it; but because he commands it, it is a sign that no one honors his father and mother. It is commanded, but father and mother are well aware of how the children keep it. Therefore remain unsworn, keep your goods, and do not look the children in the mouth 2c. One can find children who honor their father and mother because they do not need help, but if they have to help them, they do not do so.

If there is no one at home, the honor is already over. Know then that by nature all children disobey their father and mother. Now if a child is to honor his father and mother from the bottom of his heart, as this commandment requires, it must be by the grace of the Holy Spirit; nature cannot do it.

Now parents deserve so much ingratitude for their disobedient children that some say they are doing well: "The devil should take a wife and beget children, if it happens that way. For if father and mother work and make it sour for them, and bring up their children in toil and labor, and risk life and limb for them, what do they earn thereby? Nothing else but, when they grow old, that the children do not grant them life, would rather that they were dead, that they came into the goods. Is this not a shameful, annoying thing, that the children do not grant their parents life? O world, you noble child! You should be crowned for being so grateful. Canst thou not do good to those from whom thou hast all good, yea, life? Whom should you do good to? They have served you and fed you for twenty, thirty, forty years, and you cannot serve them and feed them for two weeks? Fie on you, you shameful world, can't you do anything good to your father and mother who raised you from the dirt, who are you going to do it to?

209] So it is with other commandments, Thou shalt not kill. 2c. But if thou sayest, I will not slay any man. Yea, because thou canst enjoy thy neighbor, do not thou against him: but if he touch thee, tell how thou art disposed against him; then search thine own heart, and thou shalt find that thou art a murderer and a slayer. For if thou hate thy brother, thou art a murderer, as John saith, 1 Ep. 3:15: And though thou kill him not with thy fist, yet thou grudge him life; and if it be evil in his sight, thou laughest with thy fist. This is innate in us; nature, reason and free will can do nothing but kill 2c. There is a murderer, a bloodhound, in all men; in you as well as in me, that thus

No one is found righteous in the sight of God; indeed, we are all like evil-doers, and though our fist be still, yet the fault is in our heart. For that which is born of the flesh is flesh [John 3:6]. Therefore we see clearly in the ten commandments, as in a mirror, what God would have of us, namely, that we are knaves in the flesh, and his judgment is not lacking.

We have now heard enough in the fourth commandment about how to honor father and mother, and what this commandment contains and teaches, so that it is clear that God is very concerned that this obedience to father and mother should continue. And where this does not happen, there are no good customs, nor good government. For where obedience is not kept in the home, it will never be possible for a whole city, country, principality or kingdom to be well governed. For there is the first regiment, from which all other regiments and dominions have their origin. Where the root is not good, neither stem nor good fruit can follow.

For what is a city but a heap of houses? How could a whole city be governed, where there is no rule in the houses, where neither child, servant nor maid is obedient? Item, a whole country, what is it but a heap of cities, markets and villages? Now, where the houses are evil governed, how can a whole country be well governed? Yes, there must be nothing else out of it but vain tyranny, sorcery, murder, thievery, disobedience. For a principality is a heap of countries and counties, a kingdom a heap of principalities, an empire a heap of kingdoms. These are all spun out of single houses. Where father and mother rule badly, they leave their children to their will of courage, and there neither city, market, village, country, principality, kingdom nor empire can be ruled well and peacefully. For the son becomes a householder, a judge, mayor, prince, king, emperor, preacher, schoolmaster 2c.; where he has been brought up badly, the subjects become like the lord, the limbs like the head.

For this reason, God has made it most necessary to rule well in the house. For where the rule of the house is good and

The one who walks righteously is well advised to the other. Cause, because we see that the whole human race comes from it. For it pleased God that the whole race should come from father and mother. He could well make men out of stone and wood, yes, children of Abrahama, as St. John the Baptist says, Matth. 3, 9; but he does not want to do it, but he wants one to come from the other. Therefore he also creates children for us, and gives them to be obedient to their parents, and us to bring them up and keep them for the best. For what good would we be to God if we did not do this? For this reason he has implanted children in us so closely that he does not spin them out of stone or wood, but out of our own flesh and blood; so that the honor and obedience of the children toward their parents, and the care, effort and great diligence of the parents toward the children, may be the more heartfelt and willing. If we do not govern, train and teach children well who come from our flesh and blood, how would we take care of them if they were made of stone or wood?

For this reason, parents see to it that, according to God's command, they preside over their children well, and do so promptly in the first place, because they still allow themselves to be pulled, bent and guided, and do not wait until they grow up and become hardened in their will, or wait 2) until they come into the hands of other people. For one must not think that other people's children are as close to one's heart as one's own; and even if it happens at times, it still happens very seldom, so that among a hundred children there is hardly one that one takes as warmly as if it were one's own, physical child. If the children cannot govern themselves (as we see when father and mother are absent from the children, how they walk around so miserable and without 3) knowledge, and no one takes care of them properly), then God had to put such a hard commandment 4) on them.

1) "not" is missing in the Wittenberger.  
2) "oder erharren" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Jena.  
3) In the Jena: "weislos" - without instruction, "waislos" will probably be as much as: orphaned. The former reading seems to us to deserve preference. (See § 214: "no one to instruct them properly.")  
4) Erlanger: also vonnöthen.

214. We also see that a greater fault and defect in parents than in children is that they are disobedient and ill-bred. For parents are neglectful, and do not give diligence to their children; and such parents are not worthy that their children should prosper. Now the commandment is there that parents should bring up their children in the fear of God, but where are the parents who do this? They do this, that they love and bring up their children according to the course of this world, as they should send themselves into the world; but according to the soul, in the fear of God, there is no one who instructs and teaches them rightly. Just look at the way they are taught, what schools are thought to be throughout the country. There is no one who teaches his children to pray properly and to do the things that belong to salvation. So no one wants to dare so much that his children would be educated, taught and instructed by other people.

There are some animals that eat their own young and spoil their own fruit. So are such men who do not teach and instruct their children. Indeed, there is no animal on earth that is so hard on its young as a human being, if we look at it in terms of the soul. Therefore, they would be worthy if God were not so pious and defended the parents from the children, so that the children would throw the parents over their heads, even beat them to death, because they have so little respect for them and do not teach and instruct them well.

The fact that the parents' rule still goes on a little, and the children are still a little obedient to them, does not come from our merit, but is the grace of God, who gives them this for abundance, and, like other gifts, throws it into the rapture; otherwise it should all go to ruin, as the devil takes pleasure in throwing it all into a heap and beating it into a lump.

The children grow up, they are not powerful of themselves, but are under the hand of the parents; if they do not do the best with them, nothing good comes out of them. What then is the fault? Is it the children? What can they do about it! That is why father and mother should think about

To keep them, to train, instruct and teach them diligently, not only in the worldly way, but also in spiritual things that pertain to the salvation of souls.

But what shall I say much? How shall they teach and instruct the children much 1) in spiritual things, if they do not teach them 2) how to live outwardly in the presence of the wager, how to keep house 2c. It does not happen, because it is a commandment of God. The devil has captured the hearts and leads them as he pleases; therefore the world remains full of wolves, bears, lions and unreasonable, wild animals.

219. But righteous men see well what God wants indicated by the rule and obedience of parents, namely, that father and mother are bishops, popes, doctors, emperors, princes and lords in their houses. Therefore a father should punish his child like a judge, teach like a doctor, preach to him like a priest or bishop. If a father does this, he can stand before God; if he does not, he will receive his reward from God in due time. For, as was said above [§ 184], father and mother can earn the kingdom of heaven from their children. So again, may parents not earn hell more easily than by their own children, in their own house, where they neglect them and do not teach the things as has been said. What good would it do if they fasted to death, prayed, and did all the works, and yet failed to do what they were commanded by God? God will not ask them about these things on Judgment Day, but about the children He has commanded them.

220. But it should be noted, as is said in other commandments, that this work must also be done in the main work, namely, in faith. For discipline and teaching to keep children is nothing in itself before God, unless it is done in faith, so that the person does not doubt that it pleases God that the parents had the children for the best, and let such a work be no other than an admonition and training of his faith to trust God and to do everything in his power.

1) "much" is missing from Erlanger.

2) "they" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Jena.

To provide good things for him, without which faith no work is living, good and pleasant. For many pagans have brought up their children nicely and honestly before the world, but all was lost because of unbelief, as Paul says Rom. 14, 23: "What does not come from faith is sin"; and again: "To those who love God, all is well", Rom. 8, 28.

Now this is a glorious commandment. Though it is small in words, it is powerful in deed, for the whole world is governed by the commandment. For if this regiment of parents were taken away, 1) it would be done with the whole world; for without the regiment it cannot stand. Whoever then is in this regiment is commanded a great office. This St. Paul can finely emphasize and exalt, since he says [1 Cor. 11:7], "The woman is the man's honor." For God has commanded a man to rule his wife and children, not that a man should exalt himself and take pleasure in it, but that it is a good command from the divine majesty, therefore the man is honorable. 2) For the man is honorable, not that he should exalt himself and take pleasure in it, but that it is a good command from the divine majesty, therefore the man is honorable. 3) He who does not have a wife and child does not have this honor and office. Thus he also speaks of the man as having the honor of God, that is, as being under the authority of God, and is ruled by God. As the man is under God, so the woman is under the man. Thus the Scriptures everywhere praise and extol the conjugal state; but with us it is contemptible. Therefore we are swine, and remain swine, and do not see what God wants and commands. This is how parents should behave towards their children, and children towards their parents.

From the parents the rule comes to the secular authorities. For as parents have power over their children and household at home, so the authorities have power over a whole community. The parents establish justice and peace in the home; the authorities establish peace and justice in a whole community and in all places. Therefore

It is also the office of the authorities to be a father, to do good to all men, to show kindness, and to do neither violence nor injustice to anyone. Therefore they have also in the Hebrew language the name Nedibim [XXXXX] of beneficence; and in the 51st Psalm, v. 14, the Holy Spirit is called a princely spirit, that is, which can do nothing but beneficence, as should be the office of princes; and Christ [Luc. 22, 25] calls them beneficos, gracious lords, also of beneficence. But how secular authorities should behave toward their subjects, and the subjects toward their authorities, is sufficiently indicated in the booklet of secular authorities, 4).

223 This also includes the obedience of the spirit, the workers and day laborers to their masters, wives, masters and mistresses, of which Paul tells Titum Cap. 2, 9. Col. 3, 22. and St. Peter 1. Ep. 2, 18.

### **The fifth commandment, or the other commandment 5) of the other tablet.**

#### **V. 13. You shall not kill.**

##### **Summa of this commandment.**

The other commandment of the other tablet teaches how one should behave toward one's equal or neighbor, for the sake of one's own person, so that one does not offend it, but rather, where it is allowed, promotes and helps it.

#### **You shall not kill.**

The first commandment in the other table is to honor father and mother, and is therefore the closest to the commandments concerning God; and therefore goes to the first table, because in the fourth commandment is understood the authority, which is in God's stead, as Paul Rom. 13, 2. indicates: "Whoever resists the authority, resists God's order. In the first three commandments one sins against God; in the first commandment of the other table one sins against the authorities, which God Himself ordered and instituted, Gen. 9:6, and Christ and Paul did not abolish them, but confirmed them.

4) St. Louis edition, vol. X, 374.

5) "Commandment" is missing in the Erlanger.

1) Erlanger: away is.

2) In the Jenaer and in the Erlanger: "sichs" -----sich deß. Wittenberg: sich.

3) In the Wittenberg and in the Jena: ehereich.

Now, the commandments that follow do not apply to the authorities, but to our equals and to our neighbors. We all lack and despise this, like other commandments, and do not believe that God speaks it, and that God is serious; we regard it as if a loose talker had said it. Therefore they remain commandments, because the natural man does not understand the things concerning the spirit [1 Cor. 2:14]. Therefore no man keeps the commandments unless he is a Christian and enlightened by the Spirit of God.

227 Thus the fifth commandment reads: "Thou shalt not kill," and applies to our neighbor's person. There we see once what God thinks of us, how much good he has in mind for us, what he has in mind with this commandment: "Thou shalt not kill. He thus remembers: I have wild, unreasonable, mad, raging beasts in the world, wolves, bears, lions, 2c., therein I must shut them up, bar them, grate them with iron bars, and close them with strong walls, lest they choke one another and do great harm. For if God did not have the care, what would He have the commandments to give? God knows our heart and nature well, that murder is innate in our flesh; therefore He also gives this commandment that we should know ourselves; He is concerned that we strangle one another like mad, raging dogs, wolves and bears; He therefore considers us to be desperate boys who strangle and murder one another. And the history, which Moses describes after Adam, is about murder and death, how one brother strangles the other.

228. Now go, dear man, boast, we want to be holy. [We boast of our reason, wisdom and free will; but what does God think of us? This is what He thinks of us, that we are all murderers and slayers, none excepted. And if God acts like a mayor or a prince, when he hears that some threatening words pretend that they want to do harm, to break in at night, then he lets watch and guard, so that they are resisted. So God does not do us any good, but considers us all to be murderers; therefore he commands us not to kill.

229. But it is annoying that God speaks into the community and excludes no one, lets the judgment go over all people, over pious and evil, poor and rich, high and low class, be it prince, lord or servant [Rom. 11, 32. Gal. 3, 22.]. He would have spared the holy people, the Pharisees. But he spares no one, he exempts no man, he strikes them all, and throws them all into one heap. As if he wanted to say: They are all boys, murderers and death thrower, it is none, he has a bloodhound in his bosom. This is now a short decision: as we are all at once disobedient father and mother, so we are also all at once murderers. Now learn what the world is like for a child; which the ten commandments show very well, in which you see, as in a mirror, what we are like outside and inside.

But you say: 2) I do not want to kill, murder, or strike anyone dead; I would also not like to harm a child. Well, my dear, if one does what you would like, because one smiles at you kindly and calls you dear friend, then you are well pious; but if one does you wrong, if one takes you by surprise, if one is angry with you, then it is found, then one will see your patience well, you should soon hit one in the mouth, yes, strangle, if it would be without danger for you. What is the cause? Your evil nature, in which you were born, God sees it in you, who is a searcher of hearts [1 Chron. 29:9], therefore he has given this commandment. But if thou couldst have a sweet heart toward thine enemy, and grant him all good, and no evil, if he enrage and provoke thine heart to anger, thou mayest boast: I do not kill. But where is one who does? No one does. For you can be kind to your neighbor so far as he does you no harm. If he does you harm, your friendship toward him is already over, and you cannot refrain from sinning against this commandment. You kill him; if you do not do it with your fist, you do it with your heart.

1) Erlanger: er.

2) The words: "I will ... todtschlagen" are missing in the Wittenberger.

Therefore it is not enough that you are not a murderer outwardly. For even if the hand remains still, the reason of the heart is poisoned, because you do not begrudge your enemy anything good, you laugh into your fist when he is bad, when he is ill, corrupt or dies; and when he is well, you do not begrudge him. All this is called murdering and killing. And this beautiful virtue is in the heart of all people by nature.

Therefore, as I have said, the Ten Commandments are given to us, that we may learn to know ourselves, what pious children we are, and what herbs our hearts are, and what God thinks of us, that we may be ashamed in our hearts and afraid of ourselves, when we see in the Ten Commandments, as in a mirror, that we are all idolaters, blasphemers of God's name, disobedient to our parents, murderers and bloodhounds.

233 Christ interprets this commandment, Matth. 5, 21. 22. when he says: "You have heard that it was said to the ancients: You shall not kill. But whosoever killeth shall be guilty of judgment. But I say unto you: Whosoever is angry with his brother is guilty of judgment." There Christ shows that you sin against this commandment, not only if you kill someone with your fist, but also if you are angry with your neighbor. And Christ makes several degrees and distinctions of anger. First, do not be angry in heart; second, do not show anger with signs or gestures; third, do not rebuke with words; and fourth, keep silent with your fist.

No one is exempt, but we all become guilty. For although the fist, the mouth and other limbs keep still, the heart is full of anger, envy and hatred. All these are found among us. If each one looks into his heart, he must not be shown much scripture; his own conscience will tell him and convince him that he is guilty in this. It is evident from our outward fruits and conduct what kind of companions we are; no one can ignore another's word; how then can he be kind to his enemy with all his heart?

## The third commandment of the other tablet.

### V. 14. You shall not commit adultery.

#### Summa.

The third commandment of the second tablet teaches how to treat one's neighbor's most valuable possession as one's own person, that is, one's legitimate spouse, child or friend, so that one does not disgrace them but keeps them in honor.

#### You shall not commit adultery.

This is a great and beautiful honor that God bestows upon the world, namely, that it is a stable full of adulterers and adulteresses! God deserves it from us that we should become enemies of Him, because He thus disgraces us, scorns us and reviles us, and does not exempt anyone from this, not even our monks, even if they had vowed chastity once again. There you see that God does not trust us to have a husband who would let himself be pleased with his wife 1) and again, a wife who would let herself be pleased with her husband. It should still annoy one, if one peeled him an adulterer, and said to him: Dear, keep your marriage, don't go to another man's wife, don't disgrace his daughter, and so on; 2) if it would be a pious man. He should soon speak: What do you consider me to be, do you consider me to be such? But God does not spare any of us; in this commandment he scolds all of us as adulterers and adulteresses at the same time; he wants to show what kind of companions we are.

So this commandment is also a book of blasphemy and a title of shame; reproach us all, no one excepted, that we are whoremongers; though we are not so publicly before the world, yet we are so in our hearts, and if we had space, time, place and opportunity, we would all break the marriage. The species is implanted in all people; none is exempt, whether man or woman, old or young, they all lie ill in this spital. And this plague does not cling to us like a red skirt, so that we could get rid of it.

1) Erlanger: Weibe.

2) Wittenberger: and so on. Erlanger: forthrightly from. Jenaer: before from.

1) or put away, but we brought it from our mother's womb, and it has passed through our skin and flesh, marrow and bone, and through and through all our veins. Are there not many who do not fornicate, but lead a good life? Well, my dear, I do not say of the doing, but of the kind. God does not allow Himself to be mimicked by works; the Scriptures call Him a knower of the heart [1 Kings 8:39], He sees deeper than we do.

That some are pious and do not sin against this commandment is judged by his divine grace, or by Master Hans with the sword and the whisk, 2) who 3) puts a fear into them, so that they publicly avoid such sin; if this were not the case, we would probably reveal what is in our hearts, and thus live like some pagans who have not punished fornication outside of marriage. Thus God says: "You shall not commit adultery," but you shall be chaste; as if he wanted to speak: You are all of the kind that are fornicators and adulterers, one as the other.

Because the species is in us, God has permitted every man to take a wife, and every woman to have her husband, so that fornication and adultery may be avoided [1 Cor. 7:2.]. For this vice is very widespread in the whole world, like a great fire, neither sword nor spirit helps. Therefore it is very necessary to punish such sin externally and not to allow it to be a warning to others. And the rulers should diligently strive for this and not be negligent in this.

(240) Our reason tells us that fornication, adultery and other sins are wrong. For every man's own heart tells him to honor his father and mother, because we come from them, and have flesh and blood from them; [they] risk life and limb for our sake, lay up all their goods and chattels for us. So also nature teaches us 4) that we should murder no one, not be our own judges. And summa, in nature all these commandments are written; but we are so mad and so 5) full of blindness that we do not obey them.

not see nor recognize. So also nature teaches us that we should not defile anyone's wife or children. For nature says, Do not do to others what you would not have done to you [Matt. 7:12]. Now no one wants his wife and child to be violated, so let your neighbor's wife and child be unviolated.

But when one comes into the heat, one forgets everything, law, nature, scripture, books, God and His commandment, there is only a pure request to atone for evil desire.

**The fourth commandment [of the other tablet].**

**V. 15. You shall not steal.**

**Summa.**

The fourth commandment of the second tablet teaches how to treat one's neighbor's temporal goods, so that one does not take away or hinder them, but promotes them.

**You shall not steal.**

243 There comes another large register, from which no one is exempt; the smallest part of the thieves is hanged with the rope. For if all thieves in the world were to be hanged, where would one get enough ropes? One could not get enough of them; all belts and straps would have to be made into ropes.

**The order of the commandments of the outer table.**

Now notice the order of the commandments of the other table. The first concerns the authorities. The other concerns the person of the neighbor: Thou shalt not injure thy neighbor in his own person. The third concerns the persons belonging to your neighbor, as: Thou shalt not ravish thy neighbor's housewife, daughter, sister, maid 2c. The fourth concerns the goods of your neighbor, that you do not steal them from him, nor do you destroy them.

This commandment shows us once again what God thinks of us, namely, that we are all thieves, none excepted, before God and before the world. But since the theft remains to a certain extent, this is the reason that one has to be careful before the executioner and the

1) Erlanger: to strike out.  
2) Wittenberger: stäupe und besem.  
3) "the" is missing in the Erlanger.  
4) In the editions: lernet.  
5) "so" is missing in the Jena.



The thief fears the gallows; also, where God's grace and the Holy Spirit dwells, there is no sin against this commandment; otherwise the thief lies buried in the heart, and where God does not hold, or the executioner does not shrink, then the thief goes out into the work, to the utmost.

246 But thou shalt not think that it is only stealing when thou doest thy neighbor his own; but when thou seest thy neighbor in need, hungry, thirsty, without lodging, shoes, or raiment, and dost not help him, thou stealest as well as when one stealeth money out of another's purse or casket; for thou owest to help him in his need. For your goods are not yours; you alone are appointed as a guardian to distribute them to those who need them. Therefore those who have goods belong to the round table and to this great register, in which thieves are written, and they do not give to those who need it; 2) they do not take care of their neighbor's need, they pass by.

Therefore there is seldom a rich man who is not a thief in this case, even a great thief; there would have to be a great rope to hang such great thieves. But there are not too many such thieves, for the common man does not have such great goods as the rich, great merchants, who only scrape, scrape, and scrape the poor, collecting great treasures. These are the right and greatest highwaymen, they are not hanged on gallows, but are honored by everyone, they sit on top; but they will not escape the gallows, the devil himself will become master of them, he will tie them up in hell so that they will not escape him.

But the petty thieves who steal scarcely ten pennies must flutter. The Romans, who were wise and prudent people, were well aware of this. For one of them, called Cato, said: "The petty thieves are hanged on gallows, but the great thieves go in in handcuffs. Another wise man said: "The law is like a spider's web; if the petty thieves are hanged, they are hanged.

- 1) Thus the Jenaer. Wittenberg: reien; Erlangen: Reihen.
- 2) Erlanger: they.

If flies get into it, they have to hold out, but if the large bumblebees get into it, they drive through it and tear the spider's web with force. And it is truly so; for if a poor man has stolen barely five pennies, he must hang. Only to the gallows with him, there no pleading helps, 3) there the law is strict. But those who toil and scrape day and night, as usurers, deceive and lie, sell wicked goods, give false measurements, are called mercy junkies, who would have deserved thirty times more to be hanged on the gallows than the petty thieves. But they will be hanged more shamefully than if they were hanged by the executioner.

249. item, who sit in a city or town, as brewers, wine taverns, fishermen, butchers, tailors, shoemakers and all craftsmen 2c. [There is seldom one among them who does not carry a thief in his bosom. He gives false measures, the other has false weights, cubits 2c., 4) he cheats his neighbor otherwise, the other so. With his false, small goods, each one does as he pleases. And even if some abstain, 5) the way is there; where they could or might, they also lead out. It is the same with the merchants. There is not one of them who could escape from the thief. Behold, whether any of them have conscience or reason? They sell their goods according to their liking, and still want it to be right; they also say: It is my property, I may deal with it as I please. Praise yourself, cuckoo, with your song; one can hear by your cry what kind of bird you are.

The farmers who come to the market can do it well. If someone brings rotten, stinking eggs or nasty cheese to the market, he is more proud of it than someone with stuff worth several hundred guilders. Another comes with other humbug, and cannot make himself disgusted enough with it. No one thinks that such is thievery; indeed, one thinks that it is an art to handle with knowledge of advantage in our dealings, and thus to deceive our neighbor. But thou shalt not be a-

- 3) Wittenberger and Erlanger: Prayer.
- 4) "Elle 2c." alone in the Jena.
- 5) Wittenberg and Erlanger: they.

think that you would be excused by this; you are both a thief, where you use such trickery, as if you had stolen it from someone's bag. You know that you do not act right, because your conscience punishes you. And yet you do not want to be a thief; yes, you let other people call you a pious, honest and upright man, sometimes you give a penny to a poor person for the sake of God, so that it shall be paid. But it will be otherwise. You may have a good praise and name before the world, but see how you are before God. Let princes and their rulers see to it that a remedy is found for it. 2c.

251 We can see how it was done in those days, how they traded with the grain; everyone gave it only as he pleased, so the poor had to buy it as much as they offered, because they had to eat. This is not considered theft. Yes, such sellers boast 1) even more, and say: I have now gained so much. Rather, what you gain from it, grease your shoes with it. Item, such fellows, when one leads a thief to the gallows, laugh into their fist and say: It serves him right; forgetting themselves that they are greater thieves than he, and deserve to hang better than he.

252 This is what is said about gross, outward theft, which can be grasped and is seen daily before one's eyes; that is, that there is seldom a man 2) who does not carry a thief in his bosom and is a thief in the eyes of the world. And this vice is more common and more running in the world than adultery or murder. For because murder and adultery are punished, they are not so much more prevalent than such usury and petty thievery. For every man may sell his own as he pleases, without any penalty; so it goes on and on, and there is no end of cheating. But the authorities should see to it that this is done properly, and punish those who deceive the poor in this way. But those who should punish are themselves criminal in this; that is why no crow scratches out the eye of another.

1) Erlanger: they.  
2) Wittenberger and Erlanger: be.

Now God allows this to happen, but he can bring it back again, namely, he can delight those who have been deceived, and punish those who have wrongfully obtained it, with their neighbor's harm. For when one has long plowed and gathered, another comes and consumes it, and kills it uselessly. It also happens as one sees and experiences before one's eyes. How often does it happen that someone is so rich that he does not know the end of his wealth, and yet it is so soon dispersed and flies away that one does not know where it goes. Hence a common saying has come from such daily experience: De male quaesitis non gaudet tertius haeres, evil gained good does not come to the third heir; and: Male partum male disperit, 3) evil gained, evil devoured.

So you see that God considers us all to be thieves; if we are not all thieves outwardly, we are not thieves at heart. For he who covets his neighbor's goods is a thief in the sight of God, as the last two commandments show. But that we do not all go out with the deed and steal, that Junker Henker repels with the rope; he is a fine man, makes many pious children. For many more do not steal for fear of the gallows than for love and piety.

255 So this is not only theft, when one breaks into houses at night and secretly takes one's possessions by night, but also any damage or loss that is done to one's neighbor's good, whether by buying, selling, working, or unlawful trade, so that theft is a common vice in the whole world, and those who cannot accomplish it by deed do it with their thoughts; but those who have room do it with their fists. Today there is a great deal of fraud in buying and selling by all craftsmen, all of whom are engaged in great thievery. We can do no more than preach against it, but the secular authorities must prevent it and do so in earnest. But the heart remains full of thievery, unless God enlightens the heart in a special way. The judge will not force it; God, however, who is

3) In the issues: (Usxsrit.

is a right judge [Ps. 7:12], can repay finely, as said above.

But how is one to resist it? No one can resist the heart, but God alone through His grace. But outwardly it would be good, and indeed necessary, that a proper order be established in a city, and that such racketeering and scraping be stopped, so that the poor man could come to it. Where the merchants or craftsmen would not allow themselves to be instructed, I would give such advice that a mayor would summon the butchers, bakers, brewers, taverns, etc. before him and admonish them to handle the matter properly and to sell their goods without falseness, and to do so in such a way that it would not end up with their children. For if they would thus toil and scrape, let them know that God will not allow such unrighteous, wickedly obtained goods to prosper, nor to benefit their descendants, as is said above. For as it comes, so it goes again.

257. Where such counsel and faithful exhortation would not help, but the people would strut and defy according to their pleasure, it should be done, as is the custom and usage in some cities, that an honest, pious man be charged, to whom a council would advance two or three hundred guilders, so that he would provide a whole city with meat or bread, and the council would allow him to slaughter alone in the city, so that such proud fellows would be humiliated and not strut like that, as we have to hear and experience. One could teach them mores in this way, so that they would not say so defiantly: If you do not want it, leave it.

258 So if one had to go along with other craftsmen, who wanted to strut in the same way and thump a whole community, then others would be careful and not say so defiantly: One must have it well. Because they are allowed their courage, 1) they do it with their craft according to all their liking, toil and scrape without any shyness, and still think that they are in the right. I ask you: Are you not a worse thief, if you do your will with your selling, than a public highwayman?

1) Erlanger: lets her courage.

Yes, of course; one can beware of such a one and flee him, or defend oneself against him; in addition, the same highwayman stands all hours in danger of his life, because if he is seized, he must be held up; but no one can beware of you. For this you are in no danger, but live, grow and steal without fear, and on top of that you want to be called an honest man. Therefore you are a thief and robber, yes, much worse than a tramp. Remember your conscience and your soul's salvation. 2)

259 This, then, is a broad commandment, to which all men are guilty. Therefore let every man take heed how he acts. For even if one does not steal by pointing fingers at him, it is sufficiently said how broad this commandment is, and how the whole world sins against it.

**The fifth commandment [of the other panel].**

**V. 16. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

**Summa of this commandment.**

The fifth commandment of the other tablet teaches how to behave toward one's neighbor's temporal honor and good report, so that one does not weaken them, but rather protects and preserves them.

**You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

This commandment is to be understood primarily from the way things are done in court, and springs from theft. And just as the other commandment of the other tablet forbids harm to the body, the third to the person belonging to your neighbor, the fourth to the good of your neighbor, that you do not translate it or preach it: so this fifth commandment forbids harm to the honor and name of your neighbor, that 3) no one should injure or damage his name.

This commandment springs from the previous three. For if a man is wounded in his body, in his persons belonging to him, he is wounded in his body.

2) "und Seelen Seligkeit" is missing in the Erlanger.  
3) "man" is missing in the Wittenberger.

and his good, then quarrels and disputes arise, and most of all about the good. And this happens in the whole world where the Holy Spirit does not dwell.

As all men are thieves and adulterers, so are they guilty of this commandment. Because the transgression of this commandment is so great, public courts must be held to prevent it from becoming worse. Therefore this commandment is good for the innocent, lest violence and injustice be done to him in the courts.

Therefore, in such a case, both parties should be questioned publicly, and the innocent should not be wronged or allowed to be wronged, neither should gifts be taken, nor should friendship or favor be considered. But vice is common in the world, and is in full swing. People take goods and money and turn right into wrong. It is also rare to find a pious prince, judge or jurist who does not stumble in it, indeed, who does not become a knave over it. For more attention is paid to the great, mighty merchants than to the poor people.

It requires great courage and a bold man who, in this case, can rightly 1) execute his office. For where God's grace does not dwell in a judge, he never does his office sufficiently, falls to his friend and good patron, or otherwise to a great man; thus sees through the fingers, and pronounces a wrong judgment against the other party, where there is no reputation, power and friendship. As when a poor man comes, one must not be afraid of him, wait for no harm, he must be held out. The pagans have finely illustrated this by a likeness of a spider's web: When the small flies come in, they remain covered in it, but the large bumblebees pass through and tear the web. It is the same in a court of law: If a poor man comes in, and no harm is done, he must suffer himself; but if someone is concerned that he will be avenged, he passes through, even if he is seven times wrong.

So it is with false witness, which is a common vice in the world. For

A man who does not have the Holy Spirit clings to what is good and does not want to lose it; so there is strife, and a man will swear ten oaths before he leaves. God has seen in all of us that we are false witnesses.

266 Therefore the regents shall not judge a case and bring it to an end, because they have heard both parts. Let the plaintiff, however powerful he may be, adorn his cause as high as he can, and a judge shall speak: I have two ears, and you have one mouth. What you say, I take with one ear; but what the mouth of him whom you accuse says, I take with the other ear.

God knows who we are and does not consider us better than when we come to court, that we should make our cause beautiful, adorn it and defend it, so that it is right, but the other's must stink. In sum, no one is so pious as to disgrace his cause. Since we are by nature so minded that each seeks his own, and no one inquires of the other, we should not believe one part to have heard the other part also. So every one, as far as he is a man, is a false witness, a traitor, a liar, and no true word comes out of his mouth, that is, when it comes to a meeting. It may well happen that you do not bear false witness against your neighbor, because he laughs with you and is in good spirits; but when it comes to the serious matter, that your neighbor has a promise to you, or to your good 2c., then you will not be without lies, unless God puts them into your heart; otherwise you make yourself pious and righteous, and adorn your cause to the very best, let the other party be as pious and righteous 2) as he always wants, and let your cause be as rotten and evil as it always can.

Now this is a beautiful title and glory, so that God will mark us and call us liars, false witnesses, traitors and evil-doers. Therefore, we should be justly terrified before him that he thinks nothing better of us than that we are all liars and false witnesses. For if he did not think us so, he would not have given such a commandment. So

1) "recht" is missing in the Wittenberg.

2) Erlanger: like.

267 here we learn what God thinks of us; indeed, each one feels it in his heart.

269 Therefore the common saying is also true, which goes everywhere in the world: There is no faithfulness in the world. Item: Faithfulness is miserable. The father must not trust the son, the son the father, the daughter the mother, the mother the daughter. And as a heathen says: The brothers are seldom one. Therefore it is not new that one is deceived and lied to, it has always been so, we bring it from mother's womb. That is certain. Therefore, if you deal with a man, whether buying or selling, if God is with him, he is pious and deals honestly with you; but if God leaves him, and there is only man, without God's grace, he is deceitful and deceives you wherever he can. If then thou wilt deal with him, remember this: God will give him grace, so that he will keep faith with me. For love keeps the best of the neighbor. But nevertheless, beware; faithfulness is evil, as a Greek prince, 1) Epicharmus, said: Remember that you believe no one. This 2) saw what the man, what the world was for a pious child, namely, therein is no faithfulness and faith.

270. Summa Summarum: We must trust, and also not trust, and know, first of all, that the world is full of devils, bad boys and husks, and we live among wolves and wild, unreasonable animals, who deceive us and lie to us falsely. If anyone does not want to suffer this, let him go to another place where there is no world, for he will find this everywhere in the world, as Paul also says in 1 Cor. 5:10: "If you did not want to live among evil men, you would have to leave the world. We must not provide ourselves with anything else or better; man remains man, the world remains world, the devil remains devil. Whoever can send himself into it, that is a great grace; but whoever cannot, there is misery and distress. Secondly, that we know that one may freely trust one's neighbor, and that one may hit him in the redoubt or not. Hit

it that he keeps faith with you, it is a grace from God; if it does not happen that he does not keep faith with you, and deceives you, you knew beforehand that [it] would not be better by nature with him.

271 This commandment, Thou shalt not bear false witness, speaks primarily of the fact that when one has to deal with one's neighbor in court, if it is a matter of property, honor, or whatever, one must act righteously. 3) This also includes all lies that cause harm to one's neighbor. This is also the place of all lies that cause harm to one's neighbor. But lies to joke and fool are not true lies, for one knows that no harm will come to his neighbor. But if I want to harm my neighbor with lies, be it to his body, property, honor or name, these are called right lies.

Item 272: Therefore also belong the useless, washy mouths, which people like to hit the bank and carry out, if it does not happen in court, but against other people in secret, or in collusion, 4) As those do, so one calls afterreder, who have a desire to talk evil to other people, have nothing else to send, but that they align the people, and no one is prettier than they; they are pure, and everyone stinks before them. If another fills in sin, everyone must know it, carry it back and forth, thus slandering their neighbor, defiling and blaspheming in the very worst way.

273. Where one would speak of other people's vices, if it were right, this should be done for the neighbor's correction, not for harm and damage; but if I cannot correct it, I should keep silent and cover up my neighbor's infirmity; but if I can correct it, I should deal with it alone with him, as Christ teaches Matth. 18:15: "Punish your brother between you and him alone"; this is then a secret correction. The other correction is public; if you know anything about your neighbor, go to the place where it can be corrected. So, if your neighbor's child, son or daughter sins, punish him first; then, if you do nothing, tell his parents, or the priest, the mayor, the judge, or those who have

3) Wittenberg and Jena: that one.

4) Thus the Jenaer: Collation - Society, Gasterei. Wittenberg" and Erlanger: Collation.

1) "a Greek prince" is missing in the Wittenberg.

2) Erlanger: The Prince.

If you have the power to punish, it is not wrong; indeed, you do right when you report your neighbor's sin in this way; not that you take pleasure in it, but only for his correction. But the wicked mouths do the contrary, not speaking of their neighbor's faults and infirmities, that he should be corrected thereby, but that they tickle themselves with it, have pleasure and joy in it, not even thinking that they would punish or correct their neighbor's sin with it.

Such people are real swine and filth eaters. For the neighbor's sin is no different than dung and dirt. So those who delight in other people's sin are like sows, waiting for the dirt to run through their teeth and mouths. For they take pleasure in other people's sins and wash their mouths with them, as swine do in the street, picking up dirt; they take pleasure in it and are not sorry that their neighbor falls into sin or disgrace; they talk about it and then paint the sin in the sharpest way, and can help the matter finely and make it much worse than it is in itself. They would also be sorry that their neighbor remained pious, for they could not atone for their lust and wash their mouths. Such people alone are beautiful and pure; the others are all unclean. Their thing must be right and pure balm, but other people's thing is all devil's filth with them.

Now there are few of them who are not guilty of this commandment, for it is widespread, and vice is common everywhere. And even if one does not speak of other people's sins, he least of all likes to hear it, or does not prevent it when he hears it.

276 So you have recently understood the concept of this commandment. It forbids all harm done to one's neighbor with the mouth, or with the tongue, so that one harms him in his honor or good report. On this commandment they also drew the forgery of letters, but it belongs more to the other commandment. This commandment is so broad that all the world is drowned in it.

The Ten Commandments are a mirror in which we see that the world is nothing but a wicked, desperate multitude that does not trust in God, does not believe, has little faith in God, and does not know Him.

He strives against him day and night with all his might, blasphemes God and reviles his holy name, does not respect the works of God, but rather reproaches his own work, despises father and mother and all authorities, is full of murder and strangulation, full of thievery and adultery, full of false witness and lies. This is what God makes us sing and say. Therefore, our hearts should tremble and our bodies shake when we hear that God, the highest Majesty, passes such a judgment on us.

### Decision.

278 Thus it is forbidden to harm all the goods of one's neighbor, and commanded to pity him. If we now look at the natural law, we find how just and equal all these commandments are. For nothing is commanded here to be kept against God and neighbor that each would not have kept if he were in God's and his neighbor's stead.

### The sixth and seventh commandments of the other tablet.

**V. 17: Thou shalt not lust after thy neighbor's husband. Thou shalt not lust after thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that thy neighbor has.**

### Summa.

The last two commandments teach how evil nature is, and how pure we should be from all desires of the flesh and foreign 1) goods. But there remains war and labor while we live.

### Thou shalt not let thyself lust 2c.

Some divide the two commandments. There is not much in the division, St. Paul summarizes it in one commandment (Rom. Cap. 7,<sup>2</sup>) 7. where he says: "Thou shalt not let thyself lust. Thus lust is forbidden.

The Jews have thus glossed and interpreted the commandment: The thoughts, as one is wont to

1) "der fremde" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) Erlanger: "Rom. on the 17th."

in a proverb, are duty-free. As when one thus wishes: If the ox, the cow, the donkey, the house, the field, the property were mine. These thoughts they counted for no sin; the other sins of the other commandments they interpreted 1) as being done outwardly by works and by deeds. As when a man sets up an idol or makes an image, blasphemes the name of God, does a bodily work on the Sabbath, strikes his father and mother, slays his neighbor with the sword, breaks into his house by night and takes away his goods, sleeps with his wife, and gives false testimony against him in court.

But the last two commandments they have interpreted thus, If a man show himself with an outward sign, and yet perform it not. As if a man were not obedient to his father and mother, though he did not curse them, or strike them, or lift up a club, or take hold of a stone, or lift up his fist against them, and strike them not, yet do such things as if he would strike or throw them; the sign would be contrary to the commandment, according to the interpretation of the Jews. Thus, to violate one's neighbor's wife is against the sixth commandment; but if it is not carried out, but is only done with a sign, as if one were seized from another's wife in a chamber, sitting with her on the bed, the commandment and sign have led them to this commandment, even though the work is not done. So stealing with the fist is against the seventh commandment; but if a man is seized on a floor, in the cellar, in the chamber, by the chest, and lets himself be marked with a sign, as if he would steal, and take away his neighbor's goods, and yet has not taken them away, he sins against this commandment.

The Jews interpreted it this way, but they were far wrong and glossed it wrongly. For it is not so interpreted here, nor shall it be so interpreted. Moses was not so unlearned that he did not know how to speak. Therefore the gloss is not valid at all. So we also know well what lust and desire mean. It is not written in the fist or in the outward spirits.

1) "for no sin.... they have" is missing in dT<sup>W</sup>Wittenberger.

The words of the Bible do not refer to the fist or other parts of the body, but to the heart; as now and then the Scriptures refer to lust or desire not in the fist or other parts, but in the heart. As when it is written, the desire of their heart. So Christ also rightly interprets Matth. 5, 28: "Whoever looks at another man's wife and covets her (not with his mouth, eyes, hand or feet, but in his heart) is an adulterer," even though he gives no outward sign of lust. So the commandment is in the heart, though it does not break out with signs and works. For this lust is in our hearts, marrow and legs.

When he says, "You shall not let your neighbor's wife lie with you," it is to be understood that if a man desires to have it for himself, God will give him what his neighbor has; do not allow his neighbor to have a pious, honorable wife, honorable and disciplined children. So it is to be understood with other things, as with servants and maids, house and farm, oxen, cows, donkeys and other goods; if one is sorry that his neighbor has such a pious servant, such a beautiful house, such good fields and meadows, fat oxen and sheep; he would that he alone had it, although his neighbor had nothing. So that it is not only that one is sorry that his neighbor has such a delicious thing, but that he also wants to have it himself and possess it, where he can easily get it.

Thus we have the Ten Commandments, which make us all scoundrels and knaves before God. And although the worldly sword outwardly defends, and makes a difference in the world, that one says: He is pious, he is a rogue, nevertheless all men are sinners in heart with one another. Therefore no one may boast that he is pious before God, but must confess that he is guilty of all the commandments as they read. Let every man take hold of his own bosom, and he shall find it so. Therefore we should cry and howl to God, that He may give us the Spirit, that we may not only be outwardly pious before the world, but also 2) before God in our hearts. Amen.

2) "also" is missing in the Wittenberg.

# C. The Ten Commandments

preached to the people of Wittenberg by Father Martin Luther, Augustinian. \*)

Preached from the end of June 1516 to February 24, 1517. Printed in 1518.

Newly translated from the Latin.

## Preface [of] B[ruder] S(ebastian) M[ünster]. \*\*)

Many books, both Latin and German, are printed daily, many of which are almost beneficial and useful to the common man; as one finds people who are so hungry and eager for the word of God that they also spend all the remaining time they may have in beneficial books, to draw comfort and instruction from them. For their love, this book is described by the pious, spiritual and highly learned man, D. Martin Luther, who explains the Ten Commandments in such a spiritual, Christian and evangelical way that one does not find anything like it; although many teachers have written about it. There, the spiritual and the secular, the good and the bad, the afflicted and the challenged, the young and the old, the superior and the deaf, all find the ten commandments.

and subject, in short, everyone, how he should go the way (which is the ten commandments), which leads to eternal life. There we find how each commandment is kept according to the letter and according to the spirit. In addition, how each commandment has several degrees and scales 2c. Why is it necessary to write much about this here? If you read through the book, you will find a true Christian and evangelical teacher. And do not be hindered by the fact that it has not been Germanized with flowery and highbrow words; for it has been transferred more for the sake of the simple than for the sake of the polite, and transferred in such a way that the subtleties that the above-mentioned doctor has let run in it have been left to Latin. God be with you.

\*Luther preached on the Ten Commandments to a large audience (St. Louis Edition, Vol. XXII, 1716, No. ISO) of the people in Wittenberg from the end of June 1516 to February 24 1517. At the beginning of the last century, a complete Latin manuscript of these sermons by Luther (Weim. Ausg., vol. I, p. 19. Köstlin, Mart. Luther, 3rd ed., vol. I, p. 123) was still available, which was in the possession of Valentin Ernst Löscher. From this manuscript he printed a number of sermons in his "Reformation-Acta," Vol. I, pp. 277-2H9 and pp. 729-795, of which he notes: "These klemm Sermons have only been Exordia to Luther's sermons on the Ten Commandments, "which he held on feast days and Sundays." In the St. Louis edition these exordia are found Vol. XII, 1266-1271; 1724-1829; Vol.X, 198-209; 976-981; 1212-1219; 1276-1297; Vol. XIX, 736-761. It is these exordia which give us a firm guide to the exact timing. Luther's sermon on St. Matthew's Day (February 24) 1517 was, as already noted in our edition, vol. XIX, 754, the last introductory sermon to Luther's lectures on the Ten Commandments. Nothing is known about the whereabouts of the Latin manuscript. But also of the German translation, which Luther mentions in his letter to Johann Lang of November 4, 1517: "I have therefore sent you the interpretation of the Ten Commandments in both languages, so that you, if you wanted, could preach about it to the people" (Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. X VIII, 28), we no longer have any trace. The later German translation is, as can be seen from Münster's preface, not by Luther, but by someone else. Luther then took the sermon form from the sermons, and put his treatment into print in 1518. The first Latin edition was published on July 20, 1518 by Johannes Grünenberg (Virickivaontunulll) in Wittmberg under the title: Vsosm prusesptn IVittsnksrMnsi prusäiontn popuio psr U.MarUmim lmtüs XuAustininnum. In the same year, two reprints were published by Valentin Schumann in Leipzig, and by the same printer in 1519. In the latter year, Melchior Lotther in Leipzig also printed

\*\*This preface is on the back of the title page of the two German translations published by Adam Petri in Basel in 1520. Münster, who belonged to the Franciscan order (Vlinorum cis okssrvuntiu), was at that time Corrector at Petri. The following is reported about him in the Erlanger Briefwechsel, Vol. II, p. 360: "He was born in 1489 at Jngelheim in the Palatinate, studied at Heidelberg and Tübingen, hence known to Melanchthon, belonged to the Franciscan order, which he left in 1529, and died May 23, 1552 in Basel, where he had worked for a long time at the university as a teacher of the Hebrew language." - Münster as well as Conrad Pellicanus, Guardian of the monastery at Pforzheim, were students of the learned Rabbi Elias Levita at Neustadt an der Aisch in Baireuth in the Hebrew language in 1514. (Niederer, nützliche und angenehme Abhandlungen aus der Kirchen-, Bücher- und Gelehrten-geschichte, Altdorf 1768, p. 308.)



# The first commandment. \*)

## You will not have other gods. 1)

First, the question arises, why does he not command in an affirmative manner, namely: You shall have the right (proprium) or the One God, or: Worship me, the one God? Second, why does he not rather speak in imperative: You shall not have other gods, than in indicative?

To both I answer at the same time that every commandment of God is given more for the sake of indicating past and present sin than for the sake of preventing future sin, for, as the apostle says [Rom. 3:20], "Through the law comes only knowledge of sin," and again [Rom. 11:32], "God has decreed all things under sin."

that he may have mercy on all." Therefore the commandment of God, when it comes, finds sinners, and makes more of them, "that sin might become more powerful," Rom. 5:20. But the laws of men are given for the sake of future sins. Therefore the [Holy] Spirit, as he is an exceedingly kind teacher, speaks more in an indicative manner, as if to say, O poor man, behold, I show thee thy corruption. You should be like this, so that you would have no gods, would not use the name of your God uselessly, would sanctify the holiday, would not kill, would not let yourself be lusted after 2c. But now you are completely different and wrong. Therefore he finally commands in a negative way, because a negative is stronger than an affirmative. For even the Samaritans of old worshipped the One God, but also their gods at the same time, and so do the Jews and pagans, the heretics and the wicked. Yes, every

1) Vulgate: Xon ftuftsftis cksos uiionos. We have had to keep the Vulgate text because the interpretation refers to the same.

a print organized. In the Sanvnlungen our writing is found in Latin: In the Basel collection of October 1518, Bl. Haff. and in the later editions of the same; in Ll. Imfttsrii Vu\*ustiniani ttsoloZi sz-nosri luoufrutionum purs una. Lusilas upuft Vclurn?stri 1520. iHsnss Oulio. P. 157; in the Wittenberg (1550), Dun. I, toi. I; in the Jena (i579), Dorn. I, toi. II6d; in Löscher's "Reformation Acta" (improved and supplemented according to the manuscript previously mentioned; but much is also omitted from it), vol. I, p. 578; in the Erlanger, sxsMtioa opsra laftna, Dorn. XII, p. 1, and in the Weimar, vol. I, p. 398. A German translation of our writing first appeared in Basel in 1520 with Adam Petri izpter the title: "Der zehn Gebote eine nützliche Erklärung durch den hochgelehrten D. Martinum Luther Augustinerordens beschrieben und gepredigt, Geistlichen und Weltlichen dienende. Item a beautiful sermon of the seven deadly sins, also described by him." In the same year, a new edition of this translation was published by the same publisher. The former was printed by Silvanus Ottmar in Augsburg in the same year, the latter in Basel in 1523, perhaps by A. Cratander. In the collections, first in the Hallische Theil, p. 2, edited by Zeidler, "newly prepared with diligence, conferring with Latin and improved according to Luther's manner of speaking". From this, the text is taken over into the Leipzig edition, Vol. I V, p. 1, and from this into Walch's old edition. The beginning of the German translation is also found in Löscher I. o. p. 580-586, "the continuation of the German edition obgedachter explanation of the ten commandments and much from the manuscript has had to be left out because the space became too tight". (Ibick. S. 728.) The conclusion of the explanation of the ten commandments has also appeared in a single edition (without year, place, or printer) under the title: "A pretty sermon, how the ten commandments are drawn on the seven deadly sins." - This explanation of the ten commandments is also translated into Bohemian. The printing of this translation was completed at Prague on November 3, 1520. Luther mentions it in a letter to Spalatin of February 3, 1521 (Walch, old edition, vol. XXI, 746, § 5). In the Baseler Sammlung voin October 1518 and thereafter in the luoubnticmss of Adam Petri, in the Wittenberg and in the Jenaer Gesammtausgabe, the Latin explanation is preceded by a short note to the reader. It is also printed in Löscher's "Reformation Acta". From it Walch has taken by misunderstanding, "that Luther had neither made the Latin copy himself, nor had he arranged for the first printing, whether it had been done, since it came out in Wittenberg, with his approval". This statement of Walch's has also been appropriated by the Erlangen edition, and reproduced in the 12th volume of the ox<^ opsra, p. III. With reference to this, the Weimar edition rightly says: "Rather, from the list of printing errors in the first edition, one can safely conclude that Luther was the editor, since, as here, only the author himself was allowed to make changes." The Weimar edition bases its text on the first edition, but also takes Löscher into account for the sake of his handwritten source, although his work is not very critical. We give a new translation according to the Weimar edition and add the time determinations for the individual sermons according to Löscher, which was not done in the Erlangen edition.

\*) Luther probably began on Peter Pa "Is Day (June 29) 1516. (Weim. ed.)

Man in the whole world worships the One God, "who is manifest to all", as the apostle says Rom. 1, 19. But in this they sin, that they honor him in such a way that they also honor their idols at the same time. Thus there is no man in the world who does not to a certain extent keep (faciat) every commandment, for there is no one who does not at times uselessly use the name of God, who does not at times kill, commit adultery, or steal, but at the same time also does the contradiction in himself, as we will see later.

**Corollary (Corollarium).**

All the children of Adam are idolaters and guilty of this first commandment. 2) But one must know that there are two kinds of idolatry, one external, the other internal. The external one is when man worships wood, stone, animals, stars, as is known from the Old Testament and the books of the pagans. The latter, however, came out of the inward one. The inward one is when man, moved either by the fear of punishment or by the desire (amore) of his benefit, leaves the worship of the creature by heart, but inwardly remains the love for the creature and the trust in it. For what kind of service is it if one does not bow the knee before riches and testimonies of honor, and yet sacrifices to them the noblest thing one has, namely one's heart and mind? This means worshipping God according to the body and the flesh, but inwardly worshipping the creature in the spirit. This idolatry reigns in every man until he is healed by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, as the 81st Psalm, v. 9, 10, says: "Hear, my people, I will testify among you; Israel, you shall hear me, that there is no other god among you, and that you worship no strange god," which means: By your efforts and powers you will never reach the point that you do not worship a strange god. For though thou worshipest no images, yet in the

hearts prefer the creature to me. But then you will not worship a foreign god when you hear me, that is, the faith in my word will make you free from foreign gods and a true worshipper of God. For this will turn you away from desiring things and trusting in them, and draw you to the Creator. 3)

**How can this be done?**

It happens like this: Faith in Christ takes away all confidence in one's own wisdom, righteousness, and virtue, teaching that if he had not died for thee and saved thee, neither thou nor all creatures could help thee, and thus arises the contempt of all things. But since you hear that he suffered for you and believe, confidence in him and a sweet love immediately arise, and in this way all inclination to all things, as to something useless, is gone, and the esteem of Christ alone arises, as an exceedingly necessary thing, and nothing else is left to you but Jesus alone, in whom alone you have enough and full satisfaction, so that you despair of all things and have him alone, in whom all your hope stands, and love him above all things for his sake. But Jesus is the true, one, only God. If you have him, you do not have a foreign God. The Jews, however, who fear that they will have a foreign god if they worship the man Christ, worship a foreign god in an even worse way, namely the idols of their heart, which they invent for themselves from God. God thus rightly says [Ps. 81:9]: "You shall hear me," as if he wanted to say: "It is impossible that you should not worship a foreign god if you do not hear me; because you are not humbled, your trust in the creature is not torn away from you. But if you are not humbled, you will not worship me, but you and yours. It is clear, then, that no one can obey this commandment.

1) The Erlangen edition omitted *non* here, although Luther himself inserted it in the corrections of the first edition.  
2) In the manuscript it is added: "It is sufficiently evident that they are turned away from God to themselves".

3) In the manuscript it is added here: "So it is said in the 45th Psalm, v. 11. ff: .Hear, daughter, look from it' 2c. Not by your works will you be beautiful, but by faith in Christ; yet you will not be without sin, but also adorned by Christ, whose adornment is yours through faith in Him."

The Lord fills a person's life as one who believes in Christ, hopes in Him, loves Him, and is free from the inclination to all things, which is impossible without the grace of God. But there are many people who give a definite answer to the question whether they have a foreign God and are idolaters: No, not at all. In order to catch them in their obvious lie, pay attention to it: Whether they are so dead to things, and so confident in Christ, that they are neither puffed up by riches, nor fainthearted by poverty; neither flourish by honor, nor let their courage be slackened by dishonor; neither delight in life, nor be dismayed by death, neither to delight in pleasure nor to be afflicted by suffering, and whether they are completely immovable and calm on both sides, so that, whatever their lot may be, they may be satisfied that they have Jesus Christ; They love and desire poverty, shame, suffering, death, and spurn riches, honor, pleasure, and life, because they desire their God Jesus Christ, as it says in the 42nd Psalm, v. 2. Psalm, v. 2: "As the deer cries for fresh water" 2c., and the bride in the Song of Songs [Cap. 5, 8.], "Ye daughters of Jerusalem, tell my friend that I lie sick of love," and Paul [Phil. 1, 23.], "I delight to depart and be with Christ." But let him who is not yet of this disposition confess that he is not yet a pure worshipper of God, but that much idolatry still clings to him, for he is sorry, he desires, he loves, he hates, not as he ought, nor that which he ought. But here it is said: This comes to the perfect, not to all; such perfection is not necessary. I answer: We also know that this concerns the perfect (that is, not the Jews, but the Christians), 1) not as if all those were condemned who are not so perfect, but this goal and end is set before us. No one who does not attain it will be excused, unless he recognizes and confesses with sighs that he is not of such a nature, and strives daily to become such a man, and humbly asks that he may be forgiven for it.

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1) Eraser: "Here the manuscript slips in several things, and very useful ones at that."

which he does too little, saying [Matth. 6, 12.]: "Forgive us our debts", and [Ps. 51, 12.]: "Create in me, God, a clean heart." To these, I say, who stand in fear and confess, who seek and ask, this idolatry (*idolatriae suae mixtura*) still clinging to them is not imputed for the sake of Christ in whom they believe. But to those who snore in safety without fear, without caring that they become better, it is completely imputed, and they are in truth idolaters. Even the excuse that it is not necessary to be perfect will not help them, as if this commandment was given to stones or wood and not rather to men, and had to be fulfilled so completely and perfectly that not even the smallest letter nor one tittle will be lost [Matth. 5, 18.]].

For the sake of clearer understanding, so that even weaker people can grasp who and how one sins against this commandment, I will give examples in a very detailed way, but not all of them (then I would have to list countless), but many, so that by comparing them with the others, they can be understood more easily.

First. There are some who are so unintelligent that it seems that the devil is not mocking them in earnest but, as it were, as his fools in jest. Among these are the soothsayers, the interpreters of signs, the sorcerers, the blessers, the superstitious, 2) and of these there are many kinds; but I will group them together and distinguish them according to the different ages, so that it may be easier to remember.

The first age is youth, which in itself is inclined to be seduced by the devil.

First of all, there are those people who, with certain formulas (*conceptis verbis*) and certain signs, know how to bless swords, bullets, rifles, 3) and all iron weapons, that is, to conjure them so that they cannot be wounded by them, be it in the

2) In the Weimar edition, the comma before *supsrstitiosi* is omitted (not well, we think).  
3) Weimar and other editions: *boarttas*, Wittenberg, Jena and Löscher: *tionitüsriäa*".

Wars or else. I myself have seen a youth who put a drawn sword on his bare body (ventrem) and pressed it against himself with such force that the sword bent and on his body the hilt struck the point (donec capulus reflexus copularetur acumini etc.), and he let the sword go back [to its original position], but was not wounded.

Second, [there are people] who can invalidate this [invocation] by describing a circle and drawing figures in the sand, and by thus invalidating each other's invocations, they kill each other.

Thirdly, there are people who write letters or signs on glass and put them on the fire, and by doing this (machina) they force the girls to love them. But they also do it this way. Some can call their beloved (Adonides) for many miles by putting a pot on the fire. Others take the head of an ass and put it in the middle of the fire 1) and force as many of those who are attached to their art (mysterii) or are partakers of it as they want to come to them. And marvelous it is to say that those who are forced to come [in this way] cannot help nor save themselves [from it] until it is granted to them to seize the fire where the head of the ass is exposed to the fire (coctore).

Fourthly, one has letters full of many sacred words and signs that are said to have been sent by Pope Leo to [Emperor] Carl in the war. Besides being a vain pretense, it is also a lie, as is evident from the chronicles, since Leo and Carl were not contemporaries. Nevertheless, they ascribe to them so much that the one who carries them can neither be killed nor wounded nor suffer any damage, so that they presume to win in court even in unjust matters.

Fifth, they choose certain months for marriage. Some do this so that no children are born to them, others, however, in order to have many children. Thus, in an unfortunate folly, they do not write GÖtte the

creation of man, but to the months, and yet there are books full of these antics.

Sixth. The consecrated wax of the Easter candle is furtively torn off by many, I do not know how many and how great sorceries and superstitious acts.

Seventh. There are people who take holy water and hope to find an egg in an anthill with their prayers, which is supposed to make them invisible when they carry it with them.

Eighth. They seek [to discover] a thief by writing the names of suspicious people on slips of paper and throwing them into holy water, so that the one whose name falls to the ground is said to be the thief they are looking for.

Ninth. At the wedding they want to find out by observing foolish things which of the two will survive the other, as whoever falls asleep first on the first night must die first. Similarly, when the woman enters the man's house for the first time, she shall touch the upper threshold of the door with her hand and speak words by which she prophesies that she will be the man's mistress.

According to this, similar things can be judged. Although these things are more foolish than evil, and it seems, as I have said, that the devil is playing a joke with them, at last they become quite serious, because people get used to putting their trust in the creature in small things, and therefore do not trust in God in great things either. They excuse themselves, of course, by saying that they are holy signs and holy words, as if for that reason they were not to be accused all the more of using the holy things, signs and words of God for unholy and devilish things. 3)

4) The second is the male age and those who are already in marriage, where the all-.

2) According to a handwritten note, the saying reads: "Ich greift auff die überthuer, mein krieg der gee alberg fner." (Weim. ed.)

3) Löscher: "Much that is useful is added here in the manuscript."

4) Löscher: "The following is added to the sermon that was preached in 1516 on the day of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary f2 July, as attested by the mentioned manuscript, from which the following is drawn." - This introductory sermon is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, vol. XII, 1722.

1) or: in the middle of the hearth of fire (in E<Iio kooo).

The affectionate love for children and the attachment to earthly goods make it wonderfully easy for women to be seduced into this work of the devil.

First. They undertake to make the children healthy by certain superstitious customs. For there are people who heal the bewitched children (for this evil is very common in our country, so there are also many malicious (pestilent) old hags and devil's servants who do this) from an unknown disease, which is called "the Elbe" 1) in German. For these, some village priests and sextons, who have learned this from the magic whores, write letters that are hung on the neck, but not with ordinary ink, nor on paper, nor on any day; I do not know, maybe not even with a pen, and at a writing desk and in an ordinary place. For this thing has its hidden secrets, and yet what they do is done because they believe. Others [expel] another disease, which is called in German "das Herzgespanst", that is, an expansion of the chest. They prove the presence of this disease by this reason, namely when the child's measurement from one elbow to the other is not equal to the measurement from the knee to the neck. They also relieve headaches by I don't know how many kinds of murmuring and measuring with the belt, as well as other pains in all limbs. Here I wish the children had sense and could talk, so that they could punish their mothers for their exceedingly great foolishness. For there is no doubt that they would resist and show that they have more understanding than their mothers.

But they say: Who should not have mercy on his little child and the fruit of his womb? I answer: Yes, one should have mercy on them, but not so far that one enters into the service of the devil; either seek natural medicine, or ask God in simple faith. Why do you sacrifice

the child that God created to the devil, so that he may preserve it and make it healthy? But God allows such things to be done to children by sorcerers, in order to tempt the unbelievers, so that those who have abandoned God may seek the devil. For it is not to be doubted that such plagues of children are sometimes not natural, but the devils, summoned by the sorcerers, torment the parents of the same in such a way out of a hidden but quite just judgment of God, in order to test their faith or the faith of others, or to punish both.

Secondly, the fathers blow against the palate or into the throat of the little children who are suffering from I don't know what kind of disease; but they speak the words that are used for incantation seven times.

Thirdly, [there are people] who draw their cattle and thus protect them from wolves, pestilence, water and fire; indeed, in this way they can protect a whole city or a house from conflagration. The unfortunate wolf can justifiably complain that the portion God had given him was snatched away by the devil's allies. If Job had acted this way, he would have kept his cattle, but God would not have praised him.

Fourth. Out of the same devotion they put signs on the fruits of the fields and gardens, and are so foolish that they, who have received rain and prosperity from God, ask the devil for his guard, fighting, as it were, against God so that he will not take away what he has given them.

Fifth. They know how to conjure fire and water, even snakes, so that they do not harm the cattle in any way, that is, so that their cause is not subject to God.

Sixth. When sick people make vows to the saints, they then consider it a sin to use medicines, of course, in order to tempt God with their foolish vows. And if a woman has received the sacrament of the last rites, she may only wear black clothes during the year, not dance in the round dance, not sleep with her husband. The devil has such a familiar tool in the female sex that he accepts it for the orientation of his service (in sua sacra), through which he prescribes laws.

1) The Elbe or "the heart-ache". This disease is described in more detail in the third chapter of the shorter interpretation of the letter to the Galatians, Walch, St. Louis edition, Vol. VIII, 1462, 8 3. - Here "Elbe" and "Herzgespanst" are distinguished as two diseases.

writes, sows his superstition; in all things contrary to God, who lays out his worship (sacra) and his priesthood and his word to men. But this priesthood of women is much more prevalent, and has filled these lands with countless superstitions, blessings and useless doctrines, of which they are far more afraid than of the laws and services of the priesthood of men and of God.

Seventh. Here belong those who pay attention to ominations, birdcalls, as the cawing of ravens, and the remnants or examples of other pagan divinations (portentorum).

Eighth. Those who observe special days (this Aegyptios) for their journeys, for their return, for building, for business, for putting on new clothes. If these had the faith that the fire is more pleasant in winter than in summer, likewise that in summer is the right time to make hay, to gather the fruits 2c., then they would have a right faith; or that it is good for every man to go out early when he is healthy and it is necessary for him, but not good when he is ill. For what does this mocker, the devil, deserve but that we should also mock him in turn? Close to them are those who teach us that bloodletting, the weaning of children, the healing properties of baths, the right time for sowing are not to be determined according to the opportunity of moisture and warmth or the need of the body, but according to the influence of the planets and the stars, although the best physicians teach that necessity is the only rule here. But perhaps they intend to kill us by hunger, since they allow us to sow only on a few days. But it is good that these antics are heeded by no one or very few (since God takes better care of us).

Ninth. The following is the magnificent astrology or mathematics, which would like to be a science, but cannot take off its inherent foolishness. It is this that teaches us who, what kind of person, or how great a person will be who is born in a certain position of the celestial signs (in horoscopia signorum), namely, they are advisors in the divine mystery, which is not known even to the angels.

is known. Only about one thing I wonder, what may have happened to them, that they have not found the star, which indicates who will be born as a righteous and who as a sinner. For they want the position of the celestial signs (suos horoscopus) observed by them to exert an exceedingly great influence on people; then righteousness, sin, truth, lie is not a thing of so little importance, but also not so rare as a barber, a singer, a money-changer, a fisherman, a speaker, a wooer, who have their own nativities (horoscopus). Why is there no sign of justice and truth? Or if it is there, why does it never make its effect felt? For every man is born a sinner, a liar, a fool, though no star is set to bring about this fate (ad hoc fatum); nor is he 1) changed unless he is visited by the grace that is above heaven. Or is heaven so hostile and indifferent to justice and truth that it exerts its influence on quite trivial things, baths and games and love affairs, but knows nothing at all of justice? Or is the Creator so envious that he has decreed no sign for good, but only for evil? For no man is born good and will remain evil according to his nature with the influences. These I would have counted among the fine (subtle) fools, if they were not coarser than the coarse.

But very nicely they resolve the objections by saying: The influences do not force (necessitant) to sin, but only make inclined to it 2c., as if this were not an exceedingly ungodly opinion, that God made the creature in order to make it inclined to sin, and not rather in order that he might establish righteousness, so that everything works for man for good, not for evil; or as if any man sins, compelled by necessity, and not rather always by inclination. Who would say that a man sins against his will? All evil inclination is not apart from us,

1) In five editions available to us, apart from Weimar's, uniuirrm is added.

but in us, as Christ says [Matth. 15, 19. 11.]: "Out of the heart come evil thoughts", "what enters the mouth does not defile the man" 2c. And St. Jacob [Cap. 1, 14.]: "Every man is tempted when he is provoked and enticed by his own lust", which does not come from fate, but from original sin (origine peccati)). For everything that God has made is good [Gen. 1, 31.], therefore all things by their nature can only cause an inclination to good. As every thing is constituted, so it also works. But that things serve for evil is not by their nature, but by their abuse (injuria), as Paul says [Rom. 8:20.]: "All creatures are subject to vanity without their will." But they make the nature of them vanity by willing that these things by God's order (institutione) have that in themselves, that they give a tendency to sin. Why did they not instill this inclination in Adam and Eve before the serpent came to them? Why not Christ? Why not the holy virgin? Away with this blasphemous godlessness! That word which the astrologers use for their excuse is the word of our father Adam, who also put his inclination [to sin] on the woman, that is, on the creature of God, and said [Gen. 3, 12]: "The woman you have given me" 2c. But how mightily would they oppose me if they could prove that any saint or martyr had made use of these things, or written about them, or approved of them! But now they have not only not approved of them, but also rejected them, especially St. Augustine in many places, then also St. Gregory. And yet this insipid foolishness finds even more insipid people who believe it.

Abraham, they say, taught the Egyptians astrology, as Josephus testifies, 1) as if Josephus has nowhere deviated from the truth, especially since he is so eager to chase glory for the Jews. Abraham undoubtedly taught the Egyptians to worship GOD, and the right wisdom of GOD, as also of

Joseph is said, Ps. 105, 22.: "That he instructed his princes after his manner, and taught his elders wisdom." Nor is it to be believed that those holy men laid themselves upon astronomy, much less astrology, for these are superfluous (otiosa) studies of young men. But since Josephus saw that the Greeks had a high opinion of this science, and the same stood in honor, it seems that he wanted to invent, how the Jews also in this matter not lower, but higher stood than the Greeks, what he also in all other things to do has endeavored to serve the vain honor.

Then it is marvelous that the evil spirits have not finally been changed, who have been subject to the influences [of the stars] for so many centuries, but then are also closer to them than we are, since they dwell in lust. But that the influence of the stars did not come over them, or that the stars should not have shone to them in the same way, that seems inconsistent. For they remain obstinate in their wrongness, and are not changed by any sign, while it is said that our souls are changed by the briefest influence.

To the last. What shall we say to Moses, who in the fifth book, Cap. 4, 19, 2) "Lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and behold the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and all the host of heaven, which the LORD thy God hath ordained to be a service unto all nations" 2c. If "to the service", how can it be to the dominion? But from very fine wise they make an evasion and say, supported by the reputation of their master Ptolemy: The wise man rules over the stars, therefore he can forestall and prevent the influence of the stars. So they are not for the wise to rule, but only for the unwise. 3) But what does Moses say? He says, "To all nations for service." If "all", then either all peoples are wise, and so all rule over the stars, or only some are wise, and then it will come so that

2) Weimar edition as well as Walch: Deut. 4, 10.

3) This sentence has the Weimar edition, Löscher and Petri as interrogative sentence.

they are not created for the service of all peoples. But Moses is true and you are a liar, 1) not to say anything about it, that even if the truly wise man were a lord over the heavenly bodies, Moses would nevertheless have said something false, since the heavenly bodies also do not serve the wise men, but rather prevent them, so that they could not escape the destiny of them, if they did not have the advantage of wisdom. Thus it should have been said that the stars were created, not for the service of the wise, but for war [against them], and for dominion and tyranny over the unwise. But this is to accuse Moses of lying and to accuse GOD of cruelty and downright blasphemy. But this has been treated more extensively by others. Let it be enough that we have indicated that this trivial matter is not permitted. In the prophet Jeremiah, Cap. 10, 2, [says the Lord]: "You shall not learn the ways of the heathen, 2) and you shall not be afraid of the signs of heaven." For GOD alone is to be feared in all things. All other things we are to regard as ordained for service, and as serving the elect for the best [Rom. 8:28].

3) The third age is that of the old witches (vetularum), or of those who indulge in things similar to these, who make an alliance with the devil, of whom one has news everywhere.

First. By sorceries they can damage the eyes and make them blind, make the bodies ill, paralyze the legs, 4) charm by apparitions (imaginibus), and, as they please, either kill or finally abort by a slow and incurable disease.

as I have seen several who suffered such.

Secondly. They can cause storms and thunder, spoil the fruits, kill livestock, likewise steal butter, milk and cheese from others, that is, milk them from a post or an axe or a towel.

Thirdly. Here belong those who seek to obtain knowledge (of secret things) through the notarial art, 5) about which much is said in the law books (in jure). Likewise, those who seek hidden things by means of a crystal, a fingernail or an ivory booklet, 6) which, however, must first be consecrated. But they cannot do this unless girls or boys who are still virgins are enclosed in a circle, so that this exceedingly evil work does not lack a good appearance. Nevertheless, it is said that this art of inspection very often fails. Here belong those who seek hidden treasures with a divining rod, but especially those who are commonly called wise men and women (that is, fortune-tellers and fortune-tellers), whose sayings (oracula) people fetch from various places and far across the country when someone has lost something or suffered something, and does not know who has caused this damage. It is astonishing that the bishops let it go unpunished that one publicly submits to such things.

Fourth. Many believe that they ride on brooms (7), others on a trestle, and others on other jugglery (nugas), to a certain place where those who participate in this hidden art (mysterii) come together to hold a vastery. It is not only forbidden to do this, but also to believe that this is true, as will be said more widely later, as well as that,

5) We have adopted the reading Xotariarn after Löscher; in the other editions: XotorigM. That the former reading is preferable, seems to us the addition to prove: <Is qua r-r "atis äieitur. ^r8 notaria

is the art of writing quickly and with abbreviations. Löscher notes, "It is understood to mean a type of cabbala called xotarieuou."

6) sapulus - degen handle.

7) Wittenberger: ueopa", Which is the correct reading, because Löscher notes: "in the manuscript it says: die auf Besem reiten." Basel and Jena: ssobum; Löscher, Erlanger and Weimarsche: 8ool "iu.

1) Vsl-VIo8S8 vsrax st tu insrulax. This sentence has already been an erux to the earlier "translators". Zeidler renders it thus: "Either Moses lenges or you deny."

2) Weimarsche: ctiorsr instead of "Mssrs.

3) Löscher: "The following was added to a sermon which was held on the 7th Sunday after Trinity [July 6, 1516]." This introductory sermon is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XI, 1724, where the superscription should read, "On the seventh Sunday after Trinity," because Luther follows in these sermons the oogustuäc, "eolsmas Uoiuauas, according to which Matth. 7, 15. sf. is the Gospel for this Sunday (Weim. Ausg., Vol. I, p. 61).

4) - shoot with arrows.



that the old witches turn into cats and tomcats and wander about by night, must not be believed to be true.

Fifth, it is said that throughout the year (per annum) a certain woman, whom some call Herodias, others Mrs. Hulde, still others Venus, travels around with some and holds, as it were, a regularly recurring Noigungssest (lustralem februum), who leaves with her hosts either coals or trifles from her chariot, which are later invented as gold and silver, as also in the Latin language there is a saying of coals and gold, 1) which perhaps originated from this.

Sixth. Some have a kind of Hansteufel, like the household gods of old, which sometimes appear during the day. These are called in the mouth of the people (vulgo) with some "Wichtlein", with others "Hehlkäpplein", 2) and one believes that in a house there is great luck, which is inhabited by such devil ghosts, and one fears more to offend these devils, than God and all the world.

Seventh. Some, in order to find the devil, go backward around a church, and just the opposite way, as one usually does, and when they find him going toward them, they surrender to him and make a covenant with him. Among these are also those who consider it an evil omen when they meet a priest early in the morning, for they mark themselves with the cross, so that nothing bad will happen to them on that day, as the devil teaches them that it will happen by the first meeting of the priest.

Eighth. There are people who keep company with the devils in the form of men (incubi) and women (succubi), 3) which I will deal with more extensively in a moment.

Ninth. This wickedness of Satan even goes so far as to desecrate the sacraments. Because there are people who give the children,

1) At Vsinsärns, lisi. V, Mt>. VI, the saying is found: Onrborwm pro túsWuro iivoniro.

2) In the old editions written: "vichtelen" and "helekeppelin". They are called Hehlkäpplein because they make themselves invisible by a little cap. Cf. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. XX, 2112, 8 7.

3) Cf. Tischreden, Cap. 24, 8 94 f. St. Louis edition, vol. XXII, 754 ff.

who are to be baptized, verbena, cheese, and I don't know what other things. In fact, this verbena is what is most often used for superstitious acts. With whimsical ceremonies they dig it up, then have it consecrated, and with frightening sacrilegiousness they invoke many (dead) names of God and the saints over it, of course seduced by some Jew who goes with dazzle (praestigioso).

I do not want to say anything here about the purification (menstrua) of women, from which some [witches] make potions that cause a nonsensical love, but more often still cause death. Some mix them into the pig's feed so that they become fat more easily. I let it be known that they advise the children who suffer from wasting (tabe = emaciation) or leanness in such a way that they put the children in a cauldron, put fire under it, and cook moderately in warm water, while one woman stands by, but another runs around the house three times and asks through a [door or window] opening: What are you cooking? and she answers: I cook old meat, that it may become new. Likewise, that they are afraid to put the weaned children to the breast again, because of the danger that they may become cursers or speak shamefully. I say nothing of the abominable things they do when in need of birth. They read the legend of St. Margaret most devoutly and even prefer it to the suffering of Christ. Others hang the man's pants around the neck of the woman in childbirth and prove their madness with other antics.

Moreover, some women are so foolish that they take what is said in jest as serious: If you have lost something and want to find it again, give alms, namely a warm roll, and put consecrated salt on it, and you will soon find it. This is what he meant in jest: Put salt on it, namely on the lost thing, then you will find it. But you understand it: "on the bread roll". Not as if this were something great, but it is something unseemly that the devil should make such a mockery of alms and consecrated salt. Just such wisdom have the

Women who, deceived by a similar joke, take the branches that were strewn on the way of the procession on the day of St. Marcus [April 25] and pull them over the sown peas and beans; namely, because it is said: If the seeds are swept with such branches, they will be safe from being taken away by the fowls or the birds of the air, they do not understand, "If (that is, at the time when) they sweep, the birds will not do so." And who could enumerate all the foolish, ridiculous, false, void, and superstitious things with which this easily seduced generation deals? From their mother (ex prima) Eve it is innate to them that they let themselves be deceived and made fools of. From this similar things may be judged. But because there are people who do not believe that such a thing is possible, and others believe too much, we must talk about it a little more.

Firstly. Some do not believe that these witches (magas) and soothsayers are capable of so much that they make thunderstorms, harm the body, do evil to cattle, goods, children, 2c., having this reason for their opinion, that they do not believe that the witches have such great power over the creatures of God, and [believe that] the devils are not allowed so much by God. And yet, even though they believe that everything is imposed by God, they do not take refuge in God when they suffer something of this kind. Therefore, they should be persuaded to know that the devils are very capable of such things under God's permission, which can be sufficiently proven from the Scriptures.

First. Job 1, 16. When fire came down from heaven and killed the cattle and the servants, and a wind arose and flowed around the house and struck his sons, and at last smote him in the body with the most grievous swarms; Finally, he also tempted him to despair in his soul with the most severe temptation; and yet the text there clearly expresses both, namely, that the devil worked this after he had received permission from God, and that God did the same, as it says there:

"The fire of God fell from heaven" 2c. And he himself says afterwards [Job 1, 21]: "The Lord has given, the Lord has taken away" 2c., although the Lord says there to the devil [Job 1, 12]: "Behold, all that he has is in your hand; without him alone do not lay your hand." So if Satan can throw fire and lightning from heaven and do such great evil where God allows him to, why should he not be able to do the same now when he is summoned to keep his covenant?

Second. That the plagues of the Egyptians were carried out by evil angels is testified by the 78th Psalm, v. 49: "He sent evil angels among them, and made them rage and rage and suffer. But those plagues were greater than those which any witches can do now.

Thirdly. How many possessed souls are told about in the Gospel! How many souls he still possesses daily with error and sin! Or is it less, if he corrupts an immortal soul, than if he damages a mortal limb or the air?

Fourth. Did he not persecute and kill all the holy martyrs himself? Yes, he took the Lord himself and led him from the desert to a mountain and from the mountain to the pinnacle of the temple [Matth. 4, 5. 8.]. Likewise he contends [Revelation 12:7] with Michael and his angels.

Fünstens. The suffering of Christ proves all this exceedingly. For if the Son of God suffered so much from the devils and their members, what wonder is it that He can destroy our scourings and damage our members by the same permission of God?

Sixth. See how God gives power to so many wicked men to abuse goods, wealth, power, dominion, to the destruction of others and to sin themselves. Much more does he allow the devils to abuse things against us, whether to punish us or to instruct us. But it is true that they cannot move a leaf on the tree without God's permission, because, as Christ says [Matth. 10, 29. f.], not even a leaf falls from the tree to the earth without the will of the Father. Therefore, we Christians must know,

that these evils are indeed done by the devils and their witches, but that it is nevertheless so ordained by God. God does good by Himself, evil by evil. Therefore Job [Cap. 1, 21.] (as St. Augustine remarks) did not say: The Lord gave, the devil took away, but: "The Lord who gave, he also took away." But more of this hereafter.

Secondly. All too much is believed by those who believe that the old cripples can turn into hangovers or assume any other guises and go to their revels at night. And about this (spiritual rights) there is an explicit text Question 15, Cap. 6. And it is not surprising that no one believes it. For they are deceptions of the devil, but not a real thing, as beautifully illuminated from an example, which John of Kaisersberg 1) tells: that an old witch, in order to convict a preacher of lying, since he had taught that such things were not true (*falsa*), had him called late in the evening, smeared herself with ointment before his eyes, sat in a baking trough and now wanted to drive away: behold, she immediately fell asleep and made all kinds of violent movements, until she fell off the bench and received a wound on the head. At last she regained consciousness and was convinced by the wound and the fall that she had been mistaken, however much she had boasted of her miraculous faces.

The same can be seen in the descriptions of the lives of the fathers, where a virgin is told, whom her parents brought to St. Macarius. 2) In his eyes she was a girl, while to the others she seemed to be a cow. And such deceptions still happen today, as happened to the one who owed a Jew and suffered in his sleep that his whole leg was torn off his body, so that he should disgrace the Jew. It is also told of a monk who almost consumed a wagon full of hay 2c.

There are many reports of such things everywhere. For the devil can change from one person to another and miraculously deceive the senses, as is said in the legend of St. Martin, where one who had been given a certain garment by the devil under the name of Christ deceived the senses of all. A similar story is told of a certain nun who was seen by others sitting half-naked in her cell in a tattered cloak with a heap of cow dung on her head, but who nevertheless believed that she was sitting there in the most shining garment and adorned by Christ with a golden crown. Similarly, in the legend of St. Andrew, how the devil in the form of a beautiful woman deceived such a great man. The same is true of the knight who came to an inn late at night, thinking that he was in pleasant company among girls and dances and enjoying a delicious meal, but early in the morning he was lying in a deep cellar, and his horse was tied to a tree, unlined. But the strongest is the one in the legend of St. Germanus, the bishop of Altisiodorum. See the catalog of the saints, Book 6, Cap. 9. Once he had arrived, and since it was already bedtime, a table was prepared for the neighbors (as he was told when he asked) who would be there during the night: so he summoned those who were coming, woke up the father of the house with his own, and inquired whether they knew them. When they answered in the affirmative, he ordered them to go to the neighbors and see if they were at home, and they found them all asleep in their beds, and so it was clearly revealed that it was a haunting of the devils, and he disappeared at his command. 3)

But I also want to satisfy those who feel like quarreling about it. For they say that women were turned into tomcats is true because a certain Wagehals, who slept in an empty house, wounded several such tomcats; but when morning came, many old women were found so wounded. [This has

3) The same narrative is more detailed and understandable in the Tischreden Cap. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. XXII, 776.

1) Johannes Geiler von Kaisersberg, so called after the residence of his grandfather, who educated him, was born on March 16, 1445 in Schaffhausen. He died as a preacher at Strasbourg Cathedral on March 10, 1510 (König, Deutsche Literaturgeschichte, p. 194).

2) Cf. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. VIII, 346, note 2.

no reason,] 1) because either it is fictitious, or the devils have wounded the right old women themselves, in order to give credence to a lying thing, as if he had wounded the right old women, who seemed to wound the tomcats (that is, the devils). It is possible, I say, that the old women in their sleep or in a swoon (extasi) thought that they were running around and were wounded, while they were lying quietly in bed and were wounded by the devils in reality, so that they believed afterwards that they had really been running around and had been wounded by another. It is the same with riding on the broom. It is sufficiently obvious that the Herodiad and the goblins (laribus) are devils.

Thirdly, excellent men write about the devils, who act as man (incubis) or woman (succubis), that Satan in the form of a woman can have dealings with a man (succumbere), and when he has received the seed, again lie with a woman (incumbere), and thus procreate. 2) For in such a way he sought to seduce a certain hermit, that he might bring him to fornication, and then disappeared, as St. John, the first hermit, relates in Jerome. Yes, it is said that the devil was once in the form of a child, and süns nurses could hardly have given him enough.

Fourth. I almost doubt those who ride on a coat. It is possible that they go a short distance, but whether they go far, I do not know, at least not in such a short time, as they say. I know that even if they don't really ride, the devil can ape all the senses in such a way that the one who rides is calm, and yet makes himself think that he rides to his beloved (dominam) and accomplishes everything with her, which, however, may be nothing but mere imaginations (phantasmata).

I make the same judgment about those who bring food and drink from afar; and this is not opposed to the fact that afterwards they really recognize the places where they have been, as they say, because the devil

could form similar figures before their senses. Likewise, I also judge the servants he brings, for which it seems to me an indication that no one is allowed to address them, lest they disappear like smoke.

To the last of what is seen in the crystals or ivory or in a fingernail, it is certain that it is a deception of the devil, who fancies (fingentis) figures in the crystals, as much as is admitted to him. For he cannot always do this, nor above all, as one has experienced enough.

But from this other things may be judged. For the kinds of these juggleries (portentorum) are innumerable and still increase daily, because the workers in the vineyard of the Lord do not do their duty.

All this, however, is quite insignificant and small with the devil, for these are things by which he hears the bodily senses and imaginations, the lowest parts of man. But with much greater subtlety, as well as with greater danger, he intercepts the mind and the intellect. And though there are very many whose senses are open to his dazzling works, yet he listens to many more in the mind, namely, to the learned in the Scriptures, to the saints in works, so that he is called by the apostle [2 Cor. 11:3] by his proper title, a madman of the mind, even as he beguiled Eve with his mischievousness, so much so that he also disguises himself as the angel of light [v. 14.]. Therefore also St. Ambrose says in the sermon of the bishops: Hostile highwaymen 3) set ropes along all roads, which are to be greatly feared because of the innumerable danger of death (mortibus), small beasts with the great and innumerable creeping beasts, so that it is impossible for any man to be secure in any work, in his mind and intellect, unless he constantly distrusts himself and fears in all things, and with Job shuns all his works. But oh, that God would have mercy, how secure we are today, the lowliest as well as the highest, the learned as well as the unlearned, as if the devil had died, in such a

1) Inserted by us.

2) The Wittenbergers and the Jenaers add: "but mißgeburten (monstru), not a right human being".

3) supplantore", actually - who put someone "in leg to trap him.

Just that we fight the bloodiest wars for our delusion or quarrel and fight without end! Thus our godlessness deserves that we would be given over to a wrong sense.

Well, of the coarser and sensual things this is enough. There follows another kind of transgression, that is, those who are deceived by a beautiful appearance. There are again two kinds. One consists of those who deviate from the right path with regard to relics and the veneration of the saints, the other of those who are hopeful in wisdom and their own righteousness against God. First, let us deal with the first.

The saints are venerated and invoked by us in two ways. 1) First, only because of temporal and physical things. And these venerate the saints in a wrong way, yes, they honor themselves more in them, because they seek what is theirs, not what is God's, and therefore they make the saints almost idols to themselves. St. Augustine does not reject them completely, but only praises them in such a way that he says they are better than those who seek the temporal through alliance with the devil. For it is better to seek temporal things from God than from the devil. But by this they are not praised, not even Christians. It is a very small praise, yes, a great rebuke, that they are not good, if they are not compared with the most wicked. And yet, God, who also gives food to the young ravens, hears them also in this service (cultu), and gives them what they ask, as is proven from the Scriptures.

First. Through Naaman the Syrian, God gave salvation to all Syria, even though he was an idolater, yet held in high esteem by the king of Syria [2 Kings 5:1 ff].

Second. The people of Samaria, when they began to serve God, even though they also worshiped their gods (which could not possibly please God), were delivered from the lions that strangled them [2 Kings 17:24 ff].

Third. To Ahab and many idolatrous

1) Löscher remarks: Luther speaks soberly of the veneration of the saints, but still caught up in the Roman superstition, which he had not yet discarded.

and evil kings he gave many victories and benefits because of some works that have an outward appearance before men.

Fourth. St. Augustine, in his writing *De civitate Dei*, Book 1, Cap. 8, tells us that the Romans were given such an exceedingly great empire by God because of some excellent virtues that they had, while they could not please God, but only made themselves deserving of the Meys.

Fifth. He often spared the Jews, who avoided sin only out of fear of punishment, even though they were a people who always went astray in their hearts and did not please God.

Sixth. And even now God often averts pestilence, war and famine for the sake of an improvement that has come about only out of fear, although God cannot like a forced repentance that is less than half a repentance. This is quite obvious, because when the punishment subsides, they soon return to their former attitude and way of life, yes, they become even worse. All these, as they worship him as one God and live piously for the sake of temporal things, so they also receive their reward. We do the same with the saints of God, whom we honor no further than when our foot or head hurts or our purse is empty. And even though this is useless and foolish in the sight of God, and even though it does not please God and the saints, it still serves the glory of God, who is able to bring forth something good from all things, indeed, whose essence it is that He is good even to the foolish, even to His enemies and blasphemers, rains on the grateful and the unthankful, in order to teach us precisely by this that these are not the things for the sake of which he or a saint should be worshipped, since we see that he also gives these things abundantly to all bad boys without being asked or worshipped.

And so that this may be more clearly understood, let us enumerate some of the saints whose superstitious veneration is known to all.

The first is St. Anthony, who is venerated by many because of the "holy fire" 2) (because otherwise you would not look at him) is venerated and in sol-

2) ignis sacer - the rose, the red run, St. Anton's fire.

The saints of the world worship St. Anthony in such a way that they have almost gone so far in their godlessness that they believe that the holy man can perform these healings himself, by his own strength or through the gift that God has given him. So much so that they do not ask for what they desire from God through the intercession of St. Anthony, but, as it were, from Anthony himself alone, that they do not even think of his intercession. Then they seek this grace of healing from him alone in such a way that they either do not know or do not seem to believe that God could bestow it through anyone else. In the meantime, no one has ever heard of anyone who has called upon St. Anthony for the merit of succeeding Anthony in the joy of the spirit and in the other virtues mentioned in the legend of St. Anthony, but of the fire it says nothing at all.

The second is St. Sebastian, who is venerated above all because of the pestilence; only recently St. Martin was added to him as a companion, 1) [and St. Rochius, who led a very fine life and enjoyed a high reputation. The holy life and faith of these three men is not to be appropriated by anyone. And to also blurt out my suspicion, which admittedly may seem inconsistent, it appears that some saints have been called to this service before others only because of the sound (allusione) of their names. For the name S. Tonii has in Italian almost the sound (Italica allusione prope sonat), as if one said: sanctus ignis, that is, the holy fire, as if he was because of his name also the emergency helper (patronus), who could heal the holy fire, as also the pagan Romans the fever 2) and other things, which in their name an appeal Hal

(allusiones rerum) to the gods. So also Sebastian "Sanct Pastian", as if he alone could help against the "plague", while in their biographies nothing is read about the plague. Therefore, even in Italy, these two are honored before others no differently than if you saw that among the pagans the evil-willed deities are pacified. Now the holy "Rochius" has a name, which in German is "Rache" (revenge) and Zorn (wrath), as if he were therefore useful to avert the wrath of God, because he is either called Rochius in truth, or only invented. But the legend of the same, if it is otherwise credible (si recipitur), tells something like that]. 3)

The third is Valentine, the patron (praefectus) of the falling sickness. Since we read nothing that he had to do with this disease, so I would almost swear that he has come through the consonance in the German language to the office that he must provide help here. For cadere means "to fall", which sounds quite similar to "Valentin". And one should not be surprised about this, since the superstitious women also employed St. Vincent to find lost things, guided by the same consonance; for in German invenire means "to find", and therefore they appointed Vincent a servant and guardian over the lost things.

It is not something great nor wonderful that God allows this to happen, and still accompanies these things with his constant benefits, and the church approves of it in the same way, especially as far as St. Anthony is concerned, because, as I have said, God cares little about distributing these things, which he also gives to his enemies. In the meantime, he lets both the foolish and the weak in faith enjoy these goods, as long as they are not worthy of better things, or until they become capable of better goods.

The fourth 4) is Christophorus, according to a

3) This last sentence is added by Luther in the misprint index.

4) Löscher: "The following was preached by Luther as a sermon on the feast day of St. Jacob [July 25, 1516], after he had sent a short preface on the words [Matth. 20, 22: 'Ye know not what ye ask.' - This introduction has not been preserved for us. (Weim. Ausg.)

ts The following passage, which we have put in brackets, is missing in the editions of Schumann and Lotther. The Weimar one has it only in the margin with the remark that this passage is found in the first edition, but Luther had preferred to see this passage deleted, as can be seen from the misprint. In the editions there are many different readings in it, depending on whether they used Luther's improvements more or less.

2) Isdris was worshipped as a goddess, As reported by Pliny.

Legend, which is not both apocryphal and suspicious, but who has such great honor that no apostle can be compared to him, even if his deeds are written in the middle of the Bible. However, he is not honored for the sake of obtaining forgiveness of sins and the faith or grace of God, but, as the verses say, for the sake of this service:

Saint Christopher, such great power is within you:

He who sees you early in the morning, his mouth is full of laughter at night.

Satan cannot strike him, cannot spoil him by sudden death.

First of all. See how here the wicked ascribes such great power not to God, but to a wooden and painted image; he does not even ascribe it to faith, which alone makes us receive it when the saints obtain something.

Secondly. I would like to be instructed by which scripture and by which miracles it has been proven that the image of Christophorus can accomplish this. Thus, under the pretense of godliness, a vast sea of superstition has broken in, since no one prevents it, as the priesthood sleeps and eagerly seeks gain.

Thirdly. Why does the one who saw him early in the morning laugh in the evening? How? if he saw him in the evening? Has he so bound his strength to the morning sight that he who has forgotten it early in the morning or has come too late, would have looked at him in vain if he had looked at him afterwards at any other time of the day?

Fourth. Why is it not said, "He who follows your faith will always laugh? Whoever suffers with you will rejoice with you? But far be it from them that would follow him, seeking those things. Far be it also that they who would follow him should seek those things, or seek them in such a way.

Fifth. Why does not the cross of Christ make those who look at it laugh, since it has the testimony of Scripture? Is then he

image of Christophorus better than that of Christ, since Christ's cross alone is in truth a type of Christophorus [cross-bearer]?

Sixth. The worst thing is that in this way people love him more, revere him more, look at him more diligently and trust in him more than in Christ Himself, so that they show that they do not praise God in His saints but themselves, because they do not seek the glory of God but their own benefit, and publicly confess this clearly with an insolent forehead that they do it for the sake of diseases. It would be better to follow the saints, be taken away by a sudden death, and become blessed, than not to follow them, die a natural death, and become damned. Also this saint seems to be invented first by soldiers and noblemen and noblemen (generosis), since in the wars a sudden death, to German "the going death" is to be feared to them, especially after the shooting guns are invented. But they do not think of the fact that the people there die much more often stante morte, in German "of the standing death", and not only "of the going death".

Seventh. That men seek to be secure thereby, and to live without the fear of God, whereas all worship of the saints is instituted for the fear of God, that it may provoke men to repentance, make them remember death, and point them to the life to come. But they use the same only to flee these things, but to hold on to those. Therefore Christ should be said to take back his word, since he says [Matt. 25:13], "Watch, for ye know neither the day nor the hour," for we have found Christophorus to watch for us while we snore, and we can be sure of the whole day, much less that we should not know the hour. How? if now also Christophorus had found another Christophorus, whom he had looked at, and had himself become certain that God would not strike him: how then would he have come to his martyrdom? since it has now, not with weakness, but with wickedness finally come to such a point that God is deprived of his dominion, that he has to strike those who look at Christophorus, and that he has to strike those who do not look at Christophorus.

The day when neither water, nor fire, nor any creature can kill.

The fifth is St. Lawrence, whom they first honor with fasting, so that he may protect their house from fire, but then on his feast day they do not suffer a speck of fire in the house all day. However, in other houses they use fire to cook food. But in this way they do not fear and worship St. Lawrence, but rather fire. But perhaps they are so foolish as to believe that fire is abhorrent to St. Lawrence because he was burned and roasted in it, so that when he sees a fire he remembers the injustice he has suffered and is angry with those who have it. If it were so, no Christian should have fire on any day. Or did he become a lord of fire because of this, because he overcame the fire? That is certainly true (he overcame it), yes, he also became a lord of the devil, of sin, of the world and the flesh and all evil. So why is he worshipped for the fire alone? Or why do you not worship him, so that he may protect you from ungodliness and wrath, from anger and hope, by which he is roasted on the fire by Decius and his servants, who carried this out? These he finally overcame, and can still overcome in you through his intercession. But you would want to look for this elsewhere than in St. Laurence; therefore he must only be the protector against the fire. St. Florian was given to him as a comrade, whose life and name is also unknown, and is not known by them in any other way than that they see him painted on paper as he pours water on a burning house. For they are satisfied with this, because they also look for this only in him.

The rest we pass over in brevity. St. Vitus has his assigned position at the lamentable St. Vitus' Stanze. St. Erasmus is the protector of the miserly, but in such a way that he is venerated with a certain number of prayers and with wax candles: then he will surely flood them with wealth. For what else should he do, since he has nothing to do? But

St. Louis of the Order of Minorites, 1) because he once in his life made [bad] beer well, may now, since he is dead and blessed, do nothing else [than brew beer]. Saint Wendelin, a shepherd, is even more useful against all wolves than all dogs. And when he was alive, he tended only one man's cattle, namely his own; now that he is dead, he is forced to tend all people's cattle. We Christians are still not ashamed to divide the business of temporal things among the saints as if they were now servants and journeymen, so that almost the den of superstitious customs has returned, that we have again built the tangle (cabos) of Roman gods and a kind of pantheon anew, for no other reason than that we might have a good life only here.

Now we want to add some female saints. Among them, St. Anne, as she is both a newer and an older one, is rightly the first. Although her legend is exceedingly doubtful, nevertheless she was probably the most pleasant in this respect, and still is, that she came as a new one, because we begin to get tired of the old things and of those which have a quite certain proof. But it was even more pleasant because it did not come empty, but full of riches, since otherwise it could not have done anything at all if it had brought poverty. Secondly, that she is almost elevated above the Blessed Virgin. Thus, new festivals always detract from the old ones, and we elevate the new ones, guided more by the influx of the great crowd than by proper devotion. Thirdly, that it is clear and evident that they began to worship her because of wealth, according to the apocryphal and very suspicious legend, in which that impoverished gambler was helped (even from heaven) to become rich again. For this alone has the godless eye of avarice observed in this whole legend. And it is necessary that because of the feast of this holy mother, the feasts of all the saints are now somewhat obscured, especially those of the apostles, perhaps because they taught poverty. And yet God wanted them to

1) Barefoot, Franciscan.



They have been worshipping St. Anne so much for the sake of wealth that they have also sought other things that are of the spirit, as the church does, as the so-called collections of this day show. But they believe that they have enough festivals for this, which have long been celebrated to excess.

The second is St. Barbara, after whose legend many others have been invented, such as those of Catharine, Dorothea and Margaret. But those who honor her most devoutly seek that she may not die without the sacrament, which would not be so damnable; others desire that a pregnant woman may not be endangered in childbirth. For one reads that this holy martyr requested this and other things at her departure (*transitu*), that the one who keeps her memory should obtain this. First, according to the testimony of all, this legend is both apocryphal and suspicious, especially since it is written that she was a disciple of Origen, and Eusebius did not think of such a great virgin. Furthermore, that in the legend of St. Catharine a lot of things are mixed in, everyone who has only a nose notices that. But I take the liberty of wondering that the holy martyrs who die for the sake of Christ should have been so presumptuous, or should have placed themselves in such a position, that they should have wished to be venerated by men, or that they should have been certain that they would be venerated in the future. But see also this: since they are to die, they do not ask for those whom they worship that they may become righteous and blessed, but that they may obtain wealth, health, security (all of which they have despised by their death), perhaps not seeking to obtain the same goods for others to which they themselves have now gone. Hence it has undoubtedly come about that the memory of the suffering of Barbara and similar saints is kept more diligently than that of Christ Himself, which is the power of all the sufferings of the saints. But let us be blind, otherwise we could grasp it with our hands and recognize that nowadays in the church these saints have all the more honor, the more fables there are in their legends, or profit or benefit. So must

We also bear the weakness of these people until they are taught and a better mind is formed in them.

Thirdly. St. Juliana and St. Otilie are ophthalmologists, because they are venerated by none but those who suffer from the eyes, and certainly for no other cause than the eyes, making a natural right and an infallible inference from a miracle once performed, which, it seems to me, is not far from a trial of God.

Saint Apollonia is venerated without ceasing for her toothache and nothing else. Her long virginity and her extremely fervent faith are not remembered by anyone.

St. Scholastica is made mistress of thunder, and I know that this belief is completely prevalent among women, that when they hear that some saint has had something to do with some matter, they believe that he is very capable in this matter and is, as it were, made master of it. And some priests do not suppress this superstition, especially when it is felt that he will also bring something.

Now, as I have said, God allows this and gives what one asks, not because it is something great, but because He is good and gracious, that He both bears the weak in such a way, and gives gifts to the unworthy, whose slow heart does not know how to ask for better and eternal things, for which it is proper to ask the true God, and in which He is pleased when one asks Him for them and He can give them. For those who rightly revere God and His saints seek first the glory of God in the saints, and how they may follow them, as the Church does in its collections, therefore do not ask for such things; indeed, if they have them, they are taken away from them, so that they may direct their minds solely to the spiritual; nor can the true worshippers be recognized and distinguished from the false by any better sign than when the temporal goods are taken away from the latter, but given to the latter in abundance.

For just as God gives external goods to external righteousness, and internal goods to internal righteousness, so God gives external goods to external righteousness.

If God takes away the temporal goods, he gives the inward righteousness inward goods and takes away the outward goods. This is evident in all the saints; though God has not in fact (effectu) taken away their temporal goods, he has nevertheless (affectu) taken away their hearts. Even though such people do not deserve anything in heaven, they still have a reward on earth, and they are right in that they do not desire this from the devil. For in this way he also gives many priests and monks fat and sweet pasture, although they do nothing else in their whole life but always read their prescribed prayers (horas canonicas) with a cold and unwilling heart and never pray. Just as they make themselves believe that they have satisfied God with this, God also makes himself believe that he has done enough for them when he fattened them as cattle in this life.

But some quarrelsome ones charge that I am acting sacrilegiously in forbidding to call upon the saints for bodily distress, since the church also prays to be delivered from peril of soul and body through the intercession of the saints, as in the Collecte: "and that we may be delivered from adversities of the body, and cleansed from evil thoughts in the heart" and the like. Secondly, they adorn their good opinion (as they call it) that they do not seek the temporal any further than that they might thereby more conveniently seek the spiritual, and for this reason they want to live longer and be healthy, that they might repent and become better.

Thirdly. That some have the conviction (as John Gerson thinks) that the saints in heaven are given such gifts in such a way as they had different gifts of the Spirit on earth, according to the words 1 Cor. 12:9: "To make well one another's gift" 2c.

### **To this I reply:**

First, I set this word of Christ against it [Matth. 6, 33.]: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." And again [v. 32.], "After all these things seek the Gentiles." If Christ calls those Gentiles who seek after such things, I hope.

that I am permitted to call them weak Christians or at least sluggish people who have a low desire [for spiritual goods].

Secondly. Nor do I object to the saints being called upon for temporal things, but I do object to their doing so solely for the sake of temporal things, and to their virtues and examples being disregarded. Show me just one of the number of all saints who, for the sake of his humility or because of another virtue, would have such a large audience, veneration and name as St. Valentine has for the sake of the falling sickness.

Thirdly. I admit that the church in her litanies asks for protection from lightning and thunderstorms and other physical hardships, but she does this in the right order by first asking for mercy and forgiveness of sins. For Paul also commanded that we should pray, that we may have peace and quietness in this life [1 Tim. 2:2]. So do thou, and thou shalt live; and thou shalt not hear me speak evil against thee.

Fourth. I admit that the weak in faith may ask for health and life, so that they may lead a better life. But here I must say two things. Who knows, or who dares to say of himself, that he has so pure a heart as to desire this in so simple an opinion? Success proves that the greater part only pretends to want to improve his life. For almost always those who are freed from God's punishment or chastisement by their impetuous pleading become worse, so that it seems that God wants to convict us of our foolishness just by this, namely, that we do not understand that He makes us healthy when He chastises, and rather makes us quite ill when He withdraws His [punishing] hand according to our wish. Secondly. If you want to improve your life, you can never do it better than if you persevere under the chastisement you have begun (i.e., in the actual correction and healing of life) until death. For this improvement of life is all the more thorough and lasting, since it did not take its beginning from you, but from

God, who will come before you before you ask. Or how can I now describe all the glory and dignity of the life that passes in suffering (*passivae*)? We are all foolish who presume to improve our life when we are in good health, since we do not realize that it has begun to improve in sickness, and that life in suffering is much more excellent than life in action (*activa*). Therefore, Christians should rather be advised not only to bear their illnesses gladly, but also to wish that death would come the sooner the better. Nothing is more useful to the Christian than to die as soon as possible, as St. Cyprian teaches. But we prefer to listen to Juvenal: "One must pray that a healthy spirit may be in a healthy body. Thus St. Augustine does not speak [but]: when we are healthy, then most [in us] is the vile (*insanus*) disease of evil desire; not [do I say] that one should seek bad health, but that if it is imposed by GOD, one should receive it as a very good messenger of GOD, because one should not seek good without the will of GOD.

Fifth. God has also provided this very well for the sake of the hardened and the hard-necked, that some saints are considered terrible and, as it were, avengers, like St. Anthony and some others. But we teach the Christians who have a good confidence that one day they will be added to the company of the saints as comrades.

Sixth. I know the new opinion of those who say that the saints, just as they were endowed with various gifts of the Spirit in life, so also now in heaven have various gifts of grace with which they can help. But I do not see how they can prove this, except by an inference taken from similitude (*a simili*). But this kind of proof (*argumentum*) is exceedingly harmful in matters concerning faith. For what does the devil do, when he disguises himself as an angel of light, but to make a proof out of a similitude? or how many errors have flooded over the church under the name of Christ and his saints, under the pretense of holiness, under the pretense of (like

How many truths are rejected as a nuisance, pretending that one's conscience is too tender to hear them!

I see that the Church does not say: Saint Paul, heal my wounds, but: Pray for me. Therefore, you must know that all the saints are capable of all things, and that through them you will be given by God as much as you think you will receive. Therefore, you should entrust all your affairs to the one to whom you have the greatest affection; first of all, your sins and the distress of your soul, as St. Cecilia did at her wedding, calling upon all the saints in turn to preserve her chastity before God.

Of course, I do not reject what St. Augustine also expresses as his opinion in a certain epistle: that God, through a saint, does in one place what he does not do in another. Who knows the counsel of God? If he himself distributes, then it is rightly distributed. But therefore it is not salutary for you if the business is divided among the saints according to your presupposition (*sumptione*). Therefore he did not say that the martyrs in glory always receive other and again other gifts, but he says: He did not want that in all the memorials of the saints should happen what happened in those 2c. Although, as I have said, God so sustains the weak who seek only such things from the saints, giving them according to His gracious will what they desire, it is incumbent upon us to instruct and guide Christians to perfection, and to teach them what is wholesome and meritorious, lest they fall into the error of inventing idols from the saints of God. For it is not a merit that the body is made healthy and the money is increased, but if you are sick and poor, that is something beautiful, if you tolerate this merit in the right way.

Let this be said of the first glory of the saints, that is, the bodily and outward.

<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the saints are worshipped in truth and inwardly. This worship consists first of all in the praise of the heart, then by heart in word and work, that is, when God is praised in His saints and the saints are praised in God, as it is written [Ps. 150, 1. 2. Vulg.]: "Praise the Lord in His saints, praise Him according to the greatness of His power." So Paul writes Gal. 1, 24. that the first Christians did, since he says, "And praised GOD above me." So does the 111th Psalm [v. 1. 2. Vulg.]: "I will give thee thanks, O Lord, with all my heart, in the counsel of the righteous, and in the congregation: great are the works of the Lord, and delicious according to all his will." For the LORD wills that his glory be told, and the work of his hands be declared, as he saith [Ps. 102:22], "That they may preach the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem." And again [Ps. 9:2], "I will tell all thy wonders;" likewise [v. 15], "That I may tell all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion." And many other sayings in the Psalter. For for this cause he worketh so many and so great things in the saints, that he might be praised. Again it is said [Ps. 34:3.], "Let my soul glory in the LORD," and elsewhere [Ps. 105:3.], "Praise his holy name," and Ps. 20:6. [Vulg.], "Let us rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of the LORD our God be we exalted." For thus the apostle teaches [1 Cor. 1, 31.], "He that boasteth, let him boast of the LORD." Therefore there is no doubt that the saints desire to be praised and glorified, not in themselves, but in the Lord, and the Lord in them. And this way of worship will not only be pleasant to God and pleasing to the saints, but it will also be beneficial to you and incomparably more useful than if you worship them for your own sake and your own affairs; indeed, only this way is beneficial, and any other is harmful.

Therefore, for the simple-minded, we want a

way: Namely, he worships the saints of God rightly in God who looks at the works and grace of God and is moved by their contemplation and is filled with a sweet love toward God, that he has condescended to bestow upon them such great and glorious gifts, as if to say: I praise you and thank you, O pious GOD, for your mercy endures forever. For you have had mercy on this holy one and have prepared for yourself such a glorious vessel of honor out of the multitude of those who lie in sin and condemnation. Thus you have praised God in his holy one. Again, you will also praise the Holy One Himself in the Lord like this: O Holy One of God, N., blessed art thou among the children of men, that God hath counted thee worthy to be adorned with the gifts of such unspeakable grace and glory of God, as Saint Elisabeth beatified the holy virgin, saying [Luc. 1, 42. 45.]: "Blessed art thou among women, blessed art thou that hast believed; for that which is spoken unto thee of the Lord shall be accomplished." For you must perceive the odor of divine grace that he has poured out on his saints and taste the droplets of his goodness beforehand, so that you too may be inflamed with love for God. For what are the saints but, as it were, drops of dew or night drops in the locks and on the head of the bridegroom? As he says in the Song of Songs, Cap. 5, 2: "Open to me, dear friend, my sister, for my head is full of dew and my locks full of night drops." For thus he calls Micah 5, 6. the saints a dew, since he says: "There shall be the remnant of Jacob among many nations, as a dew from the Lord," for all that they are and do is dew and heavenly grace, which breathes the exceedingly sweet mercy of God upon the children of men. Thus, indeed, all glory must be brought home to the saints of God who gave them this power. Look at the Church, which sings of the Blessed Virgin: "You are a coward, O daughter, (but) from the Lord, because we, not from you but through you, share in the fruit of life; and on the feasts of all the saints, the Church addresses its prayer not to the saints, but to God, with the names

1) Löscher: "Luther said the following in a sermon on the day of St. Anne [July 26, 1516], after he had sent a few things about the precious pearl that was found in the field." - "We no longer possess the exordium." (Weim. ed.)

of the saints by testifying that the merits of them have come from God, and then by these merits God commands their prayer. For only after this sacrifice of praise is accomplished in the right way can we attach our prayer to it, asking first for just such grace from God, and lastly for temporal things, if indeed a man can pray for temporal things who thirsts for the spiritual.

But this invocation and veneration of the saints is so completely neglected that not only do we not consider the works of God's mercy on His saints, but we do not even know their deeds, or even their names, like the one who called the Holy Trinity "three falcons. Thus, we do not consider what good God has done for the saints so that He might be glorified, but what good they do for us so that we might be pleased. But the Holy Spirit and the Church of Christ, in all the veneration and the feasts of the saints, certainly have this in mind, namely, that we should lift up our hearts to GOD and to the divine works, and that from the contemplation of the graces bestowed upon them we may attain a confidence [in GOD], as Christ says Matt. 5:16: "So let your good works shine forth." To what end? That my leg may not hurt me? No, but "that they may praise your Father in heaven." Here St. Augustine says: they should not despair; this can also happen to them, if they only want it. Of course, the saints have lived according to this rule and for the purpose of doing good, so that their light may shine for the glory of God, and it is through the effect of the devil that their lives and works are not preached or celebrated for this purpose. All their lives they have sought only what is God's, but we seek not only in our lives, but also in the lives of the saints, only what is ours, and do not care about the glory of God. And everywhere only what and how much they are able to do for our benefit is preached, but not how much mercy God has shown in them. Therefore, they stoop to the utmost sacrilege and bold argument as to which saint in heaven is the highest in the sight of God, as if they themselves had done something and had not done something.

rather GOD; we have sunk our eyes completely into the flesh and turned away from GOD.

Yes, in our time (which is even more abominable) the veneration of the saints has come to such a point that it would be better not to keep the feasts of the saints, nor to know their names. To see this, go through the superstitions of the foolish great crowd and see how different patron saints the different craftsmen have. The goldsmiths have St. Eligius, 1) the shoemakers Crispin and Crispinianus, the walkers St. Severus, the painters St. Lucas, the physicians Cosmas and Damianus, the jurists St. Ivo, those who deal with the liberal arts (artistae) St. Catharina and sometimes also Aristotle as patron saints; others have others again, and the Franks have their Kilian; every nation its saint. But now see how they honor them. First, they do not care about their works and examples. Secondly, when it comes to the highest honor, they hold a mass early in the morning and celebrate this whole day. But they show this by no other sign than their clothes and idleness, by feigning a celebration more than holding it, since otherwise they kill time in revelry, singing and jumping (since their heart is never so far from God as on this day). Yes, they mock the saints as if they were celebrating Bachanalia or Saturnalia, and they continue this into the next day with drinking, gambling and, to put it briefly, with such a frenzy that it sometimes comes to murder and death. For this is the glory of the feast days in these evil times, that even an Anubis 2) or some abomination of the pagan gods has not been more shamefully dishonored, yes, that even your pig would not tolerate being so honored. But God's wrath has become so great, and he has given them a hardened mind, that everything must be completely wrong.

1) Thus in the Weimar, Erlangen and Löschen. In the manuscript, in the Basel collection and in the Lotther edition: Dlo<sup>u</sup>iura; alone there is no such saint. Wittenberg and Jena: LutoNum.

2) Anubis, an Egyptian deity with a dog's head.

How much more right it would be if, with a humble and quiet heart and in a quiet house, one moderately refreshed oneself and brought the poor here and prepared a meal for them; indeed, it would be better if one worked and also did all the menial work than if one celebrated in this way. For it is not by this disorderly being with ostentation and indulgence, but by quiet conduct (therefore it is called celebrating the Sabbath [sabbatissare]) and love toward one's neighbor that one serves the saints. If you yourself would condemn it as something extremely shameful, if someone commits such things on Easter or on Christmas Day, why do you honor your patron saint, whom you have undertaken to honor most at that time? Or why is he, who all the year was calm and safe from your taunts and abuses, tormented with it just on this day, when it should be least? Why do we curse the Turks, of whom it is said that they shamefully defile the images of Christ and the saints? Or do we not yet understand that God shows us by their example (figura) how much it displeases Him that we Christians in truth defile His saints even more shamefully? What a beautiful service and piety this is! No one blasphemes the saints of God more shamefully than the very one whose patron he is, and on no other day more than on the one dedicated to his worship. Imagine if you could suffer such worship, that is, mockery, even from the least person.

Here, therefore, the bishops should be extremely vigilant; indeed, it would be very salutary if all feast days [of the saints] were abolished and only very few were kept, on which one heard the word of God early in the morning and read mass. For our feast days are nothing but a disgrace to the Church, and not a fear of God, but a godlessness against God, as experience teaches enough and more than enough. And God can say to us with much greater right than to the Jews (Amos 5, 21.): "I am disgusted with your holidays and despise them", and the word Is. 1, 14. 13.: "My soul is hostile to your new moons and seasons. The new moons and sabbaths, I do not like them."

<sup>1</sup>) Now there remains a twofold abuse in the veneration of the saints.

The first consists in the presumption and abuse of vain honor, in which some also quarrel among themselves about the saints, since everyone strives to make the saint who has done his business (sui studii) or belongs to his order so famous that he prefers him 2) to all the others, not because they want the saints of God to be honored, but they themselves, who have such great people as patrons. Although this vanity (vanitas) is clearly evident and very many deal with it, I do not dare to go further into it, partly because they, adorned with the most beautiful appearance, would easily dare to cry me out as a sacrilegious judge and to excuse themselves in the purest way, partly because this matter also concerns (tangit) the nobles and great ones in the church, who can suffer much less [that they are touched] than heaven itself. For it is precisely because of this that such a great swarm of brotherhoods 3) has arisen, and I do not know whether through so many brotherhoods they will not finally bring it about that they keep neither brothers nor sisters. But others may judge about this. Appearances are good; one must not punish too harshly until this matter itself becomes clearer.

I would like to say that those belong here who want the feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin to be the first and highest of all, and those who fill their entire sermons with the worthiness, privileges and indulgences of new feasts. Posterity will see that we have not lived in vain, for we have established new feasts to make the old ones obsolete; if we have established nothing else, this one is worthy of eternal remembrance.

1) Löscher: "The following was preached by Luther in 1516 on the 10th Sunday after Trinity, July 27. - The Exordien Hiezu finden Walch, St. Louiser Ausg., Bd. XII, 1726. Bd. X, 1284 und Bd. XIX, 736.

2) Weimarsche: oun instead of sum (misprint).

3) Degenhard Pfeffinger, councilor of the Elector Frederick the Wise, belonged to six and thirty brotherhoods at the time of his death (1519). The list of them can be found in Kolde, Friedrich der Weise, p. 74.

I hope that it will come to this, that also a feast of Abraham will be celebrated, because in his faith was the beginning of salvation and the promised Christ. For if God had not given the promise to Abraham, Christ would not have been born. And perhaps it is provided that the day of Adam and Eve must also be celebrated. And so the days have come when we are very fond of teaching and hearing everything except what is old and established truth, as the apostle says [2 Tim. 4:4, 3.], "They will turn away their ears from the truth, but will turn to fables, charging themselves with teachers, after which their ears will prick." Not as if I reject a godly inclination to new festivals, but that I see that not a few of the same are held and exalted, that one even seeks to make others detestable. The saints do not need our hope and discord; indeed, not they, but we make idols of ourselves and honor ourselves under the name of the saints.

The other abuse comes from avarice. Churches are erected everywhere and have already been erected over images that are not consecrated, especially where the easily seduced crowd of the common people flows in. And even the churches themselves are not consecrated; nothing but profit is sought in them, only that the appearance and the name of godliness is there. For if the devil sends false Christ under the name of Christ, how much more can he work error and deception under the name and image of Mary or another saint! And the more freely, the more negligent we are in heeding the counsel of Paul [1 Thess. 5:21]: "Test all things, and keep that which is good," and that which John says [1 John 4:1]: "Test the spirits, whether they are of God." But we are content with a beautiful appearance, and immediately run to it without examining. This running to and fro is done by the devil: first, so that he may draw the people away from the consecrated places and alienate their hearts from the sanctuary and direct them to worldly things, always tempting them with new and strange things and making them curious (for this is deserved by those who are weary of the church they have at home). Two

They do this so that they may have a just cause for neglecting the word of God and the worship of God in the parish churches. I do not want to say anything about the fact that by traveling they waste time and squander their wealth, and burden themselves with many sins by gossiping, or hearing, or seeing many useless things. But their house, their business (rem), their family they neglect, that is, in vain they toil and commit much evil.

But that such running together is of the devil is shown, besides what has already been said, by the impetuous running together of the mob itself; for it is said that women and servants, while they were working or going about their business, were suddenly raptured (raptos) and forced, as it were, to leave their business, which cannot possibly be by the Holy Spirit, but is a very evident deception of the devil. For the Holy Spirit is not a spirit that drives to sacrilegious behavior and impetuous being, but a spirit of counsel. Nor does he revoke his commandment, in which he commanded the woman to be under the authority of the man, and that without his consent her vows are void; and the servants that they should serve their masters faithfully and not embezzle anything: how then should he draw away the very same to disobedience, which he has so strictly forbidden? Therefore, I have heard that where such churches were consecrated and ordained for regular worship, such congregation ceased. But it is said that even now some of them are not consecrated, lest the influx should cease and the profit dry up. Oh about the Christians who seek profit through such ungodliness! Is that from God that cannot bear the cross and the blessing? Who could have ever believed that Christians could be plunged into this abyss of error even by the most cunning devil!

But I, too, have known a man who began to erect such a sanctuary, which serves to deceive, under the name of the Virgin Mary, who had appeared to him in his sleep (so holy and worthy does hope think it to be); but when this was refused him by the superiors of the Church, he denied the idea of a sanctuary.

the devil immediately stopped in that place, and he went elsewhere and established his whorehouse there. But these are in truth images and idols of whoredom, which the Lord punishes through the prophet [Hos. 9:1, Ps. 73:27], in which believing souls forsake Christ through their whoredom. For He has forbidden to believe those who point us to certain places and preach to us [Matth. 24, 23.<sup>1</sup>) 25.], "Behold, here is Christ, or there." Believe them not, saith he, "behold, I have told you before." Therefore let it be cheaply suspicious to thee, as the pestilence that creepeth in darkness [Ps. 91, 6.], however delicious a semblance that may have inag, which is performed upon these unconsecrated oerters. For it is not in vain that the Church has decreed that her churches and places should be sanctified by the word and prayer. Now if anyone's wife or servant should cry out that they have overcome such a spirit for pilgrimage, hear my counsel: then you also take a good oaken wood (oruoem) and sanctify their backs with several strong blows, and you will see that by this finger of God that devil is cast out. For since women are easily seduced, he is most wont to deceive them by these antics.

Thirdly. If he does not have this power in unconsecrated places (for in truth he does not have it everywhere), he does so in holy places. But this he does when he incites to leave the mother church and to go on pilgrimages to church consecrations and saints' funerals (patrocinia) of other churches, which are situated either in desolate places or in villages, but where you can see so many taverns and disorderly houses that you would like to think it is a Babylon (for in such a way the church consecration feasts and the feasts of the patron saints are kept nowadays); but in the evening they return home full of indulgences, that is, full of beer, revelry and other abominable sins, which they have served there, if they go home at all; for it happens almost regularly that at the church festivals some are killed or at least badly wounded, in such

Just that it has also become a proverb: The indulgences from the church consecrations are distributed late in the evening, because they beat themselves to death or at least injure themselves there. The devil continues to increase such lamentable disgrace, and we can still be of the opinion that it would be better if these church consecrations were not held, but should take place. May the Lord finally give our bishops the grace to revoke this indulgence at the consecrations and not allow the devil to mock us when we are murdered, for he would already be allowed too much to mock us through error.

But here I am opposed to the pilgrimages which have been accepted (*receptae*) [by the Church] to St. Peter in Rome, to St. James, to Jerusalem, to Trier, yes, also to various places to honor the relics of the saints and to obtain indulgences.

I answer: He would not sin who would have all these in order and would stay at home; they are not required, but one takes them on voluntarily. But I do not oppose what has now been established by long custom and habit; those who want to may still go, only they should learn that they could serve God incomparably better and create their happiness with the same costs if they serve the poor at home, yes, those who are commanded to them, as, their wife, children, servants, overlords, then also patiently bear the chastisements of God and any adversities. But it is as if we do not have enough to fight with the devil at home, if we do not go out like Dina [Gen. 34, 1. 2.], and seek more opportunity to become disgraced. For how many resist the sophistical speeches and worries with which he disputes our hearts in the home church? Furthermore, he torments us every day with drinking, gambling, and idleness, and tries everything so that our worship will not remain pure and our blessedness will suffer.

Our greed for money has also recently invented that seven golden fairs (namely they are so called from the gold coins with which they are

1) Weimarsche as well as Walch: Matth. 24, 26.



paid) with certain wax candles and other customs are held, I do not know for what for a quite certainly occurring event. So the shameful enemy has not even left us this sacrifice unharmed.

How? if this bottomless and insatiable money bag of avarice also belongs here, since for the building of the church one sacrifices, begs, and a treasure without end is gathered together, and for this purpose one uses the relics and indulgences in the most cunning way: so that, where the money is gathered together, it is not spent, neither for the building of the church nor for the poor, but for wars or legal disputes, which are already there, or is kept for such, which will still come? For so also have they made the nails of Christ ministers of avarice, yet under an exceeding holy appearance of godliness, that they pierce the gold and silver coins [with the same]. Why do they not rather pierce paper or a board with them, if only it is sought that one performs a reverent act (*devotio*)? But what do I dare to describe the cesspool of avarice in the church, since the prophet himself despairs of it, and summarizes everything in one piece and says [Jer. 6, 13.]: All follow avarice from the greatest to the smallest. 1)

After all, this is supposed to be the summa of everything:

All these worshippers of the saints sin against the first commandment, because they do not seek what is God's, but their own, even in God and His saints, and are themselves in this work the ultimate end (as they say) and an idol, using God and serving themselves. Of these the word of the 78th Psalm [v. 34. ff.] can be said: "When he strangled them, they sought him, and turned early to GOD, and thought that GOD is their refuge, and GOD the Most High is their Redeemer (but now it follows from what heart they did this), and pretended to him with their mouth, and lied to him with their

tongue; but their heart was not steadfast unto him, neither did they keep his covenant faithfully"; and that word of Christ Joh. 6, 26. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me not because ye have seen signs, but because ye have eaten, and are filled." For the same cause he drove away him also that said [Matt. 8:19.], "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." But he said [v. 20], "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," by which, of course, he indicates that he said this not only for Jesus' sake, but also for his own covetousness (*cupiditatem*). -

So the verdict is clear [Matth. 16, 24.]: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny (not money, not clothing, not even health, but) himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Likewise [Luc. 14, 33.], "He that renounces not all that he hath cannot be my disciple." Likewise [Luc. 14, 26.]: "If any man hate not his father and mother, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

Furthermore, since they also seek their body and what is of the body, it is certain that they are not worthy of Christ; however, they are worthy of some gifts, like the hired servants, like the children of Abraham of Keturah [Gen. 25:6], but not of the inheritance with Isaac. But if they are not worthy of Christ, it is clear that they do not do his will, nor keep his commandment.

I do not say this to say that all those who are such people are condemned, but only that they may learn to recognize their misery and not rely on being Christians for the sake of honoring and worshipping God and the saints in such a way, but rather that they may see their imperfection and understand what is meant by the groaning that Christ taught us to confess and then commanded us to pray [Matth. 6, 12. 10.]: "Forgive us our debts" and: "Thy will be done" 2c., because we are not such people, although we should be. Therefore, if one can grasp the counsel of God, He does not give these [bodily] goods for the reason that He is in contact with the-

1) Löscher remarks: "This is said against Tetzl and his indulgence stuff. After that, Luther spoke in particular (sx prokssso) about indulgences, which will be communicated later from the 'manuscript'." In our edition, this passage is found in vol. XIX, 736 ff.

But rather to provoke by these little things, that either the imperfect, or at least his children, may desire the greater, to whom he does not give such things. And this is enough of this matter.

But lest the unholly heretics, the Picards, think that I am furthering their cause, who, out of great ignorance, indignant in haughty conceit, accuse us Germans of worshipping the saints of God and making idols of them, and therefore gather against us a great heap of scriptural languages, in which it is forbidden to worship more than one God, and, in order to make us hated by their own, as it seems, with good reason, do not indicate in the most deceitful way, that it is written that King David and Solomon and many others were worshipped, at the same time as godless perverters of Scripture and deceitful slanderers of our Christianity (pietatis) (for so these peasants finally teach us that one must worship only One GOD, and boast as if we had ever denied just that, while they cannot deny that often also the officials at the court of a king are honored and, as it were, worshipped, in order to reach the king all the more easily): so I say for the sake of the exceedingly coarse and inconsistent ignorance of these people: that one should at any rate take his recourse to the intercessions of the saints, as it is said in Job [Cap. 5, 1.], and turn to any one of the saints, and as Solomon directs his father [Ps. 132, 1. Vulg.], "Remember, O Lord, David, and all his meekness." But also the patriarch Jacob said of Ephraim and Manasseh [Gen. 48, 16. Vulg.], "My name shall be called upon these lads, and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac." But I will speak of this in His time, God willing.

<sup>1)</sup> Here also the trust in the indulgence should have been punished, if the same had not already been punished by me more than too much in many ways.

<sup>2)</sup> Now I have to talk about the other kind of over-

1) "This is certainly a later addition from the time when Luther prepared the print: unfortunately Löscher is silent here about the old manuscript." (Weim. Ausg.)

2) "What follows here first seems to have been preached on August 1, 1516." (Weim. Ausg.] - The exordium is found in Walch, St. Louis ed. vol. XII, 1726 ff.

**Lutder's shipyard. Vol. III.**

This is the case with those who worship the idol of their wisdom and righteousness instead of the true God. These are "the proud" whose king, as God says in Job 41:25, is the Behemoth, the devil. With these there is trust in free will [the opinion] that things are not bad for them, that they do not need a doctor. But Christ died in vain for them, because they can lead a good life without him. In this way the Pelagians in particular, and then all heretics, have been lost for ages. Furthermore, there are also people today who are not Pelagians, but have the same attitude or even a worse one than the Pelagians. For the Pelagians at least attributed to God that he instructed free will through the teaching of the law; but these have reason, which guides them rightly, 3) which strives for the best, so that they do not use the instruction of the law out of necessity, but only because it is convenient for them (pro commoditate). But in this they differ from the Pelagians in that they admit that without Christ one cannot lead a good life in such a way that it is meritorious, and so Christ died, not for the sake of sin, but because otherwise there would be no merit. It would not have been necessary for him to die in order to pay the punishments of hell, but only so that heaven could be earned. For imagine that if a child grows up without a real mortal sin (for this, they claim, is difficult, but still possible), Christ is not necessary to him as a deliverer from the power of the devil, but only as a helper to heaven, because if such a man died, he would neither go to hell nor to heaven. By this theology they seem to me to assert that no one is born as a child of wrath and a child of the devil, unless one wanted to say that a child of wrath and of the devil is he who has no merit. And since the priest at the baptism of little children blows out Satan, that he may give place to the Holy Spirit, it is understood by this that from such a vessel, which has no

3) Cf. Luther's detailed explanation of the Epistle to the Galatians Cap. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. IX, 237, z 347.

merit, only make one that has merit. For only now is the apostle forced to the point that he understood in such a way "the vessels of wrath" [Rom. 9, 22.]; and the sacrament of baptism gives grace, not for the forgiveness of sin, but only for .a beginning of merit, and the word of the [Nicene] Creed, "I confess a certain baptism for the remission of sins," must, according to the new gloss, be understood not of sins leading to damnation, but of sins not meritorious. And so original sin has brought no harm into the world, but only deprived of merit and of seeing God, and this deprivation of seeing (that is, of all goods) is not an evil [in fact], but only according to the word, namely privative [it only indicates the deprivation]. For in such a way we do theology nowadays. And [Gal. 3, 13.]: "Christ became a curse for us" and [2 Cor. 5, 21.] "was made sin for us", that he might free us from the curse and from sin, this is not understood differently than that he was made something unmeritorious (non meritorium), in order to free us from the unmeritorious. Finally, the little word "sin" will receive a new meaning in the whole Scripture, that is, the Scripture will become a completely confused book (in duet confusionem). But we want to leave this darkness and save it for another time, because we have spoken and acted of these things very often elsewhere.

Now, as we said above, since we are, as St. Augustine says. Since we are a corrupt multitude (Una massa perditionis), no one is justified other than by the pure grace of Christ, without any merit. And therefore he must necessarily be haughty and think much of himself who has not yet despaired of himself, his reason, his good opinion, his inward and outward works, and has come trembling and miserable to the throne of grace. For all those moral virtues and sciences which are in human knowledge (scientiae speculativae) plunge man into a twofold evil: first, that they are not true virtues and sciences, but sins.

and error, because they necessarily come from an evil heart that has not yet been made whole by grace, which in all things can seek nothing but itself, and so they make man empty and vain (inanem). Secondly, that they deceive man and make him puffed up, so that he makes himself think that he is neither evil nor foolish. Hence it is that he is sure, and cares for nothing less than seeking grace, knowing that he does no evil, though he admits that in so many good works he does nothing meritorious. From this comes further evil, that he despises, judges, condemns, bites, jeers against, punishes, belittles all who are not like him, for he, like that Pharisee (Luc. 18:11), is "not like other people," nor one of them. These are the ones who build their house on the sand (Matth. 7, 26. 27.), which is in terrible danger and will fall into eternal destruction.

But the right servants of righteousness know and confess that they are wholly sinful, and want that all the good they have is not in them, but apart from them in God and in His mercy, because the righteous of his faith shall live, but before God no living man is righteous (Rom. 1, 17. Ps. 143, 2.). Therefore, depressed by their sin, they judge no one but themselves, put no one down, despise no one but themselves, and hold themselves by this declaration (diffinitionem) of righteousness: righteousness consists in accusing oneself first, and a righteous man accuses himself first. These have in truth One GOD, from whom, through whom, and to whom (in quem) they are justified, and are without sin through the mercy of GOD, who forgives their sin, not through their active righteousness. Thus, God is praised and worshipped in truth, since to His works is attributed all that we are, indeed, since our works are not ours, but God's, as Christ says (John 7:16), "My doctrine is not mine." Thus nothing remains for us but sin, foolishness, wickedness, corruption and shame, and therefore we cannot please ourselves in any way or make an idol of ourselves, since we have again become the nothingness from which we came.

have come, and God alone remains all in all.

<sup>1</sup> But if we say this, we are reproached: Just as the apostle, who taught the same, was also reproached [Rom. 3:8]: "Let us do evil, that good may come of it; which condemnation is quite right."

Therefore, these must be answered: First, that it is not denied, but most zealously taught, that one should do good. The argument is only based on the word "good", because (Hebr. 11, 6.): "Without faith it is impossible to please God", and (Rom. 14, 23.): "Everything that does not come from faith is sin. Admittedly, their good, which they so call, done out of nature and out of a moral endeavor (moraliter), is therefore evil in the sight of God, because it is not done out of God and for God's sake (that is, it is not recognized out of God and not related to God), but man puts it on himself and pleases himself in it as if it were his, even though it is not his. For this addition of Leviathan (the devil) makes everything evil in the sight of God, however great the appearance it has in the sight of men, hence Paul freely exclaims publicly both about the Gentiles and the Jews [Rom. 3:10, 12]: "There is no one who does righteousness, there is no one who does good; they have all gone astray, and have all become unfit." But grace enlightens man to recognize that his works are God's alone; nature does not teach him this. Hence such a man is patient and meek, whether his words and works be blamed or praised, knowing that he loses nothing because it is not his. But nature rages when it is rebuked and is senseless when it is praised. The cause of all this is that faith and hope have no other foundation than God alone, Jesus Christ, the right rock, and by no creature. Reason and nature, however, have a sandy foundation, their

good works and their wisdom. Therefore, when a man's good works fall away through evil speaking, he is angry, but when they fall away through the revelation of conscience and divine judgment, he despairs forever. But the righteous, though he falls, rises again, and against his conscience he leans on God's mercy, as it is written [Ps. 21:8]: "For the king hopes in the LORD, and shall stand firm through the goodness of the Most High."

Therefore, the description of hope in the Magister Sententiarum [Petrus Lombardus] is either wrong, or it is obscure and not given in an understandable way, for hope does not come from merit, but vice versa, merit comes from hope; for as faith, so hope and love must necessarily be there sooner than any meritorious work. For hope comes only from God having mercy and pouring it out, and has no other object (objectum) or substance (materiam) or foundation than the mere mercy of God, not at all our works, which are rather the object (objectum) and origin of despair. Christ lived for us and is our merit if we believe in him. But those who believe in him do not henceforth live for themselves, nor accumulate their merits, but serve Christ, and in turn, make merit for Christ. For thus the apostle teaches Rom. 14:8: "If we live, we live unto the Lord; if we die, we die unto the Lord." He is our hope, and we (that I say so) are his hope, or those for whom he waits (expectatio ejus), as a son is the hope of his father, and the father the hope of the son, for whom he has provided everything and gathered treasures.

But as I have said of hope in spiritual things, so may it be understood of hope in bodily things, as there are riches, beauty, honor, power, favor, sex, good living, and the like. For he that trusteth in these things, and is proud of them, and despiseth others that are not equal unto him, it is evident that he maketh these things his own, that he taketh them for his own use.

1) Perhaps this following piece belongs to the sermon of August 3, 1516, whose exordium is found in Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. X, 1 288 ff; only it will have been reworked for printing. Compare, among other things, Luther's Urtheil here and there on the explanation of the "pes (hope) [1. o. Col. 1290, § 4s at the Magister svntviiturnum. (Weimar edition.)

He would not make a distinction between himself and any other man, however rejected. If he realized that it belonged to God alone, he would make no distinction between himself and any man, however rejected, and would confess that he had nothing more, only that Jesus Christ alone was his assurance. Thus it would happen that if this commandment were kept, there would be no hope, that is, no root, no beginning of sin, and as a result there would be no sins, but peace, love, gentleness, meekness, patience and all virtues in one heap, which, however, cannot be hoped for in this life. Therefore we always remain sinners and transgressors of this commandment, but are preserved by this sacrifice alone, that we well recognize this transgression and do not deny it, nor excuse ourselves in our sins with ungodly, malicious words, but confess them and sigh for the help of grace, and that the future kingdom will soon come. By this humility we deserve to be forgiven in the things we do too little, as St. Augustine says: "All the commandments are fulfilled when we are forgiven for what we do not do. But those who confess are forgiven, for God gives grace to the humble [1 Pet 5:5]. Therefore, one must beware of the harmful and flattering gloss, which completely exorcises and nullifies humility from the ground up, saying: God does not require that this commandment be fulfilled in this life; for this gloss evokes the most harmful certainty, it makes the hands limp and the knees of the sturdy fighters waver, and is one of the cushions and pillows which the Lord has made in the

**You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.**

This commandment (as well as all others) flows from the first commandment. For if the first one is kept, this one is also kept easily.

Prophet Ezekiel [Cap. 13, 18.] condemned. Unless one understands this to mean that God does not require it of those who demand such a fulfillment of themselves and suffer, and confess that they do not fulfill it, and therefore seek an early death, and desire to depart [Phil. 1, 23.], so that they may no longer lie in sins and in disobedience to this commandment, but be with Christ and in righteousness and in complete obedience to this commandment. To these, I say, he does not impute it, nor does he require it of them. But from those who do not demand it of themselves, but put pillows under their arms and walk without fear, sure that it will not be demanded, he will certainly demand it to the last penny. Of these the 10th Psalm [v. 13.] says: "Why should the wicked blaspheme God? For he saith in his heart, Thou inquierest not." For he that knoweth not that he is guilty of this commandment, how shall he know that he is a sinner? Whoever does not know that he is a sinner, how can he fear God and His judgment? But whoever does not fear, how can he be humble? But he who is not humble, how can he obtain grace? He who does not obtain grace, how can he be justified? He that is not justified, how shall he be saved? 1)

The other commandment follows:

1) On St. Laurence's Day, Aug. 10, 1516, Luther concluded the sermons on the first commandment. (Weim. Ausg., Vol. I, p. 74.] - "Here, presumably, the sermon of August 10, 1516, connected itself." (Weim. Ausg., vol. I, p. 430, note 2.) This sermon is found Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. X, 202 sf. The first paragraph of it is again I. o. vol. XII, 1728.

**The other commandment.\*)**

Yes, it is already held. For it is for this reason that our blindness was made manifest to our foolishness, since this would not have been necessary if Adam had stood firm; for then we would have known all this.

\*) This commandment is introduced by the Exordium, which is found Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. XII, 1728 sf., whose conclusion [Col. 1733, tz 61 shows that Huther proceeded to the interpretation of the second commandment on the day of the Assumption of Mary, August 15, 1516.

But now we do not even know what must necessarily be done in external things, let alone that we should know what is internal. Therefore, in the first commandment the heart and the inner man are instructed how to behave toward God, but in this commandment the mouth is instructed. For we sin against God with three things, with the heart, with the mouth, with works; therefore for each one there is a special commandment, and these commandments are all three such that they contain a negation (negativa) or a prohibition in themselves (prohibitiva). And among all ten commandments there is only one which commands (affirmativum), namely: "You shall honor father and mother" 2c. For the third, "Thou shalt hallow the holiday," theHErr Himself interprets by a prohibition (negative), saying [Ex. 20:10.], "Thou shalt do no work there." This is also indicated by the name "Sabbath," which means rest, that is, abstaining from works. For in the same no work is commanded, therefore on that day they occupied themselves only in reading the law. So in all the commandments he forbids evil, therefore no other commandment has a promise except the one, that is, the one which enjoins honor against parents (affirmativum). The others threaten punishment because they forbid evil.

Therefore / Just as he who does not sin with his heart does not sin with his mouth and work,  
Thus, he who sins with the heart cannot act rightly with the mouth or with any work:  
He who does not keep the first commandment does not keep the second and third,  
But he who holds the first also holds the second and third.

For it is not to be feared that he who has placed his trust in God, loves God above all things, hopes in Him, seeks Him, thirsts for Him, should use His name uselessly and dishonorably, just as it is not to be feared that a subject who loves his prince should not also want that his prince's name should be made glorious and held as a sanctuary everywhere through him. 1) Therefore, in the first commandment, we have already mentioned those who

1) As Löscher notes, the manuscript: imkert nt sanotuin, which we have recorded instead of Kaders.

sin against the same thing, namely people of two kinds, quite gross and quite foolish. Here all things must be spoken of in the same way. For in this commandment no other swearing is forbidden than when it is done in the name of God, but also no blasphemy against a man, let it be done in the name of God, but afterwards [where it is said], "Thou shalt not kill."

It should be noted above all that this commandment in an affirmative way also indicates that one should speak the name of God in the right way, or where it is necessary for salvation, and that here alone it is forbidden that one should not use it uselessly. Therefore, it is often commanded in Scripture that one should call upon the name of God, praising, thanking and glorifying. Thus it is written in Romans 10:13: "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Therefore, let us first look at the gross [transgressors], among whom we first encounter the superstitious, the soothsayers and those who invent superstitious things about the tetragrammaton from Jewish fables. 2) That these use the name of the Lord uselessly is obvious, for they use the name of God neither for the salvation of the soul nor for the glory of God, but for their own vanity, for alliance with the devils, in signs, words and gestures, as was said above [in the first commandment, Col. 1139]. For it lies

2) Instead of the previous sentence, as Löscher reports, the following is written in the manuscript: First, the superstitious, the soothsayers and others, of whom it is said above, desecrate the name of God. Secondly, some superstitious people from the Jews, who make useless talk about the rain tetragrammaton; but this belongs to the first commandment. Third, those who live unworthily of the Christian name, who actually desecrate its glory. Fourth, perjurers, liars, plotters (dolosi), deceivers, and all who abandon the truth when they call God as a witness and curse His name, 3) even by God; likewise the bishops who [wrongfully] 4) banish and absolve. Fifth, those who joke [with the name of God]. Sixth, those who blaspheme against God. These are the worst. Seventhly, heretics and hypocrites and people who have a hopeful mind, quarrelsome people who argue about the truth; indeed, those who call upon their righteousness under the name of God. These we will now take one by one. First: That these 2c.

3) Instead of nomlvj (Nvino is to be read: nomen 6M8 immo. This and the following correction results from the parallel passage Col. 1195.  
4) inZnKle is missing in Löscher and in Weimar's,

They are not interested in attaining the blessedness of the soul, much less in honoring God, but only in atoning for their lust. Therefore, just as they rejected God from their hearts and made Him useless in themselves, contrary to the first commandment, so they also now profane His name with their mouths and use it uselessly.

"But that which is done without need or just cause is called "vain" and "useless. But it is a twofold necessity or benefit, for which one should lead God's name, namely our blessedness and God's honor; yes, only God's honor, because we should also not seek our blessedness through His name, unless it is for His honor. But "to lead" (assumere = to take into one's mouth) is understood in this way, for example, when someone takes something before him or intends to do or say something, and uses the name of God for this purpose; just as he accepts (assumit) in his heart the grace of God through faith for his blessedness, so he takes (assumit) into his mouth with reverence the name of God for his and other people's blessedness. Now enough has been said about this in the first commandment, that one refrain [from the useless use of the divine name]. Nor can they excuse themselves by using holy words and prayers, since by doing so they sin more shamefully than in other such things.

Would you not consider him a madman who, wearing the sacred garments meant for worship, would go to the dance, to the theater, or to war, and make such a joke out of such a serious matter? If then you would punish him with all seriousness, why do you not punish yourself much more than the one who misuses that which is more holy than all garments, yes, that by which garments and everything are sanctified, not for dancing, but for fornication, for the works of the devil, or at least for bodily help, and does not respect the soul? Such is the excuse of those, as of him who in such a way abuses the holy garments, and when he is punished, says: Well, it is a holy and good thing. For what else should one say to such a one than this: [You speak,] as if I did not know that it was good and holy. This you teach me now, while I ask you for

For the sake of God, punish you for abusing the Holy One in such a way. But we are now such Christians, who buy wooden shoes, so that we do not defile our new shoes, and certainly do not drag good clothes into the muck, nor do we do to our golden vessels the dishonor of putting urine in them, nor even unclean water, but we drag the holy name of God to some unworthy things, without all shame. Since no one does this with what is his (just imagine that someone would be so furious if he did this with what is his), how will it be with what belongs to others, even what is his, who wants his own to be kept pure? How popular would he make himself, who would drag a prince's title, name, and coat of arms into the mire and turn back in it, namely, if he himself saw it and forbade, or rather commanded, it to be set up high, as it belongs? 1) But when we hear that the Turk desecrates the churches, defiles the altars and all the sanctuaries, we become quite beside ourselves, burn with anger, and think of avenging this disgrace by war, and complain that the princes do not wage war against the Turk. But just reach into your bosom, and you will have seized a Turk. In the meantime, God gives the princes to the greater punishment in wars among themselves, so that he punishes us more than the Turks, because we defile the sanctuaries worse than they do.

Secondly, we are confronted with perjurers, liars, schemers, deceivers and all those who abandon the truth by calling God as a witness and by cursing His name, even by cursing God, those who banish unjustly, even those who joke (with the name of God) and blaspheme against God, of whom something has already been said above and more will be said later. But here we will see who are the ones who sin by swearing against the name of the LORD.

It is therefore to be noted, 2) that there is a twofold

1) We have adopted the reading of the Weimar edition: in snkiiios ioco stntui instead of sukliini in the other editions.

2) Instead of the section from the beginning of the previous paragraph to here, the manuscript here brings only: "Secondly, those who sin by swearing against the name of God. Here is to be noted" 2c. This omission here has its reason in the fact that the same had already been said before in the manuscript. Cf. Col. 1193, note 2.

Swearing gives [a good and an evil]. Of the good it says Deut. 6, 13. and 10, 20.: "Thou shalt fear the LORD thy GOD, and serve him only, and swear by his name." For thus God Himself often swears in the prophets, saying [Ezek. 33, 11.], "As I live, saith the LORD," and Ps. 110, 4. "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent," and Ps. 132, 11. "The LORD hath sworn unto David a true oath." Thus Christ swears in the Gospel [Matth. 26, 63. f.]; the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, and all the saints swear and have sworn. And this is a meritorious work, because it is done in things pertaining to blessedness. Therefore, whenever anyone speaks or does anything that pertains to salvation, he should swear so that it will be believed, if it is feared that it will not be believed. Thus the apostle swears in the letter to the Romans [Cap. 1, 9. f.] that he often intended to come to them. What other reason did he have for his swearing than that it would benefit their salvation, that they would believe it? so that they would know that he was a faithful shepherd and not a greedy man, and that they would have confidence that true love was in him. Thus it is said in the 63rd Psalm, v. 12: "He who swears by him will be praised." The reason why God is pleased with this swearing is that by it his truth is invoked, and faith is believed in him, and for his sake peace and unity are established among those who swear. Therefore he is sacredly honored in this work, because the work of the devil is destroyed, namely strife and contention. For he that believeth not thee, and is not satisfied, believeth thee for the name of GOD, whom thou callest upon, and is satisfied; therefore we owe this honor to GOD alone. Therefore the apostle Heb. 6, 16. says: "The oath makes an end of all strife."

The other swearing is evil, and this is twofold. One is that which is done out of habit, because in this way, through the constant use of the name of God, reverence for Him is diminished. As when one says in German: "By God, truly, forsooth, as true as God is in heaven, by God and all the saints," in which

living GOD, by the holy GOD, "on my holy cross, on my holy blood, on the cross of GOD, it is torture great, torture beautiful" 1), that is, on the suffering of Christ it is so. Likewise, when one curses thus, "The devil take me, break my neck, God help me no more than God help me, on my soul," on my conscience, "by my faithfulness and honor, by my priesthood." This and many similar things are, unfortunately, so often in the mouths of many that almost the second word is such an oath. Here, house fathers and mothers should watch over children and servants and servants, for it is an exceedingly wicked habit and contrary to this commandment.

But for the sake of the simple-minded, one might ask: Does this have anything to do with the name of God, when one swears like this: "Truly, I speak the truth? I answer: Yes, because the name of God is the truth, because He is the truth. For the apostle Rom. 9, 1. swears by the truth and his conscience. And even though it might seem that this is forbidden because the conscience is not the name of God, since it is sinful to swear uselessly, just as it is sinful not to swear by the name of God or by something other than God, even if one speaks the truth, Christ still refers to Matth. 5, 34-36. refers all this to God, since He says: "You shall not swear by heaven, for it is God's throne, nor by the earth, for it is His footstool, nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of a great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black." From this it is evident that he who swears by what is GOD's, or what is appropriated to him, swears also by GOD, by Him in whom and to whom are all things [Rom. 11:36.].

The other is false swearing, when someone intentionally and knowingly swears falsely with the above-mentioned oath formulas; this is a very grave sin, and rarely does this sin go unpunished even in this life. If you doubt this, only ask the perjurers about it. But this sin is above the

1) In the original: "Martyr already".



It is very difficult when this is done in a solemn way with prescribed ceremonies (forma) in view of the church, as those do who secretly betroth themselves to each other, and as punishment for their sin afterwards hate each other and divorce by perjury: a terrible guilt, but also a terrible punishment. Therefore, among all the commandments, this one alone has a threat of punishment added to it, in that it says [Ex. 20:7], "For the LORD will not let him go unpunished who takes the name of the LORD his God in vain." But the first commandment also has a threat, that the LORD will punish the iniquity of them that hate him unto the fourth generation [Ex. 20:5]. But because the apostle [Eph. 6, 2.] does not enumerate the promise contained in this [first] commandment, but only that in the fourth, which he says is the first, it would seem that this threat of the first commandment should not be counted either.

And truly, perjury is a great sin, which is evident from the testimony against it in Scripture, for the Lord commands in the Law [Deut. 19:12, Matt. 5:33]: "You shall not take a false oath," and the prophets punish perjury severely. Therefore Hosea says, Cap. 4, 1. 2. [Vulg.]: "There is no truth, there is no mercy, there is no knowledge of God on earth. Cursing and lying and murder and theft and adultery have abounded, and one bloodguilt follows another." Yes, God wanted the oath to be kept so inviolable (sanctum) that He also avenged the fact that Zedekiah had not kept his oath to the king of Babylon [2 Kings 24:17 to 25:7]. In the same way they were not allowed to harm the Gibeonites [Jos. 9, 19.], even though they had been betrayed by them when they swore an oath to them. Nor did they dare give their daughters to the children of Benjamin for the sake of their oath [Judges 21:1 ff], and they would rather let pagan blood be mixed with the blood of their brothers than break their oath.

Secondly, how great a sin perjury is,] is clear from the matter itself. For to swear is to call upon God as a witness and to use him as a means by which those who are in conflict unite. But so he who

swears falsely, exposes GOtt to ridicule; yes, what is frightening, when he says: As true as GOtt is, is alive, is true, he says in his heart that this is not true. And thereby he denies GOD with the mouth, yes, also with the heart, with which he assents to the denial of the mouth. And this is the most grievous denial, because he knows that God is, and believes this with his heart, and yet at the same time he agrees with it also with his heart that he denies Him; for he would not deny Him outwardly if he did not want to deny Him, and yet he denies Him against his heart and conscience. Therefore, this is the most serious lie, and it is against God, because he wanted there to be no God, so that his lie would stand.

Thirdly, this is clear from a similitude. If you persuaded a prince to give you his letter and seal so that people would believe you in your cause, so that they would believe you for the sake of his name, and then you shamefully denied it and put the prince to shame, what do you think he would think of you? Do you think that you would have a guarantor in him? Or [that he would be at your service] if you asked him to be present at the treaty you made with another, and if he came, you would deny before his face that he was a prince and strangle him? But how great a majesty is God! He alone is the Lord.

To understand this more clearly, it is to be noted that against this commandment in twofold way one acts with the oath. First, by swearing; second, by breaking the oath. By swearing, for example, if someone knowingly commits perjury in a matter by fraudulently saying that he wants to do something that he does not want to do, in order to become free, or if someone falsely denies what he knows, as happens in trade, with entrusted property, in court cases. These sin more grievously than the superstitious, for the latter take the name of God in vain, while the latter lie, which is much more grievous; and this is done chiefly by negationibus, as it is said in the 24th Psalm, v. 4: "He that hath not sworn to his neighbor falsely." By breaking the oath, for example: if someone.

has sworn without deceit, but later changes his mind and does not keep the oath, which happens with affirmations, as the 15th Psalm, v. 4, says: "He who swears to his neighbor does not deceive him. But if he cannot keep it, he has not therefore sworn perjury. But you say, How is it then? If I do not swear, I must suffer harm or danger or death; surely it is seen that I am to be absolved [from the sin of perjury]; this is as if a robber or an enemy compels you to confess what you have. To this is the answer: one must not commit sin for the sake of anything, not even for the sake of the eternal, much less for the sake of the temporal. But you say: Who will restore it to me? Answer: God, for whom you have spoken the truth. But I cannot enumerate all the cases of this dreadful abomination, because nowadays, in truth, it has come down like a flood and is not considered anything. Oh, if we thought about how so few people are saved and feared, how soon this security of our blessedness would end!

Therefore the Lord says Matth. 5, 33. f.: "You have heard that it was said to the ancients, you shall not make a false oath, and you shall keep your oath to God. But I say unto you, that ye swear not at all." Many have struggled with this saying as to whether it is permissible to swear. Some say that it is "half of the evil of the punishment" if one swears, others that it is half of the evil of the swearer. But if one looks at the meaning of Christ, he definitely does not want one to swear, because he says: "You shall not swear on any account. So the meaning is: "The Jews are commanded not to take false oaths, but swearing is permitted to them at their discretion; but to you I command that you shall not swear in any way, either by heaven or by any other place. By this he means that no one should ever swear of his own will. Namely, the desire and own will to swear he has forbidden, and as much as is in him, no one may swear. Therefore, if he says more than, "Yes, yes, no, no," he sins, and it is evil. However, by this he does not forbid that any believer should swear.

I say that a man should not swear if he is forced to do so, whether he is forced by the violence of another or by the need of his brother. Yes, both friend and foe can urge me to swear, 1) and do whatever he wants, if it is only something permitted, as he says below [Matth. 5, 40. f.), that one who takes the coat should also leave the skirt, and even walk two miles with him. For then he does not swear himself, because it is not in his will, but in humility he serves another's will, or through love takes care of another's need. Where this is not the case, one may not swear in any way without it being sin and evil, because then one swears out of mere arbitrariness, without need. For in this passage Christ instructs the inward man, who is to avoid not only perjury but also oaths. The Jews are forbidden to take false oaths, but Christians are also forbidden to swear to the truth, because the honor of the divine name will be more perfect and inviolate under the new law than under the old. Secondly, because a Christian should not love temporal things, neither should he swear for their sake. For since he must not seek what is his, how should he be permitted to swear for the sake of them? Therefore, he must esteem the name of God more highly than the Jews did at that time (dissimulatum est). But where one can render service to another, a brother is bound without hesitation, but in the fear of God, to do what the other's need requires. And the cause of this prohibition is that he knows that we always use the name of God not otherwise than uselessly [, and it is not rightly used], except where it is used in love and humility for others or also for our own blessedness, which is the basis for this prohibition, 1 Cor. 12, 3.: "No one can call Jesus a Lord without through the Holy Spirit" 2c. Or to put it even better: "You shall not swear on all things" is said against those who make an excuse.

1) The Weimar has here according to the princeps: ut vrsim, but we have preferred the reading which is found in all other editions: nt sure-in.

seeking to swear, not by the name of God, but by heaven, by earth, by Jerusalem, by their head, by their soul, as if for this reason they were not guilty of swearing falsely, because they do not swear by the name of God.

In this way they regard such a swearing as if they had not sworn. That this is the opinion of Christ can be seen from what he explains immediately afterwards, how he does not want people to swear at all, namely, neither at Jerusalem 2c.

## The third commandment.

### Remember to sanctify the holiday.

"This is my commandment, that ye love one another," John 15:12. "Love is the fulfillment of the law," says the apostle, Romans 13:10. If one has this, no law is necessary; without it no law is sufficient. Therefore, in this third commandment no work is commanded, but rather rest, so that God may not be offended by works. For no work is commanded in it. Therefore these three commandments prepare man for God, as it were as a pure substance (*materiam*), that he should rest with the heart, with the mouth, with works, that is, according to the inward, and outward, and middle man, which are the sensual, the rational, and the spiritual man; and it should be a pure rest. Two things in particular are to be noted here.

First, that the Sabbath was commanded to the Jews as an example, as the apostle expressly indicates Col. 2, 17: "Which is the shadow of things to come, but the body itself is in Christ." Hence servitude (*opera servilia*) or work of the hands (*manualia*), though thoroughly good, means sinful and illicit works of the old man. For as some animals were unclean only according to their signification (*significative*), which in themselves were good, pure, and wholesome, because God had created them, and yet signified unclean and evil: so also the bodily works, which are good in themselves, are nevertheless forbidden [on the Sabbath] to signify future things, that is, the revelation of evil deeds. Thus the Sabbath signifies the spiritual time which Christ, the Sun of righteousness, has illuminated, which has no night. Therefore Isaiah Cap. 66, 23. says: "There will be one month on another.

And one sabbath upon another." And the apostle chastises the Galatians [Cap. 4, 10.] for keeping days and months and times and years after the Jewish manner, that is, only externally. Therefore this commandment has actually ceased, yea, all commandments, so far as perfect Christians are concerned, for [1 Tim. 1, 9.] "to the righteous there is no law given."

But the church has kept festivals for the sake of the imperfect, because it is necessary to carry out God's word, for the truly righteous is so conformed to God that, as with God there is no difference of days, place or person, so also with Him every day is a festival day. But the weak, who are not yet dead according to the old man, need these things, that they have to create (*occupentur*) with certain services, days and ways, with watch, fasting, work, prayers, exercises (*disciplinis*) and the like, by which they reach the growth of the inner man, so that when the body has been mortified and subjugated, and the passions slain, they may also gradually cease, and be diminished as much as the inner man has increased, so that when the latter has become perfect, those things must cease altogether. This is what the apostle says [Gal. 3:24], "The law hath been our taskmaster unto Christ." For the law brought nothing to perfection; but John went before it to prepare a ready people for the Lord [Luc. 1:17].

Whoever therefore lets himself think that he has accomplished something great or even everything through the doing of those works, and bases himself on it, trusts in it, is sure of it, and through it seeks nothing else, is [Hos. 10:11] "the calf of Ephraim, accustomed to thrash gladly," who is

who thinks that this is a good man, that is, one who does good works, whereas it is only for the purpose of preparing a man to be good. For it is only a baptism with water [Matth. 3, 11]. Of such people much, yes, almost everything is said in Scripture. For those who seek their righteousness by works (justiciarii) are hypocrites, who also pervert the Scriptures to that end, and, as the apostle says [1 Tim. 1, 7.], "understand not what they say, or what they set." Just as the apprentice in any craft does what the master does only when it pleases him, but thereby progresses to mastery (but if he were to stop there, as if he knew everything, he would appear to all as a fool and ridiculous), so here we are not made good by good works, but prepared. For it is not by doing but by suffering that we are good, if we suffer God's work (actiones) on us by being silent. Therefore, the Church keeps this commandment and many other figurative things (figuralia) to train the weak, so that they may increase, not so that they may remain on the same spot and be safe when they have done these things.

Secondly, it is to be noted that St. Gregory asks here: why the Lord attracts only this One commandment [of love], since the Scriptures are full of commandments? But (as I have said) all the commandments require love, since without love, that is, without an easy, ready, cheerful, inclined will, the commandments are not fulfilled, even if they are fulfilled. For there remains an unwilling and therefore also a guilty (rea) will, even though it does the work with its hand and outwardly. For it is said [Jac. 2, 10.], "He that sinneth against one is guilty of all the commandments." Thus the first Psalm [v. 2.] says that the man is blessed who delights in the law of the LORD (that is, who has love and loves his neighbor). And Ps. 110, 3. it is said, "Thy willing people," and the apostle says [2 Cor. 9, 7.], "A cheerful giver GOD loveth." For GOD has no pleasure in forced service, but in free and willing, as the 54th Psalm [v. 8. Vulg.] says: "Willingly

I will sacrifice to you." This will is love, as St. Augustine says.

Why then did the Lord not give this one commandment alone and let himself be satisfied with it? I answer: It would have been sufficient, but man had to be shown in which things he must have love, so that he would not deceive himself through false delusion and trust, and think that he has love, while he does not have it. For it happens very easily that we have a very good opinion of ourselves and a very bad opinion of our neighbor, while it should be the other way around. Therefore the holy ten commandments are, as it were, a mirror in which man should look at himself, in what and how far he lacks or has advanced. For with all commandments one should not only take care that one does them, but above all from what kind of heart and will one does them. I say they are given that we may know our will from them, and then also that it may be exercised; all this is a burden to those who are unwilling and reluctant. For behold, to make this very thing clear, the first commandment contains all the others in itself. For whoever keeps this one keeps them all, and whoever does not keep any other one does not keep this one, because his heart has something else in mind, but not God alone.

But our old Adam is so perversely arrogant that he often wants to be considered wiser and holier than all the saints. That is why he dares to say with an insolent face that he keeps the first commandment, that he is not aware of any transgression, that he has no idol, that he loves nothing so much as God; that is why he had to be referred to works and words that would testify about him and convict him of his arrogant sacrilege or of lying. For example, if he is in doubt that he has no other God, he should ask his tongue if it swears, if it uses the name of God uselessly. For [Matth. 12, 34.]: "If the heart is full, the mouth overflows." It is easy to be mistaken in the opinion of the heart, and to be deceitfully presumptuous. And it is not easy to know whether one is keeping the first commandment, if one does not consult the works and words about it. Therefore,

1) These brackets are violated by us.

If anyone swears or takes the name of God in vain, let him know that he is lying or deceiving himself when he says that he loves God and keeps the first commandment. He has not searched and examined his heart properly.

But behold, someone might think that he also keeps the second commandment, and is not aware of any transgression of it: let him inquire about the third commandment, whether he willingly keeps the holiday holy, whether he eagerly hears the word of God, prays, considers, reads, speaks of God, is present at the service. If he does not do this, or does it with less pleasure than his other business, he is lying when he says he keeps the first and second commandments; for his works bear witness against him. Or would it be possible that someone should not uselessly use God's name who is himself useless? How should a useless man do anything but useless? He speaks uselessly, he thinks uselessly, even if he thinks and speaks about God. But a useless man is the one who deals with other things than God's, and who does what is God's unwillingly, compared to what is his. And every man is completely useless (*vanitas*).

Thirdly, if he should think that he also holds this, let him test himself by a grosser sign: Let him see how he receives the stewards (*vicarios*) of God whom he sees, namely, the parents, the superiors; if he holds these in low esteem and contempt whom he sees, how can he presume to say that he holds God in high esteem and nothing higher than Him, since he does not see Him?

Fourth, in matters concerning the neighbor, it is absolutely the will of God that you love him. This will is always included in the first commandment (*intelligitur*). Now if you say that you love your neighbor, and hate him, bite him, belittle him, injure him, despise him, kill him, curse him, revile him: behold, your work bears witness against you. Likewise, if you do not defend him when he is wronged, do not excuse him, do not speak well of him; for this love does, if it is a true love. So look well into this mirror.

Fifth. If you do not recognize yourself from this, how is this not enough?

Because evil desire is of many kinds, and no one is sufficiently aware of his own, you must pass this test through many things, yes, through everything. Thus, if you have not harmed your neighbor's body and person, you may have harmed the body of his wife, who is one flesh with him. Hast thou not coveted her, looked upon her lewdly, touched her, spoken to her, or not resisted another who did so? not helped him and restored him? How can you, I pray you, love him as yourself? For you would certainly want another to act against you in this way, for you love yourself in this way, there is no doubt about it, and you allow yourself that.

Sixth. Suppose you were not aware of anything here either, and your Adam should think that he is completely unharmed, as he is wont to do after his blindness, while he is pure in no one, think what you have sinned against his outward good, namely whether you have stolen, that is, whether you have brought something to yourself by any fraud, with false goods, money, measure, usury, cunning, robbery, theft, whether you have harmed or harmed him with counsel and will?

Seventh. [Search thyself how it stands in the things concerning the good name. Whether thou dost disparage and bite thy neighbor, and whether thou art not guilty of any sin of the tongue against him? Whether thou rejoice when others do that which thou doest not thyself.

Eighth. If thou art blameless (of integrity) in works and words (which is very rare), go now into thine heart, search out its secrets, and consider its lusts, and if thou wilt not lie, thou shalt find that thou art full of evil desire. Neither canst thou say unto thyself, I have no evil desire: for the scripture saith against it [Prov. 20:9], "Who can say, I am pure in heart?" No man is pure inwardly. For it is not enough that thou restrain thine evil desire, but there shall be no lust in thee: it shall be dealt with more extensively in the proper place. Therefore the two last commandments are the greatest, which the apostle in the Epistle to the Romans [Cap. 13, 9.] alone refers to, saying, "Let nothing desire thee."

Therefore, whoever has love, that is, a sound, complete will for the law of God, and loves the same, fulfills the law of God. For it is not to be feared that he who loves God should dishonor His name or seek another god, or desecrate the holiday. And he who loves his neighbor is not to be feared that he should despise his parents, kill, break marriage, steal, bear false witness, or even harbor evil desires, since he rather seeks to do good to his neighbor. "Love", says the apostle [Rom. 13, 10.], "does no evil to his neighbor", neither in word nor work nor desire.

But let us return to the proper object (materiam) of this third commandment. I have said that the Sabbath once served, as it still does, as an example and a ceremony for the sake of the weak, but now every day is a feast day on which no one should sin. For since in the past he was stoned to death who picked up wood on the Sabbath day, Deut. 15:32 ff, what will happen to those who commit horrible crimes in the time of grace, and moreover mostly on feast days? This is written so that we may be frightened by it; for gathering up wood is not such a great evil, but signifies (significat) an evil, as also other service work on the feast day.

1) Now the first are those who sin grossly and crudely on the holiday, namely, with revelry, drinking, gambling, anger, murder, cursing, robbery, insidiis, deceit, evil plots, and the like, of which Malachi, Cap. 2, 3, says: "I will throw the dung of your holidays in your faces, and it will stick to you." Behold, dung he calls the feasts of such people, because on the same they also give dung of themselves, as the unclean swine. And Amos, Cap. 5, 21.: "I am grief-stricken for your holidays and despise them."

For these people, like the Jews (of whom he is speaking here), put all the glory of the feast in beautiful clothes, effort in eating and drinking, 2) and ceasing to work. If

1) Löscher: "The following was preached by Luther on the 14th Sunday after Trinity [August 24, 1516f." The exordium for this is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1736 ff.

2) Instead of "vielm, splendor" in the Weimar one, we have with the other editions (Löscher, Petri, Witten

these three things are there without what they mean, they make a Jewish celebration, and are nothing but incitements to fornication and vices. For if the belly is full and the soul idle, and then ornaments are placed before the eyes, what else should come out of it but that people are induced to indulgence and evil desires? And those who spend the holidays in this way do not think that if this meant keeping the holiday, any whore or Turk or heathen could do the same, even a horse and a pig, namely eat and drink, further, walk idly and finally, dress up splendidly.

Here one can find some who fast on the evening before the feast (vigilium), sometimes with water and bread, but spend the day itself with eating and indulging. And it has become quite common that Saturday is held more sacred than Sunday, because one abstains at least from meat dishes, idleness and splendor, which goes in full swing on Sunday, and all holy evenings (vigiliae) are held more sacred than the feast days themselves; admittedly quite wrong.

### Secret interpretation (mysteria).

The bodily rest (ocium) means the spiritual rest, that one may leave off evil lusts and thoughts, so that one may be fit for God's word, which wants to have an empty soul. Therefore, every Christian must ask himself: Why are you idle today? And in such a way he should use this as a reminder and a reminder that he must celebrate (vacandum) in order to hear God's word.

The adornment of the garments means the good works, such as hearing mass, praying, giving alms, and doing other works of mercy, as Christ taught against the Pharisees; of which more hereafter.

To eat and drink deliciously (lautus victus) means to consider the benefits of God, the suffering of Christ, one's own sins, to read the Word of God and to reflect on it again and again. Hereafter.

berger, Jenaer and Erlanger) vietns "plsiitor" assumed, because with the former reading four Dmge Herauskommen. The latter reading corresponds to luitms vietus in the "secret interpretation".

The second are those who do works that are otherwise permitted, such as works of necessity and works that serve to prepare what we need for our sustenance. And these sin less than the former, and so much less that they are excused even in many cases.

The first case of this kind is necessity. But how one must understand need is doubtful, because here an extraordinarily great variety takes place. But this cannot be measured better than according to the rule of our Savior, who says in the Gospel [Luc. 14, 5.]: It is not sinful to pull an ass or an ox out of the pit or to water it. From this we get this rule: If such a great harm is to be feared, or even a lesser harm than an ass or its health is valued, then the work can be done by which such a harm is prevented. This, however, must be understood in such a way: if something like this should not occur by one's own choice, but because of occurring necessity through an accident. For this I must add, lest the miser think that they are given liberty to sell or buy as they please, because if they did not sell or buy, so great a profit would be lost on the day. For in such a way no feast day could be appointed, because any [feast day] deprives of profit, since it hinders the business that brings profit and the work. But the rule is proved by this: Because it was permitted to the Jews, and they did no sin in it, much more is it permitted to the Christians, who are freer from legal ceremonies!

According to this, the special cases may be easily judged. For example, if a merchant buys or sells on a feast day because he cannot buy or sell on another day or at another hour without great harm, than because the buyer or seller is in transit and does not want to wait. The latter is excused because he did not seek the work and the profit, but accepted what was offered to him in order to prevent harm, but otherwise would not have done so, and his heart was such that he would have preferred that it had been offered to him at another time.

has been offered. For in such a case, as the business has come about unexpectedly, he can also soon settle it and turn back to the celebration. The same applies to any other damage, even minor, but on condition that the service, namely the mass and the word of God, is not missed, unless there is great need, which in the judgment of a good man would serve as an excuse. But, as I have said, this is to be understood from the damage, which does not come from keeping quiet with the business, or from the omission of the business, but from approximately. For a damage by omission of the business can happen at any hour.

Secondly, from those who cook and prepare the food. For this is necessary, and it is not necessary to follow the Jewish superstition nonsensically, since the Jews do not cook on the Sabbath day, although they eat, drink and indulge. So it is also lawful to bring food and drink, and, to come to our customs, it is not a sin to put a barrel of beer in the cellar, but it is more of a sin to bring it out in so many stalls (*modiis*) and jugs 1) that they also drink so much that they spit it again. So it is a greater sin to bring out of the kitchen and cellar too much than to bring it in: about this the Jews do not worry, but about that they fearfully (*curam*) guard themselves, and many follow them. But it is a strange folly that they do not prepare food [on the Sabbath]. Why then do they not also leave off dressing and go naked? for dressing is also a work and a labor. Further, why do they walk and go and stand? Why do they not sit and sleep? Why do they eat and drink? Are these not also works? How then do they keep the Sabbath, that is, how do they rest? Furthermore, it is not a small work that one must stand at mass, at the sermon, and at the acts of worship; I prove this by all who do this with unwillingness, of which there are many here and elsewhere. So they say: I must celebrate and

1) A parlor - a gallon; jug - quart.

not work; and act according to the commandment contrary to the commandment. For that is where Jewish wisdom has come to.

For in such a way some have also gone to the petty that they even say it is forbidden to make wreaths. If they understand this from those who sell them, it is true. But a virgin may well make a wreath early in the morning to adorn herself with. For she can mend it if it is torn, so also make one; yea, she can put on her garments and adorn herself, shake out and clean her garments to put them on. It is not against this commandment that she put her cloak (peplum) in order and other adornment, except that this is done after the manner of some who cannot get away from the mirror and therefore miss the services. But those who adorn themselves out of pride or for evil desire do not sin against this commandment, but sin all the more grievously because they sin against another commandment of God on a holy day.

Third, one may feed, litter, milk, graze, tend livestock 2c.

Fourthly, wine taverns (tabernariis), butchers, bakers, fishermen and other craftsmen who provide other people with food and clothing. These do not sin if they do not encourage, help or favor drunkards and gamblers.

Fifthly, works may be done that serve a common purpose, such as repairing a bridge, preventing a flood, warding off an enemy, extinguishing fires, and averting other public hardships.

Sixthly [work may be done] by physicians, 1) runners, messengers who have to carry necessary things, blacksmiths who shoe horses, mills 2c. All this is excused in case of need, if only the service is not missed.

Seventh, those who go to the fair because they cannot do so at other times. And hereafter similar cases may be judged.

1) Weimarsche: msüols, in the other editions: rnocloinis.

But here the question arises: whether the Wittenbergers are excused for arranging crossbow shooting on a feast day in order to shoot a bird from the perch, since they could just as well do this on another day, and there is neither need, nor love (pietas), nor due modesty (modicitas), and this half feast day could just as well be given to GÖtte after the meal as the morning? A similar judgment to make about the military parade (armorum ostensione), as if this could not be done just as well on another day. Here the mayors should take care.

The other is to be moderate (modicitas) or to do little. Therefore, one may do here all the works that one does on other days, if they are only a few. As when a cobbler cut a pair or two of shoes, a tailor a skirt, a grocer sold something he had not laid out for sale. So you may run through all kinds of officia and works in similar things.

The third is love, when one helps the poor and needy, as well as the churches (ecclesiis). So it is also something holy when one bathes a sick person, washes an unclean person, cleans his clothes, his bed, makes his bed, serves him with food and handouts, otherwise it would not be allowed to ask for alms or to give them, since the mendicant orders never do this [to such a degree] as on feast days 2), likewise also all others. So one may also bring them [the poor] grain, wood, food and drink, this is permitted, if it is only done out of love, and not out of request of a counter-service (retributionis) or for the sake of eating, as it is now the custom everywhere.

<sup>3)</sup> The third are those who keep the day holy according to the letter, but not spiritually, since they do the works of outward sanctification, but not with the

2) Weimarsche: iuiiqusin ut üisdus tsstis; .Löschner, Wittenberger, Jenaer: noiinuncguuin in üisbus tsstis; Petri: nunquuin, nisi in clisdus ksstis.

3) Löschner: "The following was preached by Luther on the day of St. Matthew [21 Sept.s in 1516, as can be seen from the manuscript." The Erordium Hiezu is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1744.



Hearts. And even though they satisfy the church and sin less than the previous ones, they are still people like Cain (Cainistae), who do not sacrifice the person, but the work of the person. They are only careful not to get into trouble. And would God that all those who make it worse were only such people.

In order to sanctify the holiday, one must do five things, as follows from the decree [of spiritual law], namely, hear Mass, hear the Word of God, pray, sacrifice (as some wish), and repent of sins.

First, to hear the mass. Here some interpret this extremely foolishly to the Canon, in that they want the Mass to be read with a raised voice, because it is commanded, not to see it, but to hear it, as if it were not rather commanded to read the Canon of the Mass, which alone is actually the Mass, with a restrained (pressa) voice, so that it is not heard. The rest, however, are prayers and preparations (paramenta) for the Canon of the Mass. If they want it to be read aloud for the sake of the Gospel, why do they not consider that in relation to the Word of God another commandment is given than about the Mass? But away with these useless dreams! Since in the whole Church no one other than the priest alone hears the whole mass, namely, because this mystery is great, that Christ, the true priest, although he works many things in the Church through outward sacraments and visible ceremonies, in which the faithful join in and cooperate, as the clergy now does in relation to the priest with song, prayer and response, nevertheless accomplishes most things for us with God in an invisible way, which the people and their congregation neither see nor become aware of.

After that, it is an undecided (anceps) question whether it is enough to hear the early mass; likewise, whether it is enough to hear it in the monasteries. Here one must make a distinction: If there is a need (which is discussed above), it is enough to hear a silent mass (privatam) in the morning, or also a mass in the monastery, because need has no commandment. But where there is no need, this distinction is almost always made, so that if the parish church is not despised by the

but rather to visit the monastery out of devotion, it is then free to listen to them in the monastery. But in my judgment I would say (another may have his opinion) that in the great misery of our time 1) it is not at all safe to let any one, especially a simple-minded and unintelligent man, follow his devotion and his discretion against the clear rules (canones) [of spiritual law]. The reason for this is that the canons of the fathers are given to guide the people, and every man's devotion must always be suspicious, and the more it pleases him, although it goes against the common usage or the decree (decretum) of the fathers, since we know that the angel of Satan, who disguises himself as an angel of light, is to be greatly feared, and one must be extremely careful of him. For under the appearance of devotion he could easily destroy all decrees, and also the word 5 Mos. 12, 8. and Richt. 17:6, where it is commanded, and even forbidden and punished, that each person should not do what seems right and good to him. Otherwise, first the fear of man is lost and the reverence for God's church and for the community. Then the certainty is nourished [and demanded] that other greater things should also be permitted gradually. Thirdly, the licentiousness of the old [Jewish] people returns, that on the heights and in the groves and outside the churches worship is held, which was highly forbidden. For in fact we see that, if this arbitrariness of worship is permitted, not only the parish churches but also the monasteries of the city are abandoned, and the field and village churches are preferred to them under the same pretended appearance of worship, and that in such a way the worship of God is not allowed.

1) Luther's remark in the misprint refers to the following: "What is said on the first page of sheet H, that one should not hear the masses in the monasteries in a sacrilegious manner, was said and already printed before Leo's declaration of the tithe had gone out, in which he gives permission to hear the mass everywhere in the monasteries, even though it is safer not to believe one's own devotion now that this permission is there. - The decree of Leo X, of which Luther speaks here, went out under November 13, 1517. (Weimar edition, vol. IV, 538, note 2.)

Finally, the service of the church consists in visiting taverns and trading at the fair under the pretext of church consecration, patron saints (*patronorum*), vows 2c.

Therefore I say that in my opinion, whatever the reason for hearing mass elsewhere, no man is allowed to follow his judgment, his opinion, his devotion, but the order (*autoritatem*) of the church, and that one should give his mind captive to the obedience of Christ [2 Cor. 10:5], because it is written [Prov. 28:26]: "He who relies on his heart is a fool." And the Church cannot err, but every one can err in his devotions, since many prophets, saints, and kings have also erred in a similar manner, to us for a warning and a terror. Therefore, do not believe any gloss about this decree. For whoever makes such glosses is ignorant of God's law and has not yet recognized what the devil and man are, much less what God is. And it is a wonderfully perverse gloss that allows one to pursue his devotion as he pleases, while the text expressly intended to prevent this. Yes, always hold everything suspicious that points you to yourself and indulges you, for it makes "you exercise your will when you fast," as Isaiah [Cap. 58, 3.] says. Thus the prophet Micah mocked Ahab, saying [1 Kings 22:15.], "Yea, go up. "2c. But follow all that draweth thee away from thyself, as, Matt. 5:25: "Be willing unto thine adversary" 2c. Micah 7:5 [Vulg.], "Beware of thy friend"; likewise [Jer. 9:4], "One friend betrayeth another."

The second is to hear God's word, which is again under the commandment that one hear it in one's parish church, as well as the mass, unless it is omitted because of the consecration of other churches or monasteries. That one may hear God's word in the afternoon in these is indeed a council of the Church, but nevertheless 1) in accordance with the commandment of God, who wants one to hear His word everywhere with all devotion.

shall. And this second is more necessary than the first, indeed, the first is for the sake of this second, as is evident from Christ's words when he says [1 Cor. 11:25]: "Do this, as often as you do it, in remembrance of me," as if he wanted to say: Do not say mass unless you also preach the gospel. And the apostle says [1 Cor. 11:26], "For as often as ye eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, ye shall proclaim the death of the Lord. "2c. Therefore, no Mass may be celebrated without the Gospel; the private Mass with special, the public Mass with public proclamation of the Gospel. Yes, in the first Church also the banished, the penitents, the catechumens, the possessed (*energumeni*)<sup>2)</sup> were present at the Mass until after the Gospel; this was called the Mass of the catechumens, as one can see from Dionysius. Would to God that this still happened today, that the banned ones at least heard the word of God, so that they would recognize [their sin] all the more easily and feel a thorn in their conscience. For it would be an exceedingly cruel ban that should also forbid the hearing of the Word of God, since it is commanded that it be preached to all creatures.

Here again the question arises whether it is enough to hear the Gospel in the silent Mass. The answer to this is that it is enough if he understands it and at the same time is forced to make a journey. Otherwise, even if he understands it, he is required to hear the word of God when it is proclaimed publicly (*solennter*) in a loud voice (*vocale*). Otherwise, anyone would be free to leave the public preaching, and it would fall into contempt. Yes, if he has to travel because of necessity, he is excused if he does not understand it, even if he does not hear it. However, everyone must consider not only how great a need compels him to be absent, since this is a physical need, but also how great a need compels him to have the word of God, since this is a spiritual need. Therefore, godly conduct in heavenly things (*pietas coelestis*) must always outrank earthly desire.

1) In all editions ssä tuuvu, which the Weimar one, it seems to us, has not changed well, in ssä uou.

2) Cf. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XVIII, 140.

1) Here, however, it is to be noted: If now the people are bound with such great strictness to hear the word of God, dear, with how much greater strictness are the priests bound that they also proclaim the word of God and see to it that it is proclaimed! Since this is commanded above all commandments in the most urgent way, I do not know where the lamentation comes from that nowadays nothing less is taken care of. In many places it is left entirely to one's own devices, but in several places such things are preached that one should rather leave to one's own devices, and in other places human things, legal doctrines and worldly wisdom are preached; but the gospel, that is, the memory of Christ, is so rare that one must feel a horror when one looks at it. The people are forced to the parish church and do not obey, because the priests are forced to preach the gospel and do not do it. What wonder, then, if the people stray to other churches in superstitious licentiousness, since the priests in gross ignorance are fooling with fables and vain doctrines? Thou preachest not the gospel, and yet thinkest it a great iniquity that the people run now and then to the high places of idols? Since you withdraw from the church in your ministry and from the word [of God], what else can follow from this than that the people also withdraw from obedience and preaching (auditu)? You are literally a useless person inside, with the spirit you stand outside (foris - outside the church). Therefore the people also wander out equally according to the body and according to the spirit, and thereby sin so much less than you, the more willing they are to hear the gospel when you preach it; yes, if you had even learned it! So you give occasion for the church to be empty, and you do not give the sheep their pasture and food, while you drive the cattle into the stall. Therefore

1) The first half of this paragraph recurs from word to word in "Luther's Lecture on the Book of Judges," Cap. I, 8. (Weim. Ausg., Vol. IV, p. 538.) It is reasonable to assume that this passage is to be placed there on the account of the scribe, who most likely also completed other gaps in his manuscript in his own hand. (Weim. Ausg., Vol. IV, Supplements.)

the sheep of Christ will be scattered on the mountains [Matth. 9, 36], "because there was no shepherd" [Zech. 10, 2], says the Lord.

The third is prayer. There are many things to be said about prayer, but here it must be understood as oral prayer, this cannot be denied; but it should be the lesser and a small thing compared to spiritual prayer. For prayer is the elevation of the mind to God. The words are the ladder, but the voice is the putting on (apparatus) of the ladder. That is why I said that those who pray only with their voices sanctify the day according to the letter and badly; indeed, they do not pray, but only recite the prayers of others, not unlike another's book of scripture and words, which itself is dead and understands nothing, or like an organ that makes the singing of the clergy heard, but itself feels or understands nothing of it. In this lies today a great mystery (mysterium - spiritual interpretation): namely, as the organ is, so is the clergy, that is, a screamer without understanding. A voice without words, like the organ, produces only a silent and speechless sound and tone. Of spiritual prayer, however, we will say in a moment in the fifth [section] 2.

The fourth (as some suppose) is sacrifice; but this is abolished, though in the first church this offering (oblatio) of bread and other food was common; of it was sacrificed, and what remained was given to the poor. But now, instead, the churches, monasteries, hospitals 2c. are provided with endowments for the poor.

Fifth, which is the greatest and first of all, namely, to be reconciled to God by examining one's conscience and repenting of one's sins. conscience and repentance of sins. This repentance, however, is to be done in such a way that it does not arise so much from hatred (against sin) as from love (against God). But it will come out of love (to give the simple an example of this) when a person reflects again and again on the good deeds that God has shown him throughout his life. Then

2) Löscher, Wittenberger, Jenaer and Erlanger have wrong: in rjuinto ^ruc-ecpto.

May he keep his ingratitude and his misdeeds, which he has committed by misuse of such goods, as that he has given us five senses, has protected us in so many dangers, has given so many goods of the body, the soul and all kinds of things (rerum). He has not given all these things to animals, to stones, or even to many people. Then go up to the spiritual benefits, that he sent his Son into the flesh, that he let him be crucified and die, and other gifts of immeasurable greatness, finally that he promised us eternal goods. When all this is well considered and held against our own sins, it awakens an extraordinary hatred and loathing for ourselves, but love and praise for God. This is a very true repentance, which is alive and strong, while the one that is produced by the fear of hell and by the shame of sin is only a repentance according to the letter, fictitious and of short duration, because it is not rooted in love, but only imposed by fear.

Thus one reads of a man who had lived very badly all his life, but who was nevertheless lifted up by God's miraculous blessings and gifts, and finally even attained the office of bishop. Then he rejoiced, admiring God's goodness in the face of his unworthiness, and exclaimed: Lord, you have conquered, and have caught me by your exceeding goodness: behold, from now on I will serve you wholly; and so he did. And one should not despise this gross ascension from the lowly (primis), bodily goods 2c. For one reads in the histories that at the time of the Concilium at Costnitz, two cardinals who were riding to the Concilium saw a shepherd weeping in the field. But one of them, whose heart was moved with compassion, said: I cannot pass by without hearing and comforting this man, rode up to him and inquired why he was weeping. When the shepherd did not want to tell the cause of his sadness, the Cardinal insisted [that he wanted to know it] and forced him to confess it.

1) Here we have the reading of the manuscript: tri^titiuni adopted instead of "tristi" in the editions.

At last he said: Look at this animal (and looked at a toad): God has made me into such a splendid creature, into an upright, beautiful man who has reason, and I have never thanked Him that He has not also made me into such an unshapely toad; that is the reason why I weep bitterly. Since the Cardinal was horrified by the unusually great remorse of this man and suddenly realized that he had proven himself even more ungrateful against much greater benefits that had been bestowed upon him, he fell from his mule as if dead. When he was finally lifted up by his servants and brought into the city, he kept crying out: "O Saint Augustine, how rightly you have said: The unlearned rise up and snatch the heavens to themselves, and we with our learning roll ourselves in flesh and blood!

These are the works of the true saint, which are signified by all outward works. Thus it is said in Lamentations Cap. 3, 20. [Vulg.], "I shall remember, and my soul shall languish within me." Without these two pieces, the mind and the heart are not kindled; but if the heart is not kindled, everything else happens coldly, void and harmful, because it departs without fruit. And these two pieces must be heard from the Gospel, and what is heard must always be well considered (ruminari). For these two pieces, namely God's good deeds (bona) and our evil deeds (mala), are precisely the ladder to God, through which we climb down within ourselves and ascend to God, as it is illustrated in Genesis 28:12. It is also these two pieces of sacrifice of praise and confession of which it is said [Ps. 50, 23. Vulg.): "The sacrifice of praise will honor me"; and it follows what the ascension to GOD is: "And this is the way that I show him the salvation of GOD," that is, I will reveal to him eternal blessedness. Of the other, namely [the sacrifice] of confession [says Ps. 51:19], "The sacrifices that please GOD are a troubled spirit; a troubled and bruised heart You, GOD, will not despise." And these two must be sacrificed at the same time, that they may be the more perfect.

## The fourth commandment.

**<sup>1</sup>) You shall honor your father and your mother, that (it may be well with you, and] you may live long on the earth.**

The Jews have made this commandment powerless (irritum) by their statutes, as well as all other [commandments], because they have interpreted this honor only on words and signs and have thus emptied the words of the law (irritatores facti). For because "honor" means to give a sign of reverence, they have taken it according to the outward shell of this meaning, so that they taught that one should honor them with outward signs alone. But, as I have often said, the law of the Lord is spiritual, without change, refreshes 2) souls and instructs the inward man. Therefore, it imposes its obligations on the heart first (obligatory) and demands the heart. Therefore, let us continue according to this twofold understanding, namely of the letter and of the spirit.

Spiritual honor toward parents is a surrender (exhibitio) of the heart, and reverence that flows from a ready will. There are two parts to this: first, a willing obedience and willingness to do whatever the parents want; second, a due regard and high opinion of the parents. For the honor that the heart shows is a great service to God (pietas), and greater than love toward one's neighbor, because love loves only in this way,

that it is ready to serve the neighbor, but honor instills in him a holy fear above that 3) and holds him [the neighbor] exceedingly high. Therefore, this commandment is placed immediately after the commandments of the first tablet, because it deals with those who are governors of GOD; therefore, just as GOD is to be worshipped with honor and holy fear; so also His governor must be worshipped in such a manner.

It is therefore evident that whoever honors parents in a spiritual way first shows them willing obedience and subordinates his will to them, and for this reason not only comes to their aid in times of need, but also in all things conforms to their wishes. And whoever does not show such a heart to his parents shall know that he is not fulfilling this commandment, although even now very many are blind in this [spiritual] understanding and only cling to the mere surface of the words. So it is said, "Thou shalt honor," namely, from the heart and out of full affection, "thy parents," 2c. For how should he be disobedient to parents who not only offers his heart to them, but also offers it in such a way that it is filled with reverence (honore) toward them?

Secondly (which is still greater), he shows reverence (reverentiam) (not by heart according to the letter, but inwardly in spirit), that is, that he has a high opinion of them in his heart, and this is mainly commanded in this commandment, whereby it also differs (as I have said) from love, by which each should obey and serve the other, Gal. 5:13.

But from where does this high opinion of parents arise in children, especially since they are sometimes poor, of low status, ill, shapeless, or otherwise of low standing? For in such things many are annoyed, so

1) "Presumably Luther began to preach on the fourth commandment on October 5 (the 20th Sunday after Trinity) 1516, we know otherwise the Exordium Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1748s not to insert appropriately; on October 12 he seems not to have treated any piece of the Decalogue." (Weim. Ausg. I, 447.) - In our edition, I. o. erroneously placed the Gospel Match. 9, 1-8, above the interpretation, it should read Joh. 4, 46. sf. because "according to the oonsustnũo soclssiss Rornanas, this is the pericope of the 20th Sunday after Trinitatis." (Weim. Ausg. I, 87.) The interpretation is about this latter Gospel. - On October 12 [the 21st Sunday after Trinity] 1516, Luther gave the explanation of a part of the Lord's Prayer after the Exordium. Both are found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1752. Löscher, Reformationen-Acta, Vol. I, p. 293, notes that most of Luther's interpretation of the Lord's Prayer has been lost.

2) In the Vulgate: oonvrsrtons (Ps. 19, 8.).

3) The words: ðonor vsro stiam Ultra ðoo si timorsw sxlribst are to be inserted here according to the note from the manuscript given by Löscher; this was done in the Weimar edition. In all other "editions" they are missing. The incomprehensible addition: mniuns xrstiosuill k-xistiinnnL was rightly omitted by the Weimar edition.

that they are ashamed to have such parents, and they are sorry that they were not born of the rich, the powerful, the noble 2c. O great blindness! These people must be given this rule: The high opinion of the parents comes from the consideration (respectu) of God and His will. For a pious child will think thus: Behold, if it did not seem unworthy of the highest majesty that such a man should be my father or mother, why should it seem unworthy to me? If it pleased the supreme God to work and create me in them, why should it displease me to come into being or to be created in them? For what do the parents do to give the child its form, who never even think whether it will be a boy or a girl, whether it will have eyes, ears, feet, whether it will be alive or dead, white or black, whether it will have hair or not? So I will worship the workshop of my God who formed me. I will not fix my eyes on the poverty, ugliness, lowly origin of my parents, but on God, the master craftsman. Thus, even thus, the reverence flows from GOD to the parents, does not come from the parents in that they are regarded higher than how they are flesh and blood, rather as a workshop of the highest majesty. For who will despise the workshop of the originator (principis)? What man-made work hates its workshop in which it is prepared? Since, then, God wills that the parents be honored, and there is an exceedingly just cause for this, namely, because here also is a workshop that represents God's place, this commandment differs from the [three] preceding ones only in that in those God is honored as in Himself, but in this [commandment] as in another, namely, in the principis (regentibus), which are His chair, His workshop, His altar, His throne of grace. This, then, is the right honor.

The honor of parents according to the letter is done with an unenthusiastic heart and from a mind that despises them, namely when one honors the parents outwardly with gestures (signo) only out of fear of punishment. For he who honors them only out of fear of punishment,

For as long as he fears and remembers the punishment, he honors it, but always despises it inwardly in his heart; but if he forgets the punishment, he also despises it outwardly with his deeds, as is proven by many examples and is also experienced daily.

1) It has been said how children should behave toward their parents. But it is necessary that they prove themselves parents, that the parents are worthy of their name, so that the honor of the children is not shown to idols and dead images of the parents. Yes, sometimes they are worse than robbers, because they take care of the flesh of the children, but kill their souls. For it often happens that a child has a worse murderer in its father, and it would be better for the child to be killed by robbers than to be raised by its father. Or why do you think that the plague rages mainly among small children? For no other reason than because God fulfills in them what the Book of Wisdom Cap. 4, 11. 14. says: "And is put away, that wickedness should not corrupt his mind, nor false doctrine deceive his soul; wherefore he hasteth with him out of the evil life." And afterwards [v. 16.], "For the righteous that is dead condemneth the living wicked, and a young man that is about to be made perfect the long life of the unrighteous." 2c. But of this in more detail hereafter. Now let us see what they owe them, that they may be parents.

After the apostle had commanded the children to honor their parents in Eph. 6, 1. ff. and had put this command on their hearts and explained it to them by saying: 2) "You children, be obedient to your parents in the Lord", and in fact makes known the will that

1) Löscher: "Luther preached the following on the 22nd Sunday after Trinity, October 19, 1516." - "We do not possess an exordium to this sermon." (Weim. ed.)

2) Instead of Leit in the editions (also in the Weimar one) must be read with the manuscripts üiosn", because statim clis xarstibns sto. forms the postscript to: vostHnaiu titios sn8 "ü. With the reading ciiot, Luthern would have to be blamed for an error in the sequence, which is not found in him.

they [the parents] are not to be parents merely according to the flesh, as the Gentiles, but "in the Lord," and the children also are to obey them "in the Lord": so he immediately says of the parents [v. 4.], "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to anger (which he interprets Col. 3:21, "Lest they be timid"), but bring them up in discipline and admonition unto the Lord."

The first thing that he wanted them [the parents] to do, of course, concerns the soul (for he preached nothing about their bodies), that they should not provoke the children to anger, and not make them fainthearted. This goes against those who rule the children with anger, and since the heart is still soft, it is completely filled with fear and timidity, in such a way that they finally run away out of hatred against the parents, and do what they would otherwise never have done. For what is to be hoped of a man who, in mistrust and hatred of his parents, despairs of them? For this is not the apostle's opinion, that one should not anger the children or give them blows, but one should chastise them out of love, but not that the parents should vent their anger on them, in which case they care nothing how they correct the children's fault. For when a person has become petty, he becomes useless in everything, and despairs of everything, is timid in everything he does and in everything he attacks, and, what is worse, such timidity, which is implanted at a tender age, can hardly ever be eradicated afterwards. Because they have learned to be frightened at every word of their parents, they are later afraid even of a rustling tree leaf. But also the nurses are to be resisted, who frighten the children (illudunt) by terrible figures and gestures, especially at night (de nocte). With all diligence a child must be brought up to a right fear, that it may fear what must be feared, but not that it may be fearful, as it is enough for some parents, if they only have the children fearful, which is extremely harmful for the later life.

So much for the deviation to the left. But now, so that they do not miss each other on the other side, he says:

Secondly: "But bring them up in discipline and admonition to the Lord" [Eph. 6, 4.], that is, teach them what must be taught and punish them if they do not do it. For both are necessary for them, that they be taught what they do not know about God, and that they be punished if they do not follow what they have known. Therefore, see to it that the children are instructed above all in spiritual things, that they are given over to God rather than to worldly affairs. But oh, how this is all wrong now! And it is no wonder, since even the parents themselves are not instructed, nor even brought to rights (probat) by the punishment. There was still one hope left, which was based on the teachers of the schools, that at least there they would be instructed in godliness under the influence of the sciences, but this too has fallen away. All pagans, but especially the Jews, teach their children with greater diligence than the Christians. That is why the church is in a very bad way, because its whole strength is based on the offspring (successoribus); but these are neglected in their youth, like a garden in springtime.

Therefore, they must be raised up in the instruction of the Lord. But the instruction to the Lord is the one by which they are taught to know the Lord Jesus Christ, to remember vividly how he suffered for us and what he did, what he promised, as the children of Israel were commanded [Deut. 11:19], that they should make known to their children the wonders which the Lord had done for their fathers in Egypt, so that the future generation might also know [Ps. 78:4]. And if they have this knowledge, but still do not learn to love the Lord and to thank Him and to pray and to follow Christ, then the exhortation (correctionem) to the Lord must be applied, that is, the terror of the judgment of God and the threats of the wrath of God against the wicked. 1) For he who has known this from his earliest youth

1) Concerning the preceding passage, Luther remarks in the misprint: "What is said about the instruction and discipline of the Lord in the children would be better taken from the instruction and discipline which they [the parents] receive according to the way of GOD, not according to the way of the

When a person has learned the benefits of God and his promises, because of which he should love him, and the punishments and threats, because of which he should fear the Lord, he will easily hold on to them when he grows older. For in these two things the Lord wants to be worshipped, that one should love him as a father because of past, present and future benefits, and that one should fear him because of past, present and future punishments, as he says Mal. 1, 6: "Am I then Father, where is my love? Am I the Lord, where do they fear me?" In such a manner shall the children now learn to sing unto the LORD of grace and judgment [Ps. 101, 1.]. For these two things the apostle has in view, when he says, "in discipline and admonition to the LORD." To discipline belongs that you tell him [the child] how God created all things, gave him the senses, the life, the soul, assists daily with all good to what he has created; that he suffered for the child and did miracles, preached, and promised even greater things: so that he may be grateful to God for this, and recognize and love him as his father. To the punishment belongs that you tell him with how great plagues he once struck the Egyptians, the Gentiles, the Sodomites, the children of Israel, yes, also all men in Adam. Likewise, how he still strikes before our eyes with pestilence, gallows, sword, water, fire, wild animals, diseases, and how great punishments he threatens in the future in hell with the devils. And he wants them to use this rather than the punishment of men, that is, their own punishment, and not without a reason, namely, so that they learn to always look up to God, and not to fear men, but to fear God, so that they do not, when they fear the seriousness (rugas) of their parents, also finally fear men in what is God's, that is, so that they do not become fainthearted. For this is how one must act with children, not that they fear their parents, but that they know that they offend God if they do not fear their parents. For in this way they will not become fainthearted, because where they have learned, they will also know their own

people and their passions, so that the children may know that they are instructed and punished by God more than by their parents)".

Parents are not to be feared in any other way than in the fear of God, nor are they to depart from God in adversity and in prosperity because of any fear or love.

That this is a sacrifice pleasing to God, if one instructs the children in this way, is clear from the first book of Moses [Cap. 18, 17-19], where the Lord could not hide from Abraham what he wanted to do. But prompted by this he says, "For I know that he will teach his children to fear the Lord." See how he says that the punishment of the LORD on Sodom through Abraham would serve to instruct his children and put them in [right] fear. In like manner, Jonadab, the father of the Rechabites, is gloriously praised and blessed in his children [Jer. 35:19.] because he had raised them devout and godly in the fear of the LORD. This is how Tobias and Jehoiakim's wife, "Susann," were raised. On the other hand, in the first book of Samuel, Cap. 3, 13, what Eli deserved by neglecting his children. Likewise, how did it go with the five-year-old boy at St. Gregory's? 1) And we are indeed exceedingly foolish. Behold, in one's own children one can earn either life or death, and yet not take care of them. For what profit is it to thee, if by thy fault thou bringest up wicked children, if thou art also blameless in thyself? Many try in a very wrong way to do a hard service to God in things he does not want to know about (alienis studiis), with fasting, wearing hard clothes and other self-chosen requirements (affectatis observantiis), and these blind people do not pass over this godly behavior any less than once the Jews who left the temple of God and sacrificed on the heights. First of all you should pay attention to what the Lord demands of you, the direction of which office he has laid upon you, as the apostle says [1 Cor. 7:20]: "Let every man continue in the profession wherein he is called." For for this, before all

1) In the Leipzig edition, Vol. I V, p. 38, it says (more explaining than translating): "So also St. Gregory writes that the evil enemy led away a father's child, which was five years old, from the womb; for he had drawn it badly, made it swear and curse 2c."



Take care of things and deal with them especially indulgences, prayer, visits to churches, or any vows.

1) It has been said how parents should behave toward their children so that they will be worthy of the name "parents" and so that parents will not become corrupters of children who will be lost along with the children. 2) Now let us see who are these corrupters and perpetrators of the children.

For the first are those who neglect their children and knowingly let them grow up without discipline and admonition to the Lord; although they harm them by no evil example, yet they corrupt them by permission, loving them too much according to the flesh and making them angry, saying: They are children, they do not understand what they are doing. And they speak the truth. But neither a dog, nor a horse, nor a mule understands what it does. But see how they go, come, do, and learn what they do not understand. But even a stone and wood does not understand how clumsy a thing it is for a house, but it is prepared by the master craftsman and understands it immediately; how much more a man? Or if other people's children understand it, why don't your children understand it? These parents will therefore bear the sins of their children, because they make them their own. Or did not that five-year-old boy, of whom St. Gregory says, also do it without understanding it?

The second are the ones who prey on them with impure words and curses, then also with evil examples and gestures. There have been people (and God wished that there were no more such people anywhere), as I know, who lived on the wages of their daughters, and at the behest of their parents, the daughters and the wife committed fornication. Who can doubt that it would have been better for these daughters if they had had robbers for parents? Then there are also such foolish people to whom it is extraordinarily-

The people of the world like it when they have warlike sons who strike easily, as if they were worthy of the highest praise for the sake of it, because they fear no one. The final reward for the foolishness of these people tends to be grief and sorrow, which befalls them through the sudden murder of their sons; and rightly so. Now children (as youth is hot-tempered) are inclined to evil desire and anger: therefore parents must beware of [evil] examples in words and gestures. For what else should the son of a curser and unchaste man learn [from him] but to curse and speak shamelessly?

The third are those who give their children the opportunity to love the world, since they are concerned about nothing else than how they walk gracefully, learn to dance round dances, clean themselves, please people, excite the evil desires, become conformed to the world. Where are the people in our time who take such great care that their children have God, as they take care that they have clothes, splendor, wealth, positions of honor, etc.? Here we meet a whole sea full of big and small worms.

Behold, what unseemly clothing (portenta vestium) this licentiousness has brought up in both sexes, especially in the women! God only protect the men that they wear nothing but a linen outer garment (peplum), because the women wear berets on the bare hair like the men. Perhaps in revenge, because the men began to wear hairnets, which were given to the women, so the women took the berets from the men. And why does the world think that this is good, but because it likes a new fashion (mos)? But consider what this is, to cover a man's head in a woman's net, and at the same time the mystery which the apostle touched [1 Cor. 11:7], because he did not want the man's head to be covered.

But first, let us make a distinction. Either such adornment is done with the will and at the behest of the men: then the women can certainly be excused, since they do it against their will, only to please the men; but I say of this, if the men are sensible and wealthy, then the women can be excused.

1) Löscher: "The following was preached by Luther on the second Sunday svoiuiii. post Ootnvnms after All Saints' Day s9. Nov.i in 1516."

2) In Latin here is a play on words which cannot be well rendered in German: xursutss - xsräsiitss - xsrsuntss.

are; as St. Cecilia went out in a golden dress, but under it at the flesh was dressed with a hair shirt, and likewise Anastasia; likewise Esther in the old bundle (lege). Yes, St. Augustine once seriously punished a certain Editia, 1) that she had taken off her woman's clothes against the will of her husband and had put on a widow's garment. Breaking off from this, because obedience must be rendered to the husband in those things which can be done without sin, let us see how it stands with women who, against the will of their husbands, demand this expenditure, and exert a constraint on their husbands. About this do not listen to me, but to the first apostle Peter, who is appointed as a faithful shepherd over all, and 1 Pet. 3, 1-6. says: "Likewise let the wives be subject to their husbands, so that even those who do not believe in the word may be won over by the wives' conduct without the word, when they behold your chaste conduct in fear (spiritually and in heart they should be subject, that is, be subject in fear or reverence, so that they have a high opinion of them). Which adornment shall not be by heart, with braids of hair, and cloaks of gold, or putting on garments; but the hidden man of the heart unfeigned, with a gentle and quiet spirit, that is delectable in the sight of God. For so did the holy women of old adorn themselves, who put their hope in God and were subject to their husbands; as Sarah was obedient to Abraham, and called him lord, whose daughters ye became, if ye did well, and were not so timid."

This lesson is read to you, women, this Latin is given to you (as children); learn it and pay attention to it. Your bishop, pope, apostle, father, shepherd, says this and tells you to keep it. Then we will hear what he teaches the men.

And first of all, lest anyone think that in this commandment nothing should be said about women, let him know that here it is commanded to honor all human headship, as I also said before. Now the man is the head and lord of the woman, and her predecessor.

set. Likewise, however, here again all authority (potestas) is reminded that it should show itself worthy of honor. Therefore, after the children have received their instruction, yes, at the same time as their instruction, it is quite appropriate and closely connected (proxime) to speak also of the behavior of the spouses among themselves.

But see how gentle and modest, how calm and gentle the holy apostle is in his teaching. He is not stormy, he does not thunder, he does not threaten, but teaches gently and sweetly, so that even the pleasant way in which he says this should induce one to do what he teaches, let alone the benefit that the things he teaches and alone intends to teach have.

First, he wants the wives to be subject to their husbands. Paul agrees with this Col. 3, 18: "Wives, be subject to your husbands in the Lord, as is fitting"; and Eph. 5, 22. ff: "Wives be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife; even as Christ also is the head of the church, and he is the Saviour of his body," that is, not a corrupter. "But as the church is subject unto Christ, so also the wives are subject unto their husbands in all things." But in what this subjection consists he explains [1 Pet. 3, 2.] sufficiently in the following, since he praises their walk toward men in reverence and fear as useful for the salvation of men. 2) So that they are subjects, that is, that they treat the man reverently and honor him, obey him in all things. For this reason he introduces the example of Sarah, that she was subject to her husband, because she called him lord, and thereby made known her fear and reverence, and that she was ready to obey and yield to him in all things. Since Peter commands that unbelieving men be subject to him, how much more should this be done to believing men, as Paul again says, Eph. 5:33: "The woman fears her husband," i.e., she should not be subject to him.

2) Löscher: Here is a gap [?], which is to be completed from the manuscript thus: "And so right honor, spiritually understood, shows in a beautiful way just the two things mentioned above, after obedience and after reverence. St. Bernard."

behave respectfully toward him. Against this act the women, who despise their husbands, are stubborn and stiff-necked, always want to have the last word, or act without the knowledge and will of their husbands by spending money 2c. All of these are guilty of this commandment because they are not subject to their superior. For the apostle says in 1 Cor. 14:34 that the law says that women are to be subject to men. The law of Moses has this in many places, but the first law is Gen. 3, 16. the commandment of God to Eve: "Your will shall be subject to your husband, and he shall be your master." Here is the explicit provision that the man shall have dominion over the woman. Now as it is not fitting for a son to quarrel and rebel against his father, a servant against his lord, the people against their prince or priest, so it is not fitting for a wife to do so against her husband. And notice this first, for it is something great and very seldom done. This is what St. Monica did, she kept silent against her husband and gave in; but to other wives who were beaten by their husbands, she said that they should be mindful of their position, not be arrogant against their masters, since they should know from the reading of the marriage contract that they had become servants (ancillas). Therefore, a woman should either be a subject or not marry. If she does not want to have a master, let her refrain from taking a husband, for this is what God commands and decrees through the apostles and His holy Scriptures.

### Conclusion.

The woman, who has a whimsical (morosum) husband, does not take it into her mind to repay like with like and to drive out violence with violence, but seeks to bring about a change by a just opposite change and a calm nature. For so the apostle teaches here [1 Pet. 3:1], "That men through the good behavior of women may be converted to the faith." But what is done for the sake of faith, that should also be done for the sake of some other lesser good. For so also Paul says in 1 Cor. 7:14: "For the unbelieving man is a man of faith.

Man is sanctified by the believing woman." For one evil is not overcome by another evil, but increased and strengthened, but it is overcome by good.

Second. Their adornment should not be by heart with hair braids or gold or dresses. But this is now mainly the adornment of Christian women and nowadays taken to the extreme (ad monstra). The apostle says that this outward adornment is appropriate for pagan women, but Christian women should have a different adornment. But who can be silent, since the abuse has risen so high?

First. I know some women (for not all of them aspire to this foolish vanity) who are forced to adorn themselves with these precious things against their will, and have a great disgust for them, like Queen Esther, Queen St. Elizabeth; and often these are just such women who live in abundance, so that they could well adorn themselves. For those who are not able to do so strive for it all the more, as is now the case with the nobles and citizens: the poorer they are in comparison to their ancestors, the more lavish they are in their expenditure. Therefore we want to say about them.

Although St. Agatha was of noble birth, she walked not only with a veil, like a woman, but even in the dress of a slave, and since she was censured for this, she boasted that she was a handmaid of Christ, as is evident from her legend.

And first of all I do not know whether I should punish the men or the women more, or at least the authorities of the cities, that they allow the women such things, whereby their property is damaged with knowledge and will. For why do the authorities [here] not give laws as is done elsewhere? Or why does not the husband keep his wife in check, since he is her master? Or if he bears this willingly, how can he wonder at the impositions of princes? And take heed, if you do not change, the treasure will not cease, but will increase. I want to assure you that when this one is over, another greater one will come, because you have challenged and are still challenging God. Doesn't an honorable woman have to be ashamed of herself?

meu that she has such precious veils and sheaths (calyptras) that a moderate citizen could maintain his entire household with them? But what shall I say of the garments and the exceedingly costly abuse of silk, purple, gold and silver? And it is certainly a more tolerable pity to make of them silver basting, chains and rings, than to make of gold hoods, nets and fringes, of silk fabrics, embroideries and damask; for these things are consumed by use, those remain serviceable, though they are not useful at present.

But I don't know what to say about the new profit or damage masters who build fancy machines with wheels to press (plananda) veils and other linen, so that the veils come to eighteen to twenty guilders, but the pressing machine to forty to fifty: could the lightning shatter the wheels prepared for St. Catharine and can not also hit these quite vain and worldly machines?

But all these are signs that we dislike the inner adornment, which we would not dislike so much if we did not like the outer adornment so much. It is easy for a respectable woman to despise the outward adornment, when she is after the inward adornment; one cannot take care of both adornments in the same way.

Therefore, the time of the synagogue has now come again, which Isaiah Cap. 3, 16-24 with these words: "Therefore the daughters of Zion are proud, and walk with their necks erect, and with their faces made up, and they walk, and are truant, and have fine shoes upon their feet: so shall the LORD make the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion bald, and the LORD shall take away their jewels. Zu der Zeit wird der HErr den Schmuck an den köstlichen Schuhen wegnehmen, und die Hefte, die Spangen, die Kettlein, die Armspangen, die Hauben, die Flittern, die Gebräme, die Schnurlein, die Biesemäpfel, die Ohrenspangen, die Ringe, die Haarbänder, die Feierkleider, die Mäntel, die Schleier, die Beutel, die Spiegel, die Koller, die Borten, die Kittel; and shall be stench for good smell, and a loose ribbon for a girdle, and a bald head for a frizzy hair, and for a loose coat a tight one.

Sack" 2c. Behold, how many and how great splendor of women he has gathered together; forty-one ornaments are not enough for a woman! Who should not be afraid to take a wife? Do not both the Greeks and the Latins call with a very good word the woman adornment the world?

1) Because this collection of all kinds of things makes a kind of world. Read also Theophrastus, St. Jerome against Jovinian, and Plautus in the Aulularia, and you will see that a woman, if left to her will, has an insatiable desire for adornment; therefore the same must not be satisfied, but restrained with all one's strength.

And what does a respectable woman or virgin do that she desires with such great zeal to become like the whores? Or what do you seek with such great adornment? Do you want to attract the hearts of strange men to you? Or do you want to make it known that you do not like chastity? Do you wish to become a whore? Why do you seek to please someone other than your husband? Who should not think this desire to please suspicious? A woman pleases enough and more than enough when she is so adorned that she pleases her husband: for she is to please him alone; to him she is given and subject.

Likewise also the virgins. Why do they foolishly seek to please young men? Do you not think that he will be deterred from marrying you if he thinks that he will be forced to clean you at such great expense when he has married you? If you want to captivate a young man by love, listen to very good advice: be demure, little preened, speak few words and do not stare him in the face. The greatest adornment of a virgin and a woman is a demure restraint, for this appeals and captivates the hearts of men more than all adornment. Moreover, such behavior makes marriage firm, while carnal love, which has been awakened by adornment, soon produces weariness after marriage, because marriage is not based on good manners, but on vain adornment. Do so, and you will be (also with God's blessing)

rather get a husband than the most frivolous wasters of goods, who are quite similar to the wolves and harlots of whom the 144th Psalm, v. 12. says: "Their daughters are like the hewn out oriels, like the palaces", that is, splendidly adorned before others, as a palace stands out before other houses, is adorned and is seen 2c.

<sup>1</sup>) It has been said how a woman should behave towards a man, so that she honors him as her superior according to this commandment, namely by twofold service (cultu), namely obedience and reverence, that she has a willing heart to do his will, then also honors him from the heart by thinking highly of him. But if she asks how she can hold in honor a man who is shapeless, morose (morusus - to whom nothing can be done right) and not even worthy of love, let alone honor, I answer, as I said of the parents, that one should look at God in him, because it pleased God that the man should be his (ejus - God's) and represent his (ejus) place, as the apostle says [1 Cor. 11, 7.], "The man is GOtte's image and GOtte's glory, but the woman is the man's glory." Therefore he need not displease her, because she sees that he has pleased and pleases GOtte. It is a great dignity of the man that he has a part in God's name and office; therefore he should be honored by the woman, because God is the man of the whole church and of the soul. This exceedingly great mystery is also the reason why the woman should honor, fear and listen to the man. So turn your eye from the flesh and recognize and serve God in your husband, and it will be easy for you to honor him.

But on the other hand, it must now be said that the men should also prove themselves worthy of the name of a man and a superior. St. Peter continues in the above-mentioned passage [1 Petr. 3, 7.]: "In the same way, you men, dwell with them with reason, and give the female, as the weakest instrument, its honor, as well as fellow men.

1) Löscher: "The following was preached by Luther on the day of St. Martin [November 11, 1516." The exordium is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1774.

inherit the grace of life, so that your prayer may not be hindered."

First of all, he teaches men not to dwell with their wives only, but with reason, that is, not according to passion and only according to the sensuality of pleasure, making no distinction between a wife and a whore; for so also do the beasts and the heathen dwell with one another. He therefore instructs the man's eye how to look at his wife, not with the eye of evil desire, but of reason and knowledge. 2) By reason, the man is to know and recognize two things about his wife, according to God's command. First, he says: "as the weakest instrument" (vasculo), secondly: "as also joint heirs" the wives are to be held by them. And so he explains himself what he wants to be understood by "dwelling with them with reason", namely, that the man recognizes the woman as a very weak vessel, and nevertheless holds her in honor as a co-heiress of grace, and not as if he had her to atone for his lust (in passione desiderii). Let us explain this further.

You men should know that the woman is a weaker vessel (vasculum) than the man, therefore you should live with them according to this knowledge (scientiam). "Vessel" he calls her after the body and after the soul. For man also is a vessel after the same manner, but a stronger one. For as the woman has a more tender body, so also a more tender mind; therefore honor shall be shown to her by the stronger men. We are all called "vessels" because the soul dwells in the body as in a vessel.

But this honor of the instrument (vasculi) is the honor given to the body of the woman, which consists in nothing else than to love one's wife with a chaste love, as it is said in 1 Thess. 4:4, 5: "That every one of you may know to keep his barrel in sanctification and honor, and not in lust (passione desiderii), as the heathen do, who know nothing of God," that is, to withdraw from one's wife and to give up one's wife.

2) Here we have followed the reading of the manuscript: "eoMitioni" instead of coAitatioiis in the editions.

evil desire is not enough. For sanctification is this chastity.

But in teaching this, the apostle Peter, in a covert way, wanted to commend (commendare) their wives to the men, that they should have patience with them. As it were with a very short word (epitheto) he takes up the patience of the men (tangit) by saying: "to the female, as the weakest instrument", 1) as if he wanted to say: She is a woman, she is weak, she is an instrument, in that she has a very noble soul. Knowing this, give them honor for their sake, then also for your sake, so that your prayer may not be hindered. For who will come to prayer, or even do anything honorable, through the desire (passiones) of evil? For prayer requires most strongly that the heart turn away from the lusts of the flesh. But since the woman is a very weak instrument, she must also be carried and her guilt overlooked, and she must not always be punished harshly for trivial things, as some men who are too impetuous perform a tragedy for the smallest cause. As the Psalmist [Ps. 130:3] says to the Lord, "If thou wilt, O Lord, impute sin, O Lord, who shall stand?" So it is impossible for peace to be kept in a household between husband and wife, if one does not credit and overlook anything to the other, but pays attention to everything down to the smallest detail. For who does not sometimes give offense? Therefore, many things must be overlooked, many things must be ignored, so that a peaceful relationship can exist. This is why a man should keep his wife chaste, because she is the weaker instrument, that is, because of her tenderer body and softer mind; secondly, and much more, because she is the co-heiress of such a great grace; thirdly, and most of all, so that the blessedness of men themselves is not hindered. Behold, what a powerful and mighty exhortation!

In a similar way the apostle Paul says Eph. 5, 25. 33.: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the

And: "Let every man love his wife as himself; but let the woman fear the man," that is, she should honor him and have a reverent awe of him (revereatur). He has beautifully distinguished: "the man loves", "the woman fears", both in a chaste way; the chaste love should condescend, the chaste fear should soar; the subordinate owes this to the superior, the superior to the subordinate. And Col. 3, 19. He says: "Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter against them", that is, as I said above, they should not be too much after them and not take every opportunity to scold them.

How did Christ love the church? Worse, in a spiritual way. Although he could not find anything in her that he could love, but only what he had to hate in her, he nevertheless gave himself up for her and sanctified her 2c. Thus, if a man finds something in his wife that is not at all lovable, he must change himself and offer himself, that is, he must abandon his desires that are not fulfilled because of his wife's fault, so that in this way he looks only at what is lovable in her, and purifies her to himself in such a way that he presents her to himself without a blemish. This does not happen, as I have said, unless he overcomes evil with good, and learns to love even that which is not lovable, so that it becomes lovable by becoming different, or he himself changes. For since all things are indifferentes, they can be loved as well as hated, depending on the change of the mind; as, the honor of the world, although it remains the same, is loved and hated by the same man, depending on whether he turns away from it or turns toward it. And this is the best kind of change, where not the thing and the object, but the direction of the will (potentia) is changed, because this is something permanent. This change is found among Christians and at the right hand of the Most High, but among worldly people it is only the search for change of objects.

But that's enough about that. Now about the household.

"You shall honor your father and your mother." That under the father also the house

1) "In the Erlanger Ausgabe fund nur in dieser] ist hier der Text so wiedergegeben, wie ihn im Druckfehlerverzeichnis der ersten Ausgabe ausdrücklich verworfen hat." (Weim. Ausg.)

Lord is understood from 2 Kings 5:13, where the servants of Naaman called him Father. This is where the name father of the house comes from. Therefore, the servants must honor their masters in the same way as indicated above, namely with spiritual honor inwardly [in the heart], ready to obey them and to think highly of them for the sake of the Lord, whose name and office they see shining in them, whose expressed will this also is, as it is 1 Petr. 2:18, "Ye servants, be subject (behold, this is obedience) with all fear (behold, this is reverent conduct) unto masters, not only to kind and gentle, but also to whimsical," that is, to those who are hard to deal with, bad, sullen, unreasonable, hard 2c. Although the apostle is speaking here of bonded servants, not hired ones, the same commandment applies to them. Therefore, servants who embezzle their masters' goods with intent and will are to be regarded no differently than thieves, and are required to make restitution, for they receive their wages so that they may be faithful. But now the whole world has great lamentation over the servants. Therefore let them mark this commandment with all diligence; for this is not to honor masters by calling them masters, but by being obedient to them from the heart and fearing them.

And with this word the apostle comforts the servants who complain about their masters, that they are wicked and strange, that is, that they cannot get along with them (*difficiles*), by saying [1 Petr. 2, 19. 20.]: "For this is grace, if someone for the sake of conscience bears with God the evil and suffers the wrong. For what glory is this, if ye suffer strokes for iniquity?" And Paul says Col. 3, 22-24: "Servants, be obedient in all things to your physical masters, not with service in mind, but to please men, but with simplicity of heart and fear of God. Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men: and know that of the Lord ye shall receive the recompence of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ." Behold, how beautifully the apostle draws this commandment to the spiritual mind, that lords from the heart

are to be honored because they do not serve the lords but the Lord in them. If I said this out so aridly, no one would believe it. But there follows also the consolation for the servants, as in Peter, saying [Col. 3, 25.], "But he that doeth wrong shall receive that which he hath wronged (see how he seeketh to persuade them to patience), and counteth no respect of persons in the sight of GOD." That is, do not be troubled that they are masters, but you are servants; it is all the same with God; whoever does good or evil will receive his reward. He says the same thing in Eph. 6, 5-8: "You servants, be obedient to your physical masters with fear and trembling, in simplicity of heart, as to Christ; not with service alone in mind, as to please men, but as the servants of Christ (that is, because you thus serve 1) Christ), that you do such will of God from the heart, with good will. Let it seem to you that you serve the Lord, and not men (for in this you do not the will of men, but the will of God, and serve God); and know that whatsoever good thing any man shall do, that shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be a servant or a freeman." And Tit. 2, 9. 10.: "To the servants (set thyself as an example), that they be subject to their masters, doing in all things to please, not barking back, not embezzling, but showing all good faithfulness, that they may adorn the doctrine of GOD our Savior in all things."

On the other hand, the masters should not show themselves to be tyrants, because, as said above, it is impossible for a servant not to omit or commit something once in a while; many things must be overlooked in a good servant. For if they are to show obedience and reverence, masters must also show kindness and benevolence. Hence it is said in Eph. 6:9, "And know that your Lord also is in heaven, and with him is no respect of person." For who can serve such a man, from whom nothing is heard but reproach and scolding, and who is always ranting?

This also includes other wage earners

1) except by us according to the manuscript. That it is to be set is evident from the parallelism with what is said in the following parenthesis.

and craftsmen, as manual laborers, masons, carpenters and other such people, about whom and about whose disloyalty tMrrall is great complaint; for high wages they are hired, but they are lazy at work, and for the most part they cheat the masters whom they serve, and, unfortunately, they make no conscience about it, as if they were not openly robbers and thieves of other people's property, which they receive illegally, while they do not do enough work for it.

Finally, the bishops and the princes, the priests in the villages (plebani) and the town councillors (in the cities), in general the authorities in spiritual and temporal government (utrumque dominium) belong here, who are to be feared very much, because they carry the sword of the Lord, whom everyone should be careful not to contradict, because the law says [2 Mos. 22, 28.): "You shall not blaspheme the ruler of your people," and again: "You shall not curse the gods. And, alas, one is nowhere more at hand with disparaging speeches than with these; there is no fear of GOD, who exercises the regiment in them (Rom. 13, 1.): "For all authority is from GOD," and though they esteem and oppress the peasants, or their citizens, or the priests, yet one must bear them, not unlike the hand of the LORD, which oppresses us because of our sin and failings. Since these people, because of the (little) power they have, cannot harm with works, they harm with words; therefore the law commands that one should not speak degradingly of them nor blaspheme them, for that would be to judge one's superior, which is quite contrary to order. But the more their (the rulers') life is clearly revealed, the more it is judged and blamed, but not in a Christian way (catholice), yes, even in contradiction to the right doctrine ([minus] orthodox).

### To resolve.

The Jews have abrogated this commandment, since they, in order to indulge their avarice, taught [Matth. 15, 5.]: "The sacrifice (munus) that is offered by me is useful to you", that is, if I offer the gift for you, it is more useful to you than if I give it to you. But even now this foolishness prevails everywhere, in that the

the same avarice of the priests is going on, so that people are more attached to dead stones and wood and with a more willing heart than they give to their own parents and to their living neighbor. Therefore (as I have often said), so that we may not be accused of forgetting the law of God in utterly vain Jewish hypocrisy, let us first honor the commandment of God, and honor it in such a way that we accomplish and understand it spiritually, that is, that we first and foremost use these outward goods, be it body or possessions (for God has no need of them, nor has He spoken a word in the first commandments about offering them to Him, as He says in Jeremiah Cap. 7, 22), serve parents if they are poor, then relatives, then also the poor and needy; finally, we should lend or give for free to all neighbors and believers who need it, but not behave in such a way that we pass them by (as this nonsensical behavior is now commonplace), and decorate churches and in them pictures, blankets, utensils in the most precious way. This should be the last thing and should be done with moderation, because it is not necessary. For we suffer from a lack of necessities because we procure superfluous things. For it is not necessary that we should be careful of superfluous things, since so many things are necessary to salvation that no one is able to accomplish them. Otherwise, if these things were necessary for salvation, how would the poor be saved who do not have them?

But now, in these wretched times, people insist on these things as if they were necessary and belonged only to the service of God, since they are given to men for comfort, and God has no need of them, but man does: nevertheless, in wonderful blindness, they are not given to men, but to God. And there are men who say, We know that GOD hath no need of these things; but they answer not when thou sayest unto them, Why then givest thou these things to GOD, who desireth them not, and deprivest them from the brother that needeth them, contrary to the will of GOD, who commandeth [to help the brother]? And let this be enough of this commandment.



## The fifth commandment.

### You shall not kill.

<sup>1)</sup> It has been said of the commandments which refer to GOD, both to Himself and to those who are in His stead. Now the following six refer to the neighbor. And behold the admirable and fitting order. For forbidding begins with the greatest and progresses to the least. For the greatest harm is when a man is killed; next is when his spouse is dishonored (violation); third is when his goods are taken from him. Now those who cannot do harm in these things at least do harm with their tongues; therefore the fourth is doing harm to his good name. If they are not guilty of any of these things, they are at least too close to their neighbor in heart by coveting what is his. This is what envy actually consists in; let us now take these before us. Such progress is also in the first four commandments. For the greatest is when one rejects God in heart, mouth, and works; then, when one at least? uselessly uses with the mouth the name that one confesses with the heart and mouth; finally, when one does not honor with works the one whom one honors with heart and mouth, and finally, when one despises him in his representatives. Although this is the least of the first four, it is greater than the others that follow it, because [by the transgression of the latter] it is not exactly (proprie) God who is affected, but man and his neighbor.

But this commandment, as well as all others, the Pharisees have drawn to the letter, as if no one would go against it.

who did not kill another with his own hand. This is how they taught and this is how they lived. That they taught in this way is clear from all the prophets. Therefore also the Psalmist, who sees that they taught only the outward works, but not moved by heart reasons, by displeasure about it, says in the 19th Psalm [v. 2]: "The heavens tell the glory of God and the firmament proclaims the work of his hands", as if he wanted to say: These people teach only works of men, not the works of GOD. Hence it comes that they pervert the law of God, which is without change and refreshes souls [Ps. 19:8], but those convert only the hands. And the reason is that the law is spiritual. And here it is to be noted that when the law is called "spiritual," this is not understood to mean that it is to be understood according to spiritual interpretation (mystice), like the figures and mysteries (mysteria). For "spiritual" is something different, depending on whether it is understood by spiritual interpretation (mysticum) or by spiritual things (spirituale). But it [the law] is called spiritual (spiritualis) because it is fulfilled by the Spirit alone and requires the Spirit, that is, if it is not fulfilled from the heart with a cheerful will, it is not fulfilled. But such a spirit is not in us, but is given by the grace of the Holy Spirit, which makes people who desire the law of the Lord. Therefore, when one hears any law commanding this or that, one must always think and understand that it commands to do such things with pleasure, that is, freely, without fear of punishment, and with a cheerful heart. Since this is not in us, it is immediately understood that the law compels us to go to grace so that it may be fulfilled. Thus it is said in the first Psalm, v. 2: "But have pleasure in the law of the Lord." But those who understand "spiritual" in such a way that "according to spiritual interpretation" (mysticum) and "spiritual" (spirituale) are the same, must also understand the holy ten commandments not spiritually (spiritualem), but only the ceremonies of the law, since no commandment has a spiritual interpretation.

1) Löscher: "Luther preached the following on the 24th Sunday after Trinity in 1816. This information will not be correct. The 24th Sunday after Trinity is November 2. Now, however, this piece stands between the sermons of November 11 and 30; therefore, it is probably to be placed on the 26th Sunday after Trinity, November 16. (Weim. Ausg.)

(mysticum) in the Decalogue. And thereby they contradict the apostle, who says Rom. 7, 14: "The law is spiritual", and yet he speaks of the law in the holy ten commandments, as the text explicitly indicates. Therefore, spiritual interpretation (mysticum) and spirituals (Spirituals) differ, like higher and lower. Everything spiritual (Spirituals) is mysterious (mysticum), but not vice versa. For the spiritual (spirituale) is nothing other than what is a living will to do or not to do something, or means the same. But the mysterious (mysticum) often means external actions (operationes), as the sacrifice of a sparrow means the mortification of the flesh. But this still belongs to the letter, although it is a secret interpretation (mystica), because it can happen without spirit and willingness, because often also the commandments of the Gospel are kept according to the letter out of fear, and not willingly, although the right life according to the Gospel consists in doing the commandments with pleasure and gladly, and whoever lives otherwise does not live according to the Gospel, but according to the letter of the law.

Therefore, those who understand by spiritual understanding and teaching of the Spirit the gospel itself, and that according to the outward works, are almost Pelagians, for such works are also done by the ungodly, but the works of the gospel have their name not from their outward but from their inward. Therefore they are hidden works; though they shine outwardly, yet the will is hidden. For the same reason they are also called the works of God, because they are works of grace and of the Spirit, since man does not have this will of his own accord, and for this reason neither do the works themselves. Now these works are frequently mentioned in Scripture, and the works of men are severely punished because, although they are similar to right works, they are not right works, because they are not done with pleasure and in vain, but always have either the fear of punishment or the desire for benefit in mind (*pro fine*). For this is how the Jews lived and taught, as I have said. For when they brought Christ to Pilate, they would not kill him, lest they should sin, but should overthrow him.

answered him that he might be slain. So Saul also said [1 Sam. 18:17] of David, "My hand shall not be on him," and delivered him into the hands of the Philistines, as if he were innocent because he did not kill him with his hand but with his heart.

About this Christ says Matth. 5, 20: "Unless your righteousness is better than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." And why is that? Because they took the law according to the words and according to the sound of the letters, that is, not according to the intention of the Lawgiver. Therefore he says [v. 21.], "Ye have heard that it was said unto the ancients," as if to say, It is "said," but not understood; they have heard the words only, but the understanding they have not known; therefore they have lived according to the letter, and all this because they were old men of the flesh, children of Adam, earthly. "But I say unto you" [v. 22.]. Which "you?" Worse, not "to the old," but to the new, heavenly, Christians, spiritual I say spiritually. Therefore, let us hear how Christ interprets this law spiritually, and we will see how many kinds of people sin against this commandment.

Now the first are those who prove their wrath by the deed, who kill according to the letter and by the deed, of whom the Lord says [Matth. 5, 21. Vulg.]: "But he who kills is guilty of judgment (*judicio*)", or rather, he is guilty of judgment, or "to the court", in the dative (*in dandi casu*), for being delinquent against the court. This is easily understood by all, but it must be noted that under this work are also included all those who have called for it, have given cause for the murder by advice, assistance or in any other way, or have been comrades and participants.

The second are those who prove their anger with words, of which the Lord says [Matth. 5, 22.]: "Whoever says to his brother, You fool, is guilty of hellish fire." But by the word, "Thou fool," are understood all those curses, invectives, and blasphemies which proceed from well-considered anger. For although such people do not

They say such things about him that he would die in any case if this were to happen. For how could he live if the devil took him, if the pestilence killed him, if the thunderstorm (fulmen) struck him? yes, sometimes they even go so far as to wish the death of the soul on him, saying: "That the infernal fire may consume you! But Christ uses a milder word, "You fool," so that we may understand what is the matter with those who curse more harshly, out of a fierce (plena) anger that desires the destruction of the one it curses.

The third are those who vent their anger with gestures. Of them the Lord says [Matth. 5, 22.): "Whoever says to his brother, Racha, is guilty of counsel." By this are understood all other signs which arise from the same deadly anger, as there are, turning one's back on him, not greeting him or thanking him, expressing oneself with joyful words over his misfortune, expressing regret over his welfare, from which the philosopher [Aristotle] in the second book of Ethics has made the goddess (virtutem) Nemesis. For Christ uses here a very small sign, so that he would give reason to make a right judgment about the predicted, yes, because the spirit expresses the malice of men only weakly (parce) and with restraint, but wants it to be understood deeply. At least the word "Racha", if I may say my judgment, seems to me to be common even in all languages; for even we, when we are indignant, bring forth with a certain snarling of the throat, as it were [the growling] of a dog: "arch" or "räch". For such a snarling and rough sound of the throat, I think, the Lord intended to signify by this expression, and let it be what others interpret as an exclamation of one indignant. For, as is known, there is no exclamation word that expresses indignation, and more violently, than "rach" or "rarch". Therefore, although such a man does not kill either by word or by deed, he expresses this, moved by anger, by a sign by which he expresses his wish that he be destroyed (non esse); thus he kills by a sign.

The fourth are those who are angry in heart (affectu); and this stage is the cause why what the [three] above do is sin; if it did not take place, it would not be sin even if it did and could take place (for the movement of anger is the head and life of anger, which is manifested in words, signs, and works; without these it would not be anger); of these the Lord says [Matth. 5:22], "He that is angry with his brother is guilty of judgment." For though they kill not with works, words, and signs, yet they do it with the heart. Of these John says in his first epistle (Catholica) [Cap. 3, 15.], "He that hateth his brother is a slayer of death." Why? Because he does not grant him life, but death; therefore, as far as the heart is concerned, he is a slayer of his brother before God.

Therefore, this commandment is a very deep one, and there is no one who can fulfill it without grace, because there is no one who does not have someone to be angry with when he examines himself rightly. Otherwise the Lord's Prayer would be false, which says, "As we forgive our debtors." For without love it is impossible that this commandment should not be transgressed, for a man either loves his neighbor or hates him. But some people have now arisen who want to take a middle position in this (neutral), who say that one can be such that one neither loves nor hates; but I advise you not to trust these people.

Therefore, whoever wants to fulfill this commandment, let him strive in every way to love every man with a sweet affection, yes, let him ask the Lord for the grace of love, and do not flatter himself in vain that he does not hate anyone; for this must be a very gentle and humble man who does not sin in this commandment. For the anger in the spirit (spiritualis), which is forbidden in this movement of the mind (affectu), is so deep that even if it does not appear in signs or words, it may live inwardly in the strongest possible way. Of these says Isaiah Cap. 29, 15 [Vulg.]: "Woe to you who have an ambush in your heart (profundi corde) and whose works are in darkness."

But there is also another spiritual

Anger, and a good one at that, which is called "zeal for God". For if the Lord had not also wanted to indicate that there is a good zeal, he would have said without any closer definition (absolute): "Whoever is angry"; but now he says: "Whoever is angry with his brother", so that he does not contradict himself, since he says [Luc. 14, 26.]: "Whoever [does not] 1) hate his own life" in this world 2c. Therefore anger and hatred which one has against himself is something exceedingly noble; of which elsewhere.

So this explanation of the Lord about this commandment is sufficient for us; only that it moves many, why the Lord has kept this order, that he has transferred the simple anger to the court, "Racha" to the council, "you fool" to the hellish fire. For this is easily recognized, that under "judgment," since the law says, "But he that killeth shall be guilty of judgment," these things are all three comprehended in the spirit, as the Lord himself interprets the law; so that, as in the word, "Thou shalt not kill," is comprehended the forbidding of all wrath, so under the word "judgment" is comprehended all the punishment of wrath. Why then does he now distinguish "judgment" from "council" and "hell"? First of all, Lyra thinks that the text has been rearranged, since it seems that "Rath" should have been placed before the punishment. St. Augustine says in the first book "on the Sermon on the Mount" (de ser[mone] do[mini in monte]): that an order of gravity (gravitatis) is indicated here in the punishment, as it is also in the order of guilt; but how this happens invisibly in the souls, one cannot say. Thus he leaves it undiscussed (incognitum), and asserts only this, that by those stages an ever heavier sentence is expressed. For in court, there is still an opportunity to defend oneself; in council, however, the person found guilty is discussed as to what punishment he should be given; in hell, however, there is a certain and fixed condemnation of the guilty person. This judicial process expresses the severity of the various crimes. But since St. Augustine did not specify how these are punished, he also says,

that this cannot be stated, so I will also refrain from stating this explicitly. For if the Lord had wanted to designate different punishments by these levels, so that the one guilty of judgment would not be guilty of judgment or hell, it follows that mortal hatred would not be guilty of hellish fire, nor would cursing and detracting [from one's neighbor], which is quite wrong. Yes, it would follow that the one who kills with the work deserves a worse punishment than the infernal fire, because this is the worst and heaviest of the three, while there is no worse punishment.

Therefore - may it be granted me to present my thoughts without presumption - there is for these four degrees all at once, or may there be still more degrees of the death stroke, also in the work (which is certainly true, because he commits a more serious murder who kills his father and his mother or his wife than another man), only One punishment, namely the eternal damnation and the infernal fire, which however is imposed in different degrees, what is indicated by these differences of degrees. For as he is farther from punishment and slower to punishment who is tried only in temporal things, so he is slower, that is, less severe and more easily punished in hell, who has been only angry. For what in time is slowness or swiftness, in eternity is aggravation or mitigation. Yes, slowness and swiftness in bodily things arise from the strain and slackening of spiritual things, as is seen in fiery and sluggish souls, 2) some of which accomplish much in a short time, others very little in a long time. For a slack soul does little, while a tense soul does much. So also, just as he who is guilty of counsel is nearer to his punishment (malo) than he who is guilty of judgment, and yet farther than he who is guilty of hell, so he who is guilty of hell is nearer to his punishment (malo) than he who is guilty of judgment.

1) non is in the Vulgate, but is missing in all editions.

2) It seems to us that instead of uniuMipus 1 in all editions) should be read: auirabus. Because immediately follows uuiua. It is also difficult to believe that Luther should have opposed the "bodily things" (oorporulibus) to the animals as "spiritual things" (spiritualia).

The one who is guilty [of the council] will be punished more severely in hell than the one who is guilty [of the court]; but the one who is guilty of hell will have no more respite, that is, he will be punished exceedingly severely and not leniently. But he that killeth, and worse than killeth, shall without doubt be punished most severely. This I want to have said in such a way that I have not asserted anything but certain truth.

But there are some who are secretly hopeful, who certainly imagine that they are not guilty of this commandment, because they do not kill, are not angry, and are not aware of any hatred; this is possible and may be true. But therefore they must not think that they are justified and have exhausted and fulfilled this commandment to the bottom. For the law is without change [Ps. 19:8], and is purified in fire, and proved seven times [Ps. 12:7]. Therefore let no one boast that he does not sin in anger against his brother until he feels so meek and peaceful that, even if everything and his life were taken from him, he would not be angry with the one who took it from him, and would not feel anger if it happened that way. O how great and profound a word is this! It is easy not to be angry with the peaceable and with those who do you no harm; so do the heathen, so do the animals, yes, even the wild animals. What a glorious glory of righteousness is this, that thou art not angry with peaceable men! But if money, house, father, mother, brother, sister, son, fields, the members of the body and even life are taken from you, see if you can not only not be angry, but also be happy and praise God and be kind and favorable to those who do this. If you can do this, then thank God, because you have God's grace. But if you find yourself unable to do so, know that the old ingrained anger, the spiritual will to kill, is still hidden in you. For the law forbids this and fights it; therefore grace is necessary here, which the law forces you to seek, after you have recognized the impossibility [of helping yourself] through it in such a way.

Now you say to me: Must man then be so pure that he should not even have the will to be angry at all the evil that is done to him? I answer, "Only so pure, because nothing impure will enter the kingdom of heaven [Revelation 21:27]. For as long as this will remains in us, which breaks out in anger as soon as an occasion presents itself, we are unclean. Therefore, man must become so pure that he (as I have said) not only does not become angry, but also [Matth. 5, 44.] blesses those who curse him, is kind to those who persecute him, thanks God in adversity, and desires even more adversity, so that he hates only sin and not punishment, as it is said [Song of the Three Men, v. 70], "Light and darkness, praise the Lord," and [Ps. 34:2], "I will praise the Lord always; his praise shall be in my mouth forever." Therefore, that the [false] saints of the Jews have not been such people, it has been said of them in the 8th Psalm, v. 3. "Destroy the enemy and the avenger." Therefore I have said that the law is spiritual; for he who understands this commandment otherwise understands it in a Jewish way and according to the letter, and his righteousness is no better than the righteousness of the Pharisees.

Therefore, St. Augustine in the first book "On the Sermon on the Mount" sets six levels in this commandment. The first level is: Do harm, even if you have not been harmed. This is the highest injustice. The second is: To do more harm than has been done to you, which is close to the law of Moses [2nd book, 21, 12. f.]. The third is: Damage as much as you have been damaged. This is how far the law of Moses went, which says [Ex. 21, 24.]: "Tooth for tooth, eye for eye." For this law allows something (donat), because according to all laws the injurer is worth a greater punishment than the one who has done no harm (innocens). The fourth is: If one has damaged you, and you do not do as much damage as you have "suffered". The fifth is: that you do not harm again at all when you have been harmed. This comes close to the commandment of the Lord, but not yet complete. The sixth is: that when you have been harmed, you be prepared to be harmed still more; that is to say

(Matth. 5, 39.): "to offer the other cheeks also". See, then, how he wants anger to be eradicated from the bottom up, so that a man not only does not get angry, but also desires to be harmed; for such a man is pure. Do you, who hear this, not think of the word of the Psalm [Ps. 119, 96. Vulg.], "Your commandment extends exceedingly far"? Now if someone is not harmed by another, it is necessary for him to harm himself, and to vent his anger against himself through many repentances. Therefore nothing is better than that each one, just as he is commanded to love his neighbor as himself, should also hate his neighbor as himself, so that everything may be put in its proper form.

Therefore, the inclination to anger (*vis irascibilis*), which is killed and completely eradicated (*mortificatur*) by this commandment, is itself an enemy of the cross of Christ. Therefore, because she is a murderer and kills, she must not only be wounded, but completely killed and exterminated, and the right of retribution must be exercised against her. For he who kills shall be killed. But it is killed by this law, that is, it is indicated that it should be killed, but grace alone kills it in fact. But when it is killed, man becomes kind, patient, gentle, ready to love any enemies and to do them good, to be happy in tribulations. All this prevents that impatient and crude inclination to anger. Oh how few are careful about it; they are sure and rely on their other good works, and do not know how spiritual and undefiled the law of the Lord is.

So the one who loves the cross of the Lord and boasts of it is the one who does not kill and is not angry. For this is the real difference between good and evil spiritual anger, that evil anger is angry only because of the evil of punishment, but good anger only because of the evil of guilt, and therefore dislikes and hates himself so much because of sins, loves all other people, and hates no one because of the goods that have been taken from him.

But, you say, if this were so, no one would be blessed, or only a very few. I answer: That is why I said that the

Law is very spiritual, and therefore one must strive to fulfill it in such a way. It is also no wonder that few become blessed; but therefore one should not despair, for what is impossible for us is possible for God, as the Lord says Luc. 18, 27: "What is impossible with men is possible with God." This is what I have said, the law, rightly and spiritually understood, terrifies man and compels him, after he has been humbled, to take refuge in grace, and, despairing of himself, to lift up his eyes to heaven and say [Ps. 123, 1.], "I lift up mine eyes unto thee that sitteth in heaven," 2c., and again [Ps. 121, 1.], "I lift up mine eyes unto the mountains from whence cometh my help." For here there is no escape; for there it must come to pass with man that he may be so pure, whether this be in life, or in death, or in purgatory. Therefore do not be hopeful [and do not mean] that you do not sin, if you still feel that you are angry because of temporal things, because you are not yet in the spirit, righteous with Christ, but in the flesh, and have to do with Mosaic things.

But what I have said of this commandment is to be understood by all in the same way. For every commandment is spiritual, without change, reliable, tried, purified seven times, though it is seldom interpreted as the 12th Psalms complains of such people. Therefore, St. Jerome rightly said that the [ε "φ] which is in the Greek, "He who is angry with his brother without a cause," must be erased, for, as he says, every occasion for anger is abolished in this commandment, and that word is an addition, for it is not found in the right books.

But it is objected: You speak of the perfect, but not all imperfect are condemned. I answer: This is true. There are degrees in this and every other commandment, as the Lord has distinguished four degrees in this Gospel, and St. Augustine, as we have seen, six. For the first is that you do not kill with your works,

1) Weimar edition (as well as Walch): "Ps. 12, 7." This citation is wrong, because the whole psalm is about the given matter, only the seventh verse is not.

After that 1) you must go on, so that you also do not do it with words, and further not with signs, finally also not with the heart. Now if you also want to live meritoriously (mereri), then you must also gladly desire adversity and bear it with joy. I know that one does not have to be perfect all at once, but that one climbs up gradually. But at last one must become perfect, and always strive to advance, and not stand still, and be satisfied with any of the aforesaid stages, as many do, who sin more grievously by not advancing than others by not beginning, because those are proud of their righteousness begun.

Therefore, it often happens that the worst sinners and prostitutes, in deep repentance, soon become so perfect that they fly out to the highest level, ready to lose everything and endure with joy, while others, who toil for many years, do not yet reach the second level. If you should now say: This is not to be wondered at, that great sinners have such deep repentance [, I say against it]: Behold, behold, here I hear. thee, thou Pharisee; thou art not a great sinner, thou art not like other people, thou hast found thy ways good, and thy blindness is all too deep and wide, as if by this hopefulness thou wert not worse than all these.

Therefore, one must always be careful to kill not only the wrath, but also the tinder of wrath itself, and the whole Adam, the tree with the fruit and the root. "For the wrath of man doeth not that which is right in the sight of God" [Jac. 1:20]. For the commandments of God are not to be learned merely so that you know how to make your confession, for this tinder does not belong to confession, but only the works; nor is it taken away by confession, since it is not removed by baptism either; but [the commandments are to be learned] so that you may know your sins, and what you ought to do, and what you ought to ask of God, "for by the law comes knowledge of sin" [Rom. 3, 23], because the commandment of God demands more,

1) camouflage all editions, but perhaps tiin to read. (Weim. Ausg.)

than we are able to do. But here they are shouting: So should he command the impossible? This is blasphemy. It would follow that he would condemn unjustly! Answer: No, but he commands it for his own sake, that he may have mercy and humble men, that they may seek [his] grace. For he that learneth the commandments for this cause only, that he may confess, goeth into presumption, that he may do that which he hath learned, and falleth more and more grievously, doing nothing but increasing and magnifying his conscience.

### Corollary (Corollarium).

That man is not perfect as he ought to be is a sin, but to some it is attributed, to others it is not.

It is counted to those who stand, because such people do not hate their sin, which is in them, namely the tinder, and therefore they love it and make an alliance with the Cananites. It is not imputed to those who fight against it with constant zeal; for because of this zealous effort and their progress, it is not imputed to them, even though it is in them, because even though it is in them, it is not in their will, but against their will in the flesh. Therefore, that which is in them is not in them. Therefore the apostle says [Rom. 7, 18.], "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing"; it dwells [evil] in them, but it does not rule in them, as the Jebusites 2) dwelt<sup>^</sup> among the children of Israel, but did not rule [1 Kings 9, 21.]. And Rom. 8:1: "There is therefore nothing condemnable in them which are in Christ JEsu, who walk not after the flesh." Why? Because those who belong to Christ have crucified their flesh with its lusts [Gal. 5:2]. For they walk continually against the flesh, not after the flesh, that is, they contend against the tinder, which those in deep sleep (stertentes) safely disregard, and are satisfied with their good works. For what do you think the suffering and death of Christ means other than the death of the old man and of the

2) In the Weimarschen, with Löscher and in the Erlanger: <sup>^</sup>esudsi instead of: . 1 [dussi.

the whole Adam? Although he is not killed at once, he must be martyred and pierced with so many strokes of the cheek, blows of the fist, scourges, thorns, even with nails, until he bows his head and passes away. For the head is this tinder, the innermost root of anger and evil desire, which is not killed unless, broken by many adversities, it finally rests like a dead man. The same is meant by the fact that the children of Israel all died in the wilderness in former times, except Joshua and Caleb, and only another generation came into the land of promise, which represented the second circumcision in the spirit; so that [the first generation] 1) not only lost the temporal, but also the spiritual goods.

Now let us see what our theologians think of these commandments. They say that this was not the intention of the lawgiver, that they should be kept in love, unless someone wanted to enter into life [by keeping them], according to the words [Matth. 19, 17.]: "If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." Otherwise, they say, it would follow that he sinned who did not kill, and this omission [of killing] would be done by him without love. Behold, thus speak those who are among the most distinguished of theologians. But what do they say but what the Jews also hold and say? namely, they make a letter and a statute out of the most spiritual commandment of God. For they interpret [the commandment: "Thou shalt not kill" so: That is, you shall not do the work of killing. Since this can be done very easily, they immediately fall into line and say that this commandment has been kept, even if it has not been done in love; but this is not sin, nor is it a transgression of this commandment. What should we do to these Pharisaic interpreters if the Lord himself had not interpreted this commandment? for they would be able to say that even anger in the heart is not forbidden in it, except when a man who has not been offended (non irritatus) is angry out of malice; but I know that this is not sin.

1) Without such an addition as we have made, this sentence seems to us to be completely incomprehensible.

not whether this belongs here according to their opinion. If they knew that this underlying (radicalis) malignant anger (malignitas irae) is forbidden here on principle, they would certainly not deny that it is commanded to fulfill this commandment in love, unless they wanted to say that someone could change anger into gentleness by his own powers, without grace.

Secondly. They also dream this, or want to force one to dream it: that "Thou shalt not kill" 2c. refers to the time when one is left alone; if someone would then be angry, he would sin. This, of course, is the opinion of the one who made the gloss: "without cause," as if to say: [He who is angry with his brother,] if he should not be irritated by a wrong 2c.; as if he were not sinning, if he were indignant because of a harm against him who did him the harm. For they have not penetrated so far into the knowledge of this commandment that they should see that, since everything relates to the time of temptation and trial, man then recognizes the spirit of the commandments and his carnality, when he realizes that he is forcibly carried away to sin, and finds nothing good in his flesh, so that he sighs for the grace that will make him well. For here man cannot put away his anger and impatience without grace, as experience shows. Otherwise, man would be taught here that he should not put away any other anger than the devilish anger, which consists in being angry and doing harm, even if he is not offended, which hardly any animal has, or at least only very few. In the same way, they dream of the act of loving God above all things, namely, in the time of rest, and do not think of how impossible this is in temptation and suffering. They conceal all this very well when they only speak of the works of the commandments according to the sound of the syllables; for then they find the abomination of Jewish blindness, namely that grace is not necessary, nor is it meant (intenta) in the commandments, except conditionally, and not because of the infirmity (defectum) in men, but because of the intention of Him who gave the commandments (praecipien-



tis): so that grace becomes abhorrent to all men, since rather a new constraint is imposed, as it were, which goes beyond the law, and makes blessedness more impossible than the law itself, and as if grace should not rather be a help and comfort to those who are to fulfill the law. But in such a way do the theologians drive one to imagine abominations of ignorance and fantasies (prodigia) of darkness. That the commandments must therefore be fulfilled in grace requires not only the intention of the governor, but also the need (indigentia) of him who is to do them. For it is true that he sins who does not kill while he is out of grace, but he sins not because he does not kill according to the letter, but because he kills inwardly in the heart, in the spirit, since without grace he cannot be without wrath and without the tinder of indignation, as is clear from experience, when there is temptation and occasion is given by adversities; For this hidden evil of wrath causes him to be unable to do anything but kill; so he is guilty of this commandment according to the spirit, though he is not guilty of the same commandment according to the letter; so it is evident that they speak of the law according to the letter.

Third, from the same blindness, they conclude that some commandments only forbid (negativa), others only command (affirmativa). This again is not true, unless you keep only the outer shell, the syllables. For by this commandment "Thou shalt not kill" he expresses the very strongest commandments (affirmativam), namely this: Thou shalt be gentle, and kind of heart, and patient, and quiet, and peaceable. For a negation is put in Scripture for this reason, because an affirmation is not so strong; as, in the place [Luc. 10, 42.], "Mary hath mentioned the good part, which shall not be taken away from her," that is, for all eternity she shall be showered with it. And in the 110th Psalm, v. 4: "The Lord has sworn, and he will not repent," that is, it will please him most highly and forever. And the word in the first Psalm [v. 1, Vulg.]: "Blessed is the man who has not gone away [to the council of the godless]," that is, this man is extremely well to do.

taken among the godly. And so in many other things. For the apostle also interprets the word [Rom. 7, 19]: "Do not let yourself lust" in an affirmative way by saying: "The good that I want" is the opposite of evil lust, namely chastity and love, "I do not do", because "do" means in an affirmative way (positive). So this commandment is indeed forbidding according to the letter, but an exceedingly strong command according to the spirit, because the Lord demands that they be gentle and peaceable. But they leave the inward filth, which the Lord imposes on the synagogue, when he says Lamentations. 1, 9. says: "Their filth clings to their hem," and Deut. 32, 5. [Vulg.]: "They have sinned against him, and are not his children in their filth." So also the word: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" is a prohibition, but only according to the letter; but it contains the exceedingly spiritual commandment: Thou shalt be chaste, abstinent, temperate, sober, modest, and that from the bottom of thy heart, willingly and gladly. For this, however, grace is absolutely necessary, not for the sake of God, who has this in mind in His domain, but for the sake of our carnal nature, which is unable to accomplish anything through its actions. So also the word: "Thou shalt not steal" is a forbidding letter, but a commanding spirit, namely: Thou shalt be poor in spirit, thou shalt be content with what thou hast, and be modest 2c. Yes, also the first: "You shall not have other gods" is a commandment (affirmativum), namely: You shall love and honor the Lord, your God, alone (unum), above you and all things, otherwise he would not be the one God (unus), if you loved something else at the same time with him. Likewise also the second: "You shall not take the name of the LORD your GOD uselessly." This is the letter, but the Spirit says [Ps. 111, 9.], "Holy and honorable is his name," and again [Joel 3, 5.], "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the LORD shall be saved." So [this commandment] intends that the name of God shall be used in constant reverence, and shall be called upon with fear; but even more shall it be praised and glorified by a humble confession of one's own shame. And the third: "Thou shalt keep the holiday.

ligen", that is, according to the letter: You shall not do any work on the holiday; the letter is a prohibition, while in it the noblest and greatest works of God are commanded with hearing, teaching and contemplating the Word of God inwardly in the spirit. By heart is rest, by heart is the greatest activity of God who works. And if you interpret these three commandments spiritually, that is, from the inward works, you will find that the first is love toward God, the second is faith, and the third is hope. For to have no other God is to love God above all things. Not to use the name of God uselessly is to believe in His name and to call upon and praise Him inwardly in the spirit of faith. For [Rom. 10, 14. 13.]: "How shall they call on Him in whom they do not believe? For whosoever shall call upon the name of the LORD shall be saved." Furthermore, to keep a holy celebration (*sanctificare quietem*) is to keep God quiet (*sese passibilem praestare*), so that God alone may work in him; here patience and hope are necessary, for here one enters into darkness, where man does not work, but is wonderfully led along the path of suffering. So often you suffer, so often you do not work, but celebrate (*quiescis*), and God works in you, but you do not know what, because you are suffering and are a mere material on which God works]. This is what is said [Ps. 46, 11.], "Be still and know that I am GOD." Here, hope alone reigns in love through faith. Therefore, St. Augustine rightly says that the worship and service of GOD consists in faith, hope and love. But these are the very strongest commandments (*affirmativissima*) and the three theological virtues, which are expressed under the letter of these three words as prohibitions (*negativa*). There remains only one commandment (*affirmativum*): "You shall honor your father and your mother", but how this is also a spiritual commandment has been said above. Although the letter seems to teach honor only in outward gestures (*signi*), the commandment requires under it a heartfelt fear and a willing obedience, which cannot possibly take place without grace, as is seen in the test of temptation, where the opportunity approaches to each one to keep it, if it is contrary to his

Now with the eighth: "Thou shalt not bear false witness," it is sufficiently known that the letter is indeed a prohibition, but that it is a commandment according to the spirit, that thou shalt be an advocate (*paracletus*) of thy neighbor from the heart with apologizing, defending, and by doing everything that thou wouldest that one should do to thee in danger of the good name and [in distress] of the conscience. Of the remaining two commandments, it is equally known that "not to be lusted after" is, according to the letter, to grant one's neighbor all good from the heart and to wish that no evil befall him.

From all this it is evident that the ten commandments, as they read in the letter, are correctly interpreted in the spirit of Christ and the apostles, since they teach hope, love, obedience, reverence, humility, gentleness, peace, patience, modesty, chastity, poverty, kindness, gentleness, cheerfulness, benevolence among one another 2c. These are commandments, but by all means a spiritual preaching of the holy ten commandments.

Now let's get back to business.

But [the commandment] begins with gentleness and sweetness of spirit, to instruct man that he should strive to be like God in his conduct toward his neighbor, just as he would have God conduct himself toward him. For it is through kindness that God is most highly praised; therefore, in order that you may be a gentle person, kind, lovely, friendly, mild, agreeable, yielding, good, that is, exceedingly like God, He says, "You shall not kill," you shall not be a killer, you shall not be crude, sharp, hard, bitter, intolerable, indignant. This is the effect of the spirit of grace, which this commandment compels us to seek and ask for. The Lord says the same thing in Matth. 5, 5: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

**Corollary.**

In vain do those flatter themselves who do not kill, and yet do not strive from the heart to be kind, because thereby they have only the outward appearance of the commandment and the dead letter, whereby, as it were, by shadow images, the inward shadow of the commandment is lost.

of the Behemoth is covered. And we want to give a likeness:

The lime seems to be cold and without heat, but when water is poured over it, it bursts into heat, but only through oil is it quenched again, so that it becomes completely still. Thus man, ignited in the furnace of inherited (*maternae*) evil desire, has the hidden root of anger, which bursts forth when a temptation approaches him, and is healed no other way than by the oil of grace.

Another similarity: If a robber or a murderer or another highwayman does not kill or wound by deed, is the prince satisfied if he does not lay down his weapons? for he will suspect that he will murder as soon as an opportunity presents itself. In the same way, even if a man is not actually angry, he still has the sword of anger inside, even though it is hidden in the scabbard, but he does not please God if he does not lay down the sword and throw it away. Nor is it enough that it is in the scabbard; for it is to be feared it may be used on some future occasion. For this is the sword with which the Son of God was slain. Therefore, even if you do not kill, you are still a slayer of death before God, because you are found in the weapons with which his son was slain. For who could safely bear before the face of a prince the sword with which it is established that the prince's son was slain? Therefore, the anger must be so far removed from the innermost heart that it does not seem possible that it could still break out again.

So also a dog, even if he does not bite, is he not biting for that reason? yes, he is all the worse, the more treacherous he is. But oh, how few are mindful of these wiles of our heart! Therefore the 5th Psalm, v. 10, says: "Their inwardness is heartache" (*insidiae*), where we have [in the Vulgate]: "Their heart is vain" (*vanum*).

Therefore, the first stage, which is peculiar to those who begin to abstain from the work of death, whether by their own doing, or by acquiescence, or advice, or

Helping, as the false tongues (*tercia lingua*), the ear-blowers, the instigators of murder are wont to do, that they stir up anger and discord, strife, enmity, murder, as the apostle Gal. 5:20 teaches. This level seems easy and small, but if you look at it rightly, it is very great, and few are not guilty of it, because few keep their tongue in check so that they do not sow discord and thereby, as much as is in them, cause death. That his mother was free from this great and frequent evil by special grace of God, Augustine says in the 9th book of his "Confessions". And no one thinks that he is easily free from it, unless he is peace-loving and a good mediator, who speaks only what can reconcile and please angry and divisive people, or rather what can keep united people in harmony, by concealing what is evil and praising the good that each has in himself in both. There is an example of a wise servant who was sent as a messenger by his master to a man to give him orders to leave his house. But he told him to greet him from his master. And when he returned to his master, he said that the man wanted to go out. At last the master, by miraculous providence (of which I will say no more now), was favored, and recognized the wisdom of the servant. Therefore it was rightly said that a blower of ears or a slanderer is a threefold murderer, because he kills three people with one blow: first himself, secondly the one whom he blows into the ears, thirdly the one whom he slandered, because the mouth that lies kills the soul [Weish. 1, 11]. But they excuse themselves and say that they speak the truth; but it is a bad excuse, because the truth must also be told in the right way according to the proverb: What is right, you must also do right. For even the truth becomes a lie if it is not told where, how, when, to weep, and so much is hunted down as should be said. Therefore St. Bernard also says that the slanderer has the devil in his tongue; he who listens to him, in his ear. The second who is killed is the one who listens to the slanderer, because he in the same way

sins, except that he causes him to anger, that is, to death. The third [who is killed] is the one who suffers this, who, when he experiences this evil, likewise falls into wrath, that is, death; for if he does not fall there, it is not the good deed of the slanderer, but of God; the slanderer has done as much as he could.

Of other evils that a slanderer causes, elsewhere. The epistle of Jacob would have to be dealt with in order to make clear how far the first level of this commandment extends and how few are on it. And briefly we will do this.

He says in the first chapter [Jac. 1, 19. 20.]: "Therefore, brethren, let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. For man's anger does not do what is right in the sight of God." With these words he incites to gentleness, therefore follows [v. 21]: "Therefore put away all filthiness and all wickedness, and receive with gentleness the word that is planted in you," 2c., as if he wanted to say: Do not perform all uncleanness and exceeding wickedness, that is, do not give yourselves up to uncleanness and wickedness, that you may perform them all, but it is enough that where you resist and cast them from you, uncleanness and wickedness will still cling to you. He adds, "all," and "exceedingly many" (*abundantiam malitiae* in the Vulg.), to indicate that those who fight against it are nevertheless not without uncleanness and wickedness, how much more have they all uncleanness who do not fight [against it], but obey it, as the Psalm (Psalm 36, 5. Vulg.) says, "He standeth firm in all the evil way," for it follows: "but wickedness hath he not hated." Further, he calls evil desire an "uncleanness," or an impurity, because it is an impurity of soul and spirit, which is the cause of wrath among men; for therefore they are angry one against another, because the one hinders the evil desire of the other; wherefore he teaches that we should put away this, which is as it were the whole and chief of impurity. "Wickedness," however, is what he calls anger itself, which is also something that is too much and superfluous in the mind, like the disgusting separations (*foeda*) of the body

of something superfluous, as if he wanted to say: the dung and superfluous malice, that is, the malice, which is a dung and a vulgar separation (*obscenum*) of the soul, put it down and do not cherish it. But this happens when someone is "quick to hear and slow to speak". For angry people are not only quick to speak and slow to hear, but also not at all able to be silent and to hear; for he who is quick to anger is also quick to speak, and again. Therefore the best means of breaking down anger is that a man should take hold of himself and get into the habit, first, of being slow to speak when he should be angry; secondly, and this is a perfect degree, of being "slow to anger," so that he may resolve in his heart not to be moved to anger, and finally to find out whether he cannot be silent when he is offended.

But some excuse themselves by being angry and speaking for the sake of God and righteousness. To them he opposes and says: "Man's anger does not do what is right in the sight of God. It is impossible that he who is angry and does something out of anger should do a work pleasing to God, since God is a God of peace and tranquility (*suavitatis*), who is not pleased with impetuous behavior (*turbulentum*). A remarkable saying, which many too much disregard, who show their indignation against unjust behavior of others, but gloss over their injustice (*palpant*) and sometimes even boast about it. So he also says afterwards [Jac. 1, 26.]: "If anyone among you makes himself believe that he serves God, and does not bridle his tongue, but deceives his heart, his service is vain." O a great word! How many make so many words, but are also (and of these he actually speaks here) bitter, wrathful and exceedingly sharp, and yet want to be regarded as servants of God and saints! So it is one and the same, that the worship of a talkative man is vain, and that the anger of man does not do what is right in the sight of God. Thus anger, through the tongue, destroys worship and all righteousness, that is, it [worship] is beautiful outwardly, but void inwardly; therefore it also "deceives," not others, but

"his own heart" by thinking he is a servant of God, when in fact he is not.

And in the third chapter [v. 1], describing the dangers and evils of the tongue, he says: "Dear brethren, forbear not to be teachers to any man, and know that we shall receive the more judgment." He says, "Let not a great number [plures in the Vulg.(that is, all) be teachers, and be quick to speak and to teach, and slow to hear; but let every man desire to be a disciple, and let another be his teacher, lest there arise a very desolate and discordant nature, so that there be many to teach, and none to hear, and every man against another, so that they fill all with discord, as the heretics have done in the church. Becoming a teacher is not evil, but that many want to become one, that is, that they want to hold different opinions (esse diversi), in that no one hears the other, is so that they will receive all the more judgment. And he warns against this by indicating such danger, because we are already guilty enough without this greater judgment that such people will receive. There is no need to seek occasion for sin and to receive more judgment, for [Jac. 3:2]: "We all lack manifoldly." We are all such people that we lack, and not only in words, but in many things, namely, with the eyes, ears, hands, and all the senses, and also with thoughts. And these shortcomings should be enough for us, so that we do not burden ourselves with greater ones. Then the apostle also admonishes that no one arrogantly presumes to be another's teacher, as if he himself lacked in nothing, as if he wanted to say: Why do you reproach one another vehemently, and why does each of you strive to be the master of the other? Do you not know that we all (without exception) lack not only in one thing, but in many things? Now if someone is not lacking in a few things or in a work, how will it be with the word? [Jac. 3, 2: "But he that lacketh in no word is a perfect man," as if to say: He may boast of himself that he is perfect, but not until he is perfect.

He does not make a mistake even in words, as if to say, "Such a man will not be found among you, because we are all lacking in many ways, much more also in words. Why then are you hopeful, and exalt yourselves one above the other, and do not rather one admonish the other in gentleness, and bear with one another? "He is," I say, "a perfect man, 1) and can also keep the whole body in check," that is, if he can tame his tongue, he can also keep his whole body from sin, for he who does not sin with his tongue has undoubtedly already tamed his other members and has them in check.

Then he presents three parables, one of which he had already begun [Jac. 3:3]: "Behold, we put bridles in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us, and we direct the whole lend." Secondly [v. 4.], "Behold, the ships, though they be great, and be driven by strong winds, yet are they steered with a little oar, whither he will that governeth it. So also the tongue is a small member and does great things," or: throws it back and forth, as if he wanted to say: The horses we can bridle and direct, and the ships, yea (as comes after [v. 7.]), even the wild beasts; but the tongue, being but a little member, ought most to be bridled and directed. But it rather hurls and moves great things, which are otherwise well governed, moves everything and tosses it about, as the wind does the ships, just opposite to the oar, which keeps the ships in check. In size it resembles the tiller of the ships, and yet in its action it is opposite, rather similar to the winds and whirlwinds. The third simile [v. 5]: "Behold, a small fire, what a forest it kindles!" that is, it happens that a small fire consumes much material (materiam), namely a whole forest. [V. 6.:] "And the tongue is also a fire, a world full of wickedness" (mundus iniquitatis), Greek: *ὁ κόσμος της ἀδικίας* (mundus injustitiae - a world of unjust-.

1) Here we have followed the interpunction of the Vulgate and the Jena edition. The other editions available to us, Löschner, Petri, Wittenberg, Erlanger and Weimarsche offer: Hie, iir^riana, psrksetus vir. kokest etc.

tivity), as if he wanted to say: It causes so much injustice that one could think that it is, as it were, a world, because it is a fire, and sets many things on fire.

With all these and the following words he wants to remind and teach us, because our own tongue is our greatest enemy, from which we must be no less careful than from our greatest enemy, and the smaller it is, the more harmful it is, since it is very small in size (in re), but very great in its power. For nothing harms the conscience more easily than the tongue. This is why silence is enforced in the monasteries, even though the devil has introduced logic there, too, which is an exceedingly garrulous teacher of garrulity.

For the same reason, and in order to curb the quickness to speak, the Lord threatens that men must give an account of every useless word [Matth. 12, 36]; a harsh but necessary judgment against such a slippery evil and exceedingly effective poison.

This also the philosophers have seen, that for this reason two ears were given to man, but only One tongue; and the ears themselves are not only wide and open to the outside, but also provided with the auricles, which surround them, so that the ear may hear more easily; finally curved and, as it were, directed against the word, so that a word may not easily rush by. The tongue, however, is not only closed and hidden, but also enclosed with a bony wall, namely the teeth, then with a bulwark of flesh, that is, the lips, except that it is so far removed from the lungs and from the heart, and needs so many tools, while the ears need none; yet it is quicker than all the senses.

Behold, the five senses swim, as it were, like five ships in these bodily things and bring innumerable things into the memory, namely by seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting. Nevertheless, they cannot bring in so much that the tongue does not bring out even more, in that it very often speaks assumptions, suspicions, opinions, presumptuous dreams, frivolous inventions, which neither are, nor were, nor will be.

Likewise, therefore, was soon the second

The first plague of Egypt was the sending of frogs, which signify useless talkativeness; for the first plague was blood, which signifies that when a man becomes flesh and blood, he becomes all tongue and speaks only vain things, and the more vain he is, the more he wants to speak. And by this, as by a reliable sign, you may recognize a vain man when he is talkative; and vice versa: how capable and substantial (gravior) a man is, you may recognize by this sign when he is scanty in words, rich in works. For such people have an aversion to speaking [and do not speak] unless they are compelled to do so by obedience or necessity, as it is said in the 39th Psalm, v. 3: "I am silent and still, and keep silence of pleasures," for as their life disgusts them, so does speaking. Again [Prov. 10, 19.], "Where words are many, there is no going without sin"; and the same [Prov. 14, 23.], "Where words are used, there is want." Job 11:2 [Vulg.]: "Will he then who speaks much be able to be righteous?" and Ps. 140:12: "An evil mouth will have no happiness on earth."

But this is most evil when man speaks driven by anger (ira magistra), therefore it is said that Aesopus bought tongues when he was ordered to buy the best meat, and likewise when he was ordered to buy the worst meat afterwards. Yes, many have taken their own lives for fear of slander (infamiae), and the poets say that Lycambes was led to hang himself by the [biting] iambic verses of Archilochus. Now if anyone should still doubt this, let him ask a man who has a wicked, quarrelsome and garrulous wife.

Furthermore, what teeth, claws, beaks, horns, spikes, poisons or other weapons are for wild animals, yes, what all kinds of tools and weapons are for evil men, that is the tongue for souls, therefore the 57th Psalm [v. 5] says: "The children of men, their teeth are spears and arrows." Likewise the 75th Psalm [v. 6. Vulg.], "Lift not up your horn so high." Hence [their tongue] is "a sharp sword." 1)

1) We have adopted after Ps. 57, 5th [Vulg.s the Conjecture of the Weimar edition: aoutus Kiaüius instead of: nrous, Ainciins in the editions.

That is why it is rightly called "a world full of injustice" and "a small fire that lights a great forest".

And it follows [Jac. 3, 6.]: "So the tongue is among our members, and defiles the whole body", as if he wanted to say: Is it not to be wondered at, that that should defile, and stain the whole body, which is not at all apart from us, but rather so completely within us, that it is among our own members? Is this not quite similar to a miraculous event (*monstri*), that one member harms not only one member, but the whole body, even though the members take care of each other with great concern? Only this one member stains the whole body, that is, it makes it guilty of sins, so that for the sake of the tongue the whole man becomes detestable to God and men, because a man with an evil tongue (*linguosus*) is so disgraceful and abominable that even if he were beautiful in the whole body, skilful and rich, nevertheless everything about him would be hated by men as an abomination. For who is fond of gossiping and chattering people, and does not rather have a loathing and disgust for them, and say, "Eh, how washful he is!"

[Jac. 3, 6. Vulg.:] "And kindleth the wheel of our birth, and is kindled from hell." The apostle seems to understand by "birth" that as which we are born, as above Cap. 1, 23. [Vulg.:] "He is like a man who beholds the face of his birth in a mirror," and again [Jac. 1, 18. Vulg.:] "He begat us according to his will by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of beginning (*initium aliquod*) 1) of his creature." So "birth" is the begetting or creation and creature to which we are born, brought forth, made. So "the wheel of birth" is called the whole being, and everything as which we are created, like a whole body. And this "wheel of birth", and the whole epitome (*circulum*) of our being or of what we are, the tongue sets on fire. For it is a fire and a world full of unrighteousness; therefore it ignites not a part of us, but everything,

1) *initium*, which is in the Vulgate, is missing in the editions. Petri, the Jenaers and the Wittenbergers have

what we are and live. For this is perhaps why he called it a "wheel," not merely because of our complete being, but also because of our complete life and activity in this time; for our life is a fleeting wheel. But he adds, "kindled by hell," lest it be understood that here a good flame kindles, since it is kindled by hellish fire, that is, by anger and hatred it kindles all that we are, with anger and hatred, since it irritates and moves by anger, as may be seen in angry people, who tremble and glow within and without.

The fourth parable [Jac. 3, 7. 8.]: "For all the nature of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of sea-wonders, are tamed, and are tamed by human nature; but the tongue no man can tame." Behold, with how mighty words, and in how many ways (*sensibus*), he attacks the tongue, to make it like hellish fire, and to lower it among the wild beasts. Who should not be afraid of himself, since he has with him a more harmful and cruel wild animal than the whole world? Who should not hate his tongue? Who should not be afraid to speak, since he hears that his tongue is reviled by so many horrible names?

It follows [Jac. 3, 8.], "The restless evil full of deadly poison." It is too little [for the apostle] that it [the tongue] should be restless, which in itself would be an evil, but "a restless evil," that is, which always harms and does not cease to harm. Further, "full of deadly poison," that is, which kills, not merely corrupts, that is, full of a rapidly acting poison, not a slow or ineffective one (*tardo*). By this, of course, it becomes clear how deeply the poison of the ear-blowers penetrates, so that those who have poisoned each other can hardly be provided with a remedy in the whole of their lives, since the envy and hatred have penetrated to the very marrow; very often they would rather die with their hatred than that they should reconcile. Therefore he says very emphatically and exceedingly strongly "full of deadly poison" not merely "pernicious poison".

[Jac. 3, 9.]: "By them we praise GOD the Father, and by them we curse men,

made in the image of God." As if he wanted to say: One cannot do both at the same time, if it is not done for appearance. Therefore, let no one deceive himself by praising God; if he curses a man, he does not praise God, whose work the man is. For who could blame or curse a painting or a work of art that such a curse would not fall on the painter and master? Thus Jeremiah, Cap. 15, 10, says of those who curse the works of the Lord, "They all curse me." And Isaiah, Cap. 8, 21. "But when they suffer hunger, they will be angry, and curse their king and their God." Therefore it was chiefly forbidden in the law, and still is [Ex. 22, 28.], "Thou shalt not curse the gods, neither shalt thou blaspheme the ruler among thy people." And the apostle says [1 Cor. 6, 10.], "Blasphemers shall not inherit the kingdom of GOD."

Now if men would observe this, that by cursing men they also curse God, whose work and creature they curse, they would certainly not be so ready to curse, as it is said, Prov. 14:31 [Vulg.], "He that slandereth the poor blasphemeth his Maker." For what does he who blasphemes do but say, Eh, that thou art not otherwise, and art otherwise formed! whereas he ought to have mercy on him, praying and saying, O Lord, make him otherwise! even as one may remind and entreat a workman, but not blaspheme, as it is said there, Prov. 14:31: "But he honoureth him," namely, his Maker, "that hath mercy on the poor."

What St. Peter forbids [1 Ep 3:9], that one should not repay insult with insult, nor evil with evil, Christ also teaches [Matth 5:44]: "Pray for those who insult and persecute you," and Paul Rom 12:14: "Bless those who curse you, 1) bless and do not curse." What will happen to those who curse those who do not curse them? Therefore the 34th Psalm, v. 14 f., says: "Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking falsely. Forsake evil, and do good; seek to do good.

1) In the Vulgate it says Rom. 12, 14. as well as in our Bible: "pursue", therefore should have been put on" Luc. 6, 28.

Peace and pursue it," that is, "from evil," not only with endurance, but also that you do not bear it or repay it, and "the good," not only that you repay it, but also prove it for evil that has happened to you; otherwise peace is not sought or pursued when you repay evil with evil.

This degree is therefore the second, which is forbidden by the Lord, that a man should not curse his neighbor, nor injure him, nor slander him. And as in the first degree more people are guilty than they themselves believe, so also in this. For by this commandment the three greatest offenses of the tongue are forbidden, namely, cursing, slander, and ear-blowing; but this third belongs to the first degree. And so all the evils of the tongue are forbidden by the third, fifth, sixth and seventh commandments. By the third, perjury and blasphemy and any other offenses against God; but by the fifth, offenses against one's neighbor; by the sixth, unchaste words; by the seventh, words by which one deceives and cheats in business or in court. For in the seventh commandment also is slander, but publicly and in court; but here is another.

Now there is a difference between cursing and slander, and ear-blowing, in that cursing is done against someone who is present himself, or is present, as it were, and to his face. This also includes all offenses that one is guilty of by insulting, blaspheming, blaming innocent people, and giving epithets. Malicious slander occurs when the person himself is absent, to another, and follows cursing. For if a person has brought evil against someone who is either outwardly present or whom he brings to mind inwardly, and communicates this to another, cursing has already become slander. Therefore, no one who curses is not also a curser, at least in himself. And these two things are beautifully expressed in the saying [Ps. 34:14]: "Keep your tongue from evil (that is, do not curse anyone, whether with words or with wordless [tacito] murmurings), and your lip from evil.



be careful not to speak falsely" (that is, be careful not to speak falsely), because it is falsity when someone speaks behind his back, since the one he harms does not know it. But conversely, not every curser is also a man who speaks evil, at least not against his fellow man, although he speaks evil against God when he curses man. But if he also brings the evil that two have done against each other to both, or even only from one to the other, as the friend of the one and the enemy of the other, then he is a two-tongued ear-blower and a stirrer of discord, who is worse than the other two; therefore he is not to be placed in this degree, but on the first level with the slayers.

So now let us complete this degree. Just as no one has reached the first stage of fulfilling this commandment, but he who not only does not kill, or injure, or sow discord (for this can also be done by omission), but is also so gentle that he rather revives and refreshes by works of mercy and benevolence, and so peaceable that he also endeavors to reconcile those who are at odds as much as he can with gentle and sweet words, and to mediate so that they do not become divided (for these will hear the words [Matth. 5, 5. ff.): "Blessed are the meek, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall inherit the earth, obtain mercy, be called the children of God": see, these three beatitudes are included in this commandment): so no one reaches the second stage of fulfillment, but he who not only does not curse, speak evil of, or reprove, but also in all things blesses those who persecute him, and pardons the accused, prays for all, and resists those who speak evil of as much as he is able. Behold, this is the spiritual understanding of this commandment.

<sup>1)</sup> Now also equally from the third degree.

The third degree of anger is for someone to say to his brother, "Racha" or "Archa," using a harsh guttural sound and equal-

sam produces a rattling of the windpipe. I have said that this includes all signs of anger, except words, yes, even words except curses and slander, as there are mockery (ironiae) in words, throwing up of the lips, wrinkling of the forehead, wrinkling of the nose, glowing of the face, then also silence, turning away the face, grim look: all these are signs of an enraged heart, which is filled with hatred. This also includes shouting, gnashing of teeth 2c.

Here some say that it is necessary to let go of resentment, but not the signs of resentment. Although this saying is true in some respects, it is not universally the case, and it would be much better expressed thus: It is sometimes useful to use the signs of resentment, not as if they were signs of resentment, but similar to the signs of resentment; otherwise they are not signs of resentment in fact, or one must not keep them in any way if they are in fact. Therefore, it would still be best to say that the signs of love must sometimes be left in place, and signs of anger must be shown. For if the signs of resentment are not to be discarded, why should they not rather be shown for some benefit (fructum), lest an opportunity be sought merely to omit the good.

<sup>2)</sup> It is better, then, that one show [the signs of anger] than that one not let [them] go; for he who shows them does it not out of anger but out of a good zeal; therefore he remains unsuspected of evil. But he who does not show them is exposed to the accusation (arguitur) that he did such signs before out of anger, and therefore, if he does not put them away, he leaves the brother under the suspicion of anger, and thereby hinders true and complete peace and harmony, since the latter cannot believe that his heart is reconciled, and is annoyed (and induced) to do the like again.

2) To understand this somewhat difficult paragraph, compare the penultimate paragraph before the next "inferential sentence". The difficulty is mainly due to the fact that the "signs of resentment" are such that "your brother cannot know how he is with you".

1) Löscher: "Luther preached this sermon on St. Andrew's Day [the 30th of November in the year lötl]. The erordium to this sermon is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1778.

Therefore, such teachers should be directed to this commandment of nature: Do not do to another what you would not have done to you; and: What thou wouldest have done to thee, do to another; and a heathen saith, If thou wilt be loved, love. But there is no doubt that all would want a man who has been offended by us and has been angry with us, not only to put away the signs of anger, but even to show the opposite signs, so that we may be sure of him. Therefore, stronger signs are desired than if he had not been offended. For in such a way God also showed the human race after the fall (peccatum) the benefits in a richer measure than before the sin, in that he did not spare his own Son 2c. [Rom. 8, 32.] Now if he had not given these so great signs, who could or should have believed that he was reconciled? Therefore, God's children should imitate their father.

By these sayings we are taught how difficult it is to keep the commandment of God. For it is evident from experience how difficult it is for men to cast off these evil signs and to show good signs, how they writhe and writhe before they can be induced to do so, at least in appearance; for in fact and from the heart they will never do so, unless God's grace assists them, for they say: I cannot be good to you, I cannot be kind to you. And these wicked people do not consider that they do not want such things to happen to them, neither from God nor from men. Therefore, this abomination shows what hell will be and what this world is, namely a kingdom of the devil, in which such a great evil is found in people, which makes them stubbornly obdurate against nature and what nature dictates to them in their own heart.

Therefore, there is no other difference between anger and spite (invidia) than between new wine and old wine; for spite or hatred is an ingrained (inveterata) anger, as St. Augustine says in his Rule: lest the anger grow up to be a gout, and make a beam of the mote. For anger, which soon passes away and does not

The anger that becomes hatred can hardly be called wrath, for it is soon consigned to oblivion. But when it is ingrained, it becomes an exceedingly tough evil, because it is a spiritual evil, so that it is also a proverb: Nothing remains longer in the memory than a wrong, and nothing is forgotten more quickly than a good deed; both happen through the fault of natural depravity, since it should be the other way around. For by this the good nature of a man is known, when he quickly forgets an insult and always remembers a good deed, so that he does not like to be well pleased, seeing that he is overwhelmed with a great many obligations to gratitude and to a repayment that is impossible for him. But, on the other hand, it is the nature of an evil nature to always keep an insult, and to always hold up the long past and to make up for it.

Therefore, let us explain with examples when it is permissible to show signs of anger or harshness. If someone is so stubbornly wicked that he will not desist after being admonished once, twice or three times, he must not only show signs of anger against him, but he must also show signs of wrath against him. If any man be called a brother, and be a fornicator, or a covetous man, or an idolater, or a blasphemer, or a drunkard, or a robber," and 2 Thess. 3:14 f.: "But if any man be not obedient to our word, reprove him, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. But hold him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." Behold, not as an enemy, but as a brother shall he be corrected. This is a holy and good wrath, which is greatly commended in the Scriptures.

Therefore a distinction is to be made here: First, that he be admonished according to the words of Christ [Matt. 18:15], "Sins thy brother against thee." By the way, he is not to be cast away the first time, but he is to be admonished. For if he asks forgiveness seventy times seven times, it shall not be refused him.

Second, distinguish whether you do so because he has harmed you or because he has committed a sin. For

If you love God more than yourself, you must be more angry that he has offended God than you. Then you must let yourself complain that he has done more harm to himself inside than to you outside. When you have considered this, you will easily be taught how and with what kind of heart you should or should not deny him the signs of love. But lest your heart deceive you, and you say, I am angry for God's sake, and not for my own, and you may lie, examine yourself concerning this matter, and see if you are as sorry and moved if he injures another as if he injures you. For if you are not moved in that case, it is a sign that you seek and avenge yourself, but do not better [your neighbor].

And why do I dwell on it for so long? It is a vain debate whether the signs of resentment should be discarded, for they must be discarded altogether. But if there is a reason why they should be shown, one must be angry wholeheartedly, not just let the signs be seen. The signs of resentment, if they come from resentment, must be discarded completely. But if they are not signs of resentment, and it is necessary to show them for the sake of the brother's correction, a perfect anger must also be added, so that he may see that they are shown to him from the heart and from what cause. And do not go along in such silence and false pretense (simulans) that your brother cannot know how he is with you. Such teaching is evil and totally against love, for it teaches hypocrisy.

But the commandments are extensive and many, all of which love would easily see and do; if they are not there, nothing can be taught sufficiently. For it teaches how man himself wants to be loved, that one should care for him, take care of him, be kind to him, do nothing against him in a disguised way: in such a way it teaches to show the same to one's neighbor. For a friend need not walk deceitfully, as St. Jerome says: A true friendship cannot suffer dissimulation. If there is resentment, show it;

If it is not there, show it again, either with signs of kindness or severity.

### Corollary.

It is clear that even this degree is not kept if someone does not make an effort not only to refrain from the signs, but also to prove the opposite signs out of a benevolent heart. For by this commandment God trains us to all goodness, and intends to eradicate in us the root of the ability to be angry, so that there would remain only a loving heart, which works in grace, not by nature.

The fourth degree follows.

The fourth degree is to be angry with the heart, and this is the first and the root of all the others. For this also the law chiefly means, when it says, "Thou shalt not kill." For it requires a pure heart, not merely the hand, as the hypocrisy of the Jews [pretended], as the 24th Psalm, v. 4. says: "He that hath innocent hands, and is pure in heart." Therefore almost all the beatitudes Matth. 5, 3. ff. are conceived in this commandment and interpret the same. For: "Blessed are the meek, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the peacemakers, blessed are the patient, blessed are the pure in heart" are understood in this commandment. But that also: "Blessed are the poor, blessed are those who hunger for righteousness, blessed are those who mourn," means those who recognize themselves as those who do not fulfill this commandment, and therefore mourn and desire and hunger: who would doubt that here are the people, or at least must be such people, that they fulfill this and every other commandment.

Therefore, in this degree are all evil thoughts with their root, namely the capacity to be angry, which is inclined to revenge, as there are anger, hatred, evil suspicion, bitterness, resentment 2c. And just as this is the first degree, it also has fewer types than the next degree after it. For the death stroke in the work has very many kinds, as, death stroke, fratricide, spouse murder (uxoricidium), patricide, murder of a consecrated person (sacrilegium) 2c.

And by this it is clear that in this commandment there are four degrees and in the individual degrees still many degrees, and therefore no man in

in this life who is not in one of them. But blessed is he who is from the highest levels; unblessed is he who is on the lowest. For goodness is heaven, wrath hell; but in the midst of both is this world. For [Ps. 122, 4. Vulg.] "thither went up the tribes, the tribes of the LORD," here [Deut. 16, 30.] they are gone alive into the lake and into hell; the nearer to meekness they are to heaven, and again.

Therefore, it is not enough for this fourth stage if we are not angry with our brother, if we do not also have an exceedingly kind disposition and a completely gentle heart toward him. Since we are not of this nature, we must flee to the grace of Christ, that in the meantime he may supply our lack out of his fullness, until we also become perfect.

The sixth commandment follows.

## The sixth commandment.

### You shall not commit adultery.

<sup>1</sup>) O a very short word, but a very far-reaching opinion, therefore it needs interpretation. Therefore let us listen to Christ who says Matth. 5, 27. f.: "You have heard that it was said to the ancients: You shall not commit adultery. But I say unto you: Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." This also he speaks briefly, leaving it free to derive the same distinction of degrees from the preceding commandment, and setting only that which is in the heart. Therefore we also want to set the same four stages here, namely, in the heart, in signs, in words, in works. For this commandment the Lord interpreted for this reason, because the ancients, that is, the Jews, took it according to the meaning and sharpness of the word, and so taught, nullifying this commandment, as well as all others, that only he was an adulterer who violated it by works, but did not care for the lusts, signs, and words; therefore they became unclean. And in this opinion they stood so firm that Jeremiah said to them [Cap. 5, 8.], "Every man neighs after his neighbor's wife, as the full idle stallions." Therefore he speaks to the new, that is to us, differently, so that all covetousness may lose its place here.

For it says St. Augustine in this place about the Sermon on the Mount: that under the name.

1) Löscher: "Luther held this on St. Nicholas' Day [December 6, 1516]." - The Exordium Hiezu is no longer available.

Adulterers, which are considered in this chapter, are understood to be all carnal and unchaste desires.

The first stuse is therefore the outward work, which undoubtedly arises from the inward desire, as St. Augustine proves there. But if in it all carnal desire is forbidden, then also every work that arises from it is forbidden. Therefore, many distinctions are made between the works.

1. simple fornication of a single person with a single woman, from which others distinguish

2. Fornication, because the former has to do with only one wife, but the latter is an unseemly rut of unchastity against many.

3. defilement, that is, weaknesses of a virgin.

4. kidnapping, that is, when a daughter or son is stolen, wherein at the same time a theft is committed, and the very greatest theft.

5. adultery, which is sometimes single, sometimes double, depending on whether both are married or only one.

6. incest, which goes against the reverence owed to blood relations.

7. sacrilegium, that is, when a spiritual person (religiosus), a priest, a nun, and all others who have vowed chastity to God, commit fornication.

8. Some add to this the excess in marriage.

These degrees in the work are in such a way

The values are different and greater and lesser among themselves, depending on the circumstances. For in the previous commandment, too, many different values were forbidden in the death stroke, as it is said, depending on different circumstances.

Although every commandment of God is, as it were, a light by which it is known what man, the world and the flesh are, and how far we are from God, it is this commandment that primarily shows this. For the apostle says [Rom. 3, 20.]: "Through the law comes knowledge of sin." Thus, the law is a light by whose shining we see the countless miseries of the human race.

For who is such a stone that he could even refrain from sighing and weeping when he hears these commandments of God, and they enlighten him, yes, show him the whole world, if he would only pay attention to how infinitely large a number of people lead their lives in such a way that they do not walk according to the commandments? If there were no other cause why we should never be joyful, but always mourn, this alone would be sufficient, if we were to look at the lives of men in comparison with the commandments of God. For then we would see how the human race is quite a miserable lost lot, since one so rarely sees people who live and act according to the commandments of God, and especially in this commandment. Is it not frightening that there are so many degrees of works by which this commandment is acted against, and that people without all fear perform them insolently (ruere) and perish? And yet we can laugh at such things! Therefore, we should pay attention to this commandment as to a lamp, and by it we should recognize how so many people come to ruin. Then we will see that this world is an abominable abyss and very close to hell, and little justice and truth in it; indeed, the Scripture says [Ps. 39:6, 12, 62:10] that all men are "nothing at all" and "liars" [Ps. 116:11], therefore in truth hell is in the world.

The first misery of men, then, is simple fornication, in which not only those who commit it sin, but also those who encourage it, help it, counsel it, and do not resist it.

stand, laugh, clutch, mediate, and especially those who give cause.

But they "favor" those who harbor them in their houses, or even if princes, overlords and judges do not resist it, but allow it. It will not be of any use to them that they themselves do not fornicate, but it will be said to them [Ps. 50:18, 21]: "When you see a thief, you run with him, and have fellowship with adulterers. This thou doest, and I hold my peace; then thinkest thou that I shall be like thee. But I will punish thee, and will make thee see it." And this misery, alas! as a great pestilence it prevails, since everyone instructs his own kind, seduces, corrupts, both among young men and virgins 2c.

But the "mediators" are those who are intermediaries and matchmakers. You can find a beautiful history about this in the fifth section, in the 80th chapter of the "Mirror of Examples". For what the devil alone cannot or would not be able to do, he accomplishes through these people. 1)

But they "do not resist" who do not admonish or punish according to the commandment of Christ, neither have pity on their souls, nor pray for them, as befits Christians. Moreover, they make a joke of it, with telling and laughing at the ruin of their neighbor, while it should be considered, as I have said, a state of great misery.

"Cause", however, those who excite the lusts of others with lewd gestures and impure words or exceedingly splendid finery, especially if they do it on purpose; for excessive adornment is always a cause, though only a secondary cause (per accidens) of evil desire, as happens at dances, in the streets, at banquets 2c. But woe to those who wound the hearts of the innocent with lewd words, as is now going on in a frightening way in the public inns where merchants gather. It is, as they say, not necessary to put lice in the fur, for they grow in it by themselves.

For our flesh is through the first sin

1) Compare the narrative Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. VIII, 544, 8 132, and Tischreden, Cap. 43, 8 40. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. XXII, 1146.

with a twofold wound exceedingly grievous. The first is the sensitivity to offenses, the other is the evil desire; these two wounds are revealed to us by the commandments, but by grace they are healed. But the worse wound is the evil lusts, and the more dangerous, the less it pains and grieves, but moves in a pleasant way; therefore it is not regarded by foolish men as an evil, though it is twofold worse than the other, so that the Scripture says [Job 40:11.], "His strength is in his loins, and his ability in the navel of his belly." For before (ante) sin there was nothing to offend, nothing to lust after. But now both are there.

Therefore, a Christian man should know that when he feels that he is moved to anger or to evil desire, he should not think otherwise than that he feels a deadly poison and an exceedingly evil sore, and for this he should sigh to the Lord that he may be healed. For it is a certain truth that, though this tickle is pleasant and sweet, yet it is an exceedingly fiery bite of the old serpent, which brings forth the most terrifying anguish of conscience and the utmost bitterness. And thereby he is moved to seek mercy, as the figure in the fourth book of Moses [Cap. 21, 9.] contains in itself, that those bitten by the fiery serpents looked up to the serpent of brass and were healed. So also he who feels the tickle of the flesh should look up to Christ crucified. For by this account is given why the Lord, not satisfied that man is of himself inclined to evil, still uses the devil as a tempter and motivator, namely, [first] since man is negligent in seeking his recovery from God, he urges him by temptations, so that he forces him to seek the mercy and grace of God; secondly also, so that he may not exalt himself in the gifts he has received. This is what he did with the Apostle Paul, with St. Jerome, and with many others until their death. See in the "Mirror of Examples" under the title "Challenge".

However, there are others who are attacked very violently by this evil, but others who are not attacked by it.

linder, nor others even a little. Nevertheless, no one remains chaste (continent) without the grace of God, as it is said in Wis 8:21: "But when I learned that I could not be chaste in any other way, unless God gave it to me (and that was also wisdom, to recognize that such grace is), I went to the Lord" 2c. See how one must seek healing from this disease through prayer, and it is great wisdom that one should know this his malady and the place of the remedy. So also the martyr St. Chrysantus says: He is mistaken who thinks that he can maintain himself in chastity by his own efforts. Therefore, St. Augustine says in the 1st book "On the Sermon on the Mount": Whoever feels that his carnal lust is rebelling against his right will through the habit of sins, by which, if it is not restrained, he is forcibly led into captivity, let him remember, as much as he can, how great and glorious a peace he has lost through sinning, and let him exclaim [Rom. 7, 24. f.]: "I wretched man, who will deliver me from the body of this death? I thank GOD through JESum Christ our Lord." For thus, crying out as a wretched man, he implores the help of the Comforter through his mourning, and the recognition of his wretchedness is no small approach to blessedness. This is a golden saying. For he does not say that one should laugh. To have pleasure and be merry in the tickling, but to bear sorrow, because he feels the poison of death in him. Furthermore, where are those who praise free will? Why do they not immediately desist as they will? nay, why do they not will, and cannot will? Why could not St. Jerome and St. Paul lay aside the sting of the flesh? Because if they had wanted, it would have been badly done, but they could not want sufficiently; therefore they wanted against their will. It is the same with anger. For why do those who are angry not immediately stop it, if they can, yes, if they want to? But they cannot, nor do they want to, because their will is already torn elsewhere and led captive.

Thirdly, 1) this is our comfort, that those who are suffering here should be comforted [Matth.

1) This "third" corresponds to the "serstenns" and "second" at the end of the penultimate paragraph.

5, 4.). For in such a way the most wise mercy of God leads us out in a wonderful way, by driving out the poison with poison, and making a plaster of chastity out of unchastity, since he lets it break in for the sake of it, so that man may feel it, sigh, suffer, seek grace, and thus acquire the greater inclination to chastity. For he is all the more chaste, not the calmer he is, but the more he suffers because he cannot be chaste as he would like. And from this we gather (although all this belongs to the fourth stage, which will be discussed hereafter, yet, lest it slip away from us just as the opportunity presents itself), 1) that those should be comforted who feel that they are tormented by such thorns, lest, out of a foolish delusion, they immediately lower their hands and give themselves over to despair, as if he could not be chaste who suffers heat in his innermost marrow and thoughts. This thought is very dangerous and exceedingly inclined to all sins in the work, because of despair. For so a young man, who has not experienced the carnal thoughts before, and thinks that he cannot be chaste if he is not without them, immediately says: "Why do I hesitate to do the work? for it is all the same whether I do it or not, for the chastity of the heart is lost. Not so, wretched man, not so; chastity is not lost by such thoughts. Rather, you have never been more chaste, if you only feel that you have it against your will. For chastity, like every other living virtue, is so hidden that it cannot be known by him who has it, but only by God. For God hides the whole life of the saints so deeply that they themselves cannot know it, as the first Psalm, v. 6, says: "For the Lord knows the way of the righteous." Therefore, just as the living and true honor of the righteous consists in shame, true wisdom in foolishness, true rest in affliction, true joy in sorrow, true liberty in captivity, true riches in poverty, so also true chastity consists in unchastity and true love in the way of the righteous.

And the more abominable chastity is, the more glorious is chastity. Oh, that this wisdom is unknown to men, how great harm it does! A true sign of living chastity is when a man feels that he is now displeased, not that it is a complete displeasure (for otherwise the tickling would not last), but a mixed one: Sometimes he wants, sometimes he does not want, sometimes he lies above, sometimes below, so that, like a wheel, he is rolled about in the muck by his thoughts, and yet the resolution of chastity remains. For if there were not the living and true chastity, he would not persevere nor resist, but would let his thoughts shoot the reins freely, and would feel no complaint. For because he wants and delights in the thoughts, and yet at the same time feels that he does not want them, they become mixed, sweet and bitter, and thus burdensome to him, since he is not free to go to either side, but is rolled about in a middle state. For the spiritual man, that is the inclination to chastity, remains and preserves chastity, although the outer man stirs up whimsical storms in the limbs and in the heart. Therefore, the struggle for chastity is no different than when a ship is tossed to and fro in the sea by the tides while Christ sleeps in it. Therefore, one must only see to it that he is awakened, and command the sea, which is the flesh, and the wind, which is the devil. For he also often gives the priests such impurities to keep them from the altar; let him be despised, not only in the mere vile objects which he stirs up in the mind, but also when he inclines the will to it and brings forth evil impulses; yea, the more must one run to the Sacraments to obtain grace and help. But I now know many who would not go there unless they had not only rest from such inclinations, but were also free from these shameful objects, as all too foolish obedient servants of the devilish deceit and its wickedness.

So in such a way God uses the mercy and goodness of our adversity, that through it He may promote our best more, so that

1) These brackets are set by us.

[Rom. 8, 28. Everything must serve the elect for the best, even sins; all this [God does] to hide and cover the life and grace that is in us, so that we do not become lukewarm when we recognize it and are satisfied with it; but rather, since we do not know about it, as if we did not have it, we strive and groan for it all the more. But as it is said of chastity, so it is also with all other virtues, which are given most when they are denied, and are there when one thinks that they are most remote, and then man cannot believe otherwise than that they are not there, and that he is lost: hence then comes the groaning, the hatred of oneself, the longing for the virtues, and the pleading for them. Then God gives His grace to the humble, which He then hides and takes away in order to add greater grace, hiding the opposite under the opposite. This is therefore the wisdom that is drawn from the hidden and is in the hidden.

But this chastity is golden compared to that which is without evil thoughts, like patience and gentleness, without incitement [to anger]. For what kind of meekness would that be? For such gentleness even the wild beasts and at least the heathen have. So also is chastity, which is without lust and thoughts in tranquility, even in whores and the worst whoremongers, who are chaste when the flesh, sated, is still. By the way, this rest belongs to the future life. Therefore, chastity is dangerous, since it may lead to hope when it is manifest (that is, when it is quiet); but it may also be dangerous to lust when it is hidden (that is, when it is contested). Since there is danger on both sides, the danger of pride is greater than that of fornication.

That is why both happen. The commandment is not fulfilled spiritually as long as there is still evil desire in us; from this it comes that no one can be presumptuous about his chastity and cannot boast everywhere that he has fulfilled this commandment, but only accuse himself and confess his sin. How

Therefore, it is fulfilled by the fact that the spirit hates this evil desire. Therefore, he is completely pure from it and indeed a fulfiller of the commandment, because he agrees with the law in everything, approves of it and loves it by hating its misery.

But others, lewd people, do not hide their chastity, but rather erase it. So it is nothing that they can boast that they do not know their chastity. They do not belong here.

The second (different work) is common fornication (meretricium), which is a great evil, since unchastity passes into a way of life (habitum) and habit, which are very difficult to get rid of (curantur). For the Scripture says [Ps. 137:9], "Blessed is he that taketh his 2) young children, and dasheth them to pieces against the stone." But he who makes his young children grow to great sneezes, who makes them grow old and strong, how then can he crush them, and is not rather crushed? And parents should instill this exceedingly noble teaching of the Holy Spirit into their children, so that they will not only be kept in check by force, but also willingly drawn to chastity. For the struggle of chastity is in vain if this rule of the Holy Spirit is not kept; namely, the rock is Christ, our young children are the evil impulses, the evil desires. If someone feels them, what should he do? how should he overcome them? Listen: No other way than to smash them on the rock. How does that happen? Just as someone grinds a worm on a stone with his hand, so when the will and the thoughts touch Christ, the evil thought is immediately crushed. Just try it, and you will see how pleasant it is to crush the desires in this way; for as soon as the heart touches Christ, the crucified, all evil disappears. This is how it was once depicted in the Law, Deut. 21:9, when those bitten by fiery serpents were healed by the sight of the bronze serpent hanging on the wood. Furthermore, the fiery serpent is the slippery one.

1) Löscher: "Luther preached the following on the day of the conception of the Virgin Mary (December 8, 1516). - The Exordium Hiezu is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1788.

2) In the Vulgate and in our Bible: "your".



and gently creeping pleasure, which the thoughts pretend: Flee, flee this cruel serpent, for she inflames and makes the flesh extraordinarily horny and full of rut. So it is also said in Gen. 3:15 [Vulg.], "She [the woman] shall bruise thy head," that is, the believing soul bruises the beginning and the first stirring; otherwise, when it has grown up or slipped all in, it poisons and kills. Oh, if only we could think of the image of the poisonous creeping serpent at the time when unchastity attacks us, and apply the spiritual interpretation (mysterium) of it, then we would easily flee to Christ with our thoughts.

The third kind is defilement, that is, the weakening of a virgin, which in former times was punished more mildly in the law than simple or common fornication, because the man was required to expel her or marry her. But now it is something very great; for then virginity was an exceedingly great disgrace, but now it is a very high glory, then a damnable dishonor, but now an incomparable adornment, at least for those who have not had the intention to marry. But those who are willing to enter into marriage do not in fact have such a great adornment, but could have it if they were encouraged to virginity. Many have written wonderful things about this, because in fact no virgin can be fully restored. But understand this rightly: Against a virgin who has consented, the violator is not punished so severely (tenetur); but against her will virginity cannot be taken from her; but she can be induced to it, and so it can be taken from her.

<sup>1</sup>) The fourth type is kidnapping. This is punishable by death in the laws. It applies not only to a virgin, daughter or maid, but also to the wife or other person under his care; but the greatest offense is abduction.

1) Löscher: "Luther recited the following on the 3rd Sunday of Advent on the 14th of December in the year 1516".

of a wife. However, the abduction sometimes happens with the consent of the girl, namely when she is persuaded by flattery; sometimes against her will; this is the most serious crime. But one reads many cases where it did not go well. Guarinus of Verona has written an elegiac poem about a miserable case that happened with a certain virgin Alda. She left her parents, followed her abductor, and was finally violated and abandoned by him in a forest. As she was ashamed to return to her parents, she asked him to stab her with a sword. This he did and killed her. This sin also contains a theft, the greatest of all.

The fifth type is adultery. This is the most intricate and severe as far as punishment is concerned, but it is too much neglected nowadays. This sin is the cause of many questions concerning property rights; whether the woman should tell the man that the child is a bastard. See the Angelus in the Summa, 2) which gives rules about this. But who will dare to believe the rules, or who can put a case in bounds? For the minds of men are different; today they think so, and after a year they may think differently, even if in that year they would have patience with their wife who confesses her adultery.

But it is certainly a good reason to be angry that a man has given his body for the body of his wife, and another uses the body for which he has given his own body, for the sake of which he carries on his trade, for the sake of which he does everything, suffers; yes, even he has made himself a slave and bound himself to many things who has bound himself to a wife, and behold, another subjects himself to defile all this: who could bear this calmly? See also the law of zeal [Deut. 5:12 ff.], which once existed; now the wives are freed from it, and are no longer burdened with it; therefore they should rather cling to their husbands.

2) These 8nrmunnamed Luther in the great Interpretation of the Epistle to the Galatians (Walch, St. Louis ed., vol. IX, p32 s 168) a "devilish" one.

The sixth kind is inoostus, which is called in German "Blutschande", because it is a disgrace against the blood friendship and the kinship, to which the greater honor is due, the closer it is. For also in the law the Lord has forbidden certain degrees, and once seven degrees were forbidden. For in the law almost only the second degree of blood friendship and kinship is forbidden, because grace, which cures evil desire, did not yet exist, but the law prevailed, which stimulates and increases it.

The seventh kind is the sacrilegium, where already not only chastity is violated, but also that which was dedicated to God alone is abrogated and the sacred is profaned. But this is with the priests more according to an ordinance of the church than according to the order of God; but with those in the spiritual state (religiosus - monks and nuns) it is an exceedingly grave sin, because they have consecrated themselves voluntarily to the Lord, and again withdraw from Him.

As the eighth kind is added [by some] the excess of the spouses, as St. Ambrose is quoted in the second book against Julianus of St. Augustine: "A too hot lover of his own wife is an adulterer. Of this the apostle says 1 Thess. 4, 3. ff.: "This is the will of God, your sanctification, that you avoid fornication"; this is the first, after that: "That each one may know to keep his barrel (that is his spouse) in sanctification and honor, not in lust, as the Gentiles, who know nothing of God." And 1 Petr. 3, 7: "In like manner, ye husbands, dwell with your wives with understanding, and give honor to the female, as to the weakest instrument," 2c. of which enough has been said above. But it is difficult to give them a rule, except that it is vicious to do enough for one's lust and desire at every stirring of the flesh, for that is called being in the lust pestilence.

Now follow three other kinds: Softness, when a man stains himself while he is awake; sodomy, when a man abuses another man's wife, or a man's wife, or a man's wife; all these are too shameful to be spoken of; cattle-like nature; of which see Deut. 18:23. The other belongs in confession.

Above this are the nightly stains, which in themselves are not sinful, as the law Deut. 23, 10. f. says: If there is a man among you who is stained with semen at night, he shall go out of the camp and not return until he bathes himself with water toward evening, and after sunset he may return to the camp. This has a spiritual meaning: a person so stained (although it means something else) should abstain from the communion of saints (that is, from the sacrament) until the sun (that is, the heat and heat remaining from the stain) is at rest, and so, having washed himself by humble confession, he should enter. But this [defilement] often has a cause that is a sin, such as gluttony, idleness, intercourse with the opposite sex, or thinking about it.

Finally there are also defilements in the waking and in the daytime, but without their will, which happens to many, while they have to do with something completely different than scratching, riding, driving, that is, without them causing it. Of these the Scripture says 3 Mos. 15, 2. ff, 1) that they have a river.

<sup>2)</sup> Now follows the second stage of adultery, which consists of words, as some speak exceedingly shameful words of carnal sins, against which the apostle speaks Eph. 5, 3. f. "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be said of you, as is fitting for the saints; neither shameful words, nor foolish things, nor jesting, which are not fitting for you, but rather thanksgiving", that is, let not the rumor arise that you are such people.

But he has put three sins of the tongue, namely in the "shameful words" that excite evil desire, that is insolence, lewdness, shamelessness in words. This is a twofold sin:

First, by those who make a laugh out of these shameful words, and who

1) Here the Weimar edition, like Walch, has the wrong citation 3 Mos. 15, 16.

2) Löscher: "Luther preached this on the 4th Sunday of Advent, December 21, 1516. - The exordium belonging to it is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1790. There, the text should not have been John I, 19. ff. but "Luc. 3, 5.

They speak, as it were, consolationem to each other, as if it were a sweet thing of which they speak. Here one does nothing but show how insolent he too can be by calling the members and the works of the members by name with all shamefulness; but another tells stories that belong to it with all insolence; then one laughs, and it is considered something quite delicious, until one finally also brings up the monks and the priests with their sins. Oh how frightfully this mischief (morbus) prevails in the inns and hostels nowadays, so that it is dangerous or at least deplorable when a clergyman or any other chaste man has to travel overland.

I beg you for God's sake, see what these people are doing. First of all, if they are Christians, as they want to be called, they should love a chaste nature so much that they would not allow such things to be called among them if they could prevent it. Secondly, they should at least be sorry if they could not. Thirdly, they should not grieve over the tales of fallen men, be they priests or monks or princes or persons in authority (for these people's faults are told all the more readily, the stronger an example they give to those who follow them, and the more licentious their conduct), in any other way than over their own fall (for this is what love demands). Yes, the higher a class is, the more one should sigh for them and ask God for them, because that would be Christian.

But now see how far away from Christian behavior these quite tasteless people are. First, not only do they not do this, which they surely owe to Christ, but second, they amuse each other with the most wicked things. Third, they tickle and provoke themselves to evil lust with these fiery darts. Fourth, they stain other people's lives and reputations with this exceedingly grave evil libel, stirring up the stench of the dead, when they should be burying the dead. Fifth, they mock their own and other people's ruin and misery and rejoice in their and other people's damnation.

I beg you, consider when the Lord says [Matth. 12, 36.] that men will have to give an account at the last judgment for every useless word they have spoken, Dear one, where will these remain? Woe, woe, how far this plague reigns!

These people are like, first, the nonsensical, yes, who is so nonsensical that he laughs and is cheerful in his misery and plague? Is not this a pity above all pity? If an ulcer or an eye hurts, the lamenting and sighing does not stop, and everyone has lost his laughter so completely that he hates and detests even those who laugh as the most wicked people; one looks only for one who has compassion and helps or gives good advice. But behold, when the flesh tickles, even the conscience suffers the most grievous pains, furthermore your own soul or that of another, your neighbor, falls away: there is so little search for one who has compassion or gives counsel, so little sorrow is borne and sighed, that even he who has compassion and wants to counsel or hinder is mocked, despised and hated. Great God, when will we open our eyes to see what the world is? Is this not perversity beyond all measure? Is not unchastity the worst of all wounds? Is it not a boil and a plague above all boil and plague? As Jeremiah, Cap. 10, 19, says: "Oh, my sorrow and heartache! But I think it is my plague, I must suffer it." And Isaiah, Cap. 1:6, says of the people of Israel, "The wounds, and the welts, and the boils, are not healed, nor bound up, nor soothed with oil," and again, "From the sole of the foot even to the crown of the head there is nothing sound in him." These are plagues and wounds inflicted not by man but by the devil. See then, a wound made by a man is lamented, but one made by the devil is laughed at and thought to be something quite lovely. But ah, that it is taken for something lovely! But blessed is he who recognizes the wound and realizes that it is a bitter wound, as it really is. For although its bitterness is not felt, it is at last extraordinarily felt in the conscience.

to be perceived as unpleasant. Therefore it says Prov. 5, 2. ff. (Vulg.): "Be not carried away by the deceit of a woman (that is, of the flesh and sensuality), for the lips of the harlot are sweet as honey, and her throat is smoother than oil; but afterwards bitter as wormwood, and sharp as a two-edged sword. And Cap. 23, 31. f.: "It [wine] enters smoothly, but afterward it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder." Therefore we are to learn from God that to joke with such words, to laugh at them, to rejoice in them, is the same as to rejoice in one's own death and sorrow, which only a nonsensical person does, or one who is more than nonsensical.

Secondly, they are like him of whom it is written in Marci 5:2 ff. and Luc 8:27 ff. that he was possessed by a legion [of devils], who wore no clothes, nor abode in any heap, but in the tombs; and being bound with chains and taken into custody, he broke the chains, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness, and was day and night in the tombs and in the mountains, crying out, and smote himself with stones. I hope that if those who speak shamefully would see that their vice is described in this man, they would be more afraid. For what is it that he was naked, but that a man who speaks shameful words also exposes his own shame with words, when he should rather cover it, that he might be healed? Then he does not remain in the house, that is, with the living, and has to do with the affairs of the living, but in the graves, and has to do with the dead, that is, he tells the vices and evil deeds of others, and lives and weaves in them completely. For a grave, spiritually interpreted, is the memorial sign of a dead person, that is, the evil reputation and the nasty story of a sinner, namely a prince, monk, priest 2c. Likewise, he beats himself with stones and cries out, that is, he harms himself, thinking to benefit himself most and in a pleasant way. Thus it is said in Isa. 3:9, "They have not concealed their sin, but have gloried in it, as they did in Sodom." Although this is said of Pharisaic righteousness in spirit, it belongs to

but also according to the letter here. Likewise, he has a legion [of devils], so that no one can pass by there because of their rage, that is, they do the work of many devils by harming many people. And where they flatter the most, there they are the most cruel, so that no one can deal with them without danger, as I also said above. But I know that no one is so foolish and senseless that he could laugh if he saw such a man, but he would rather flee as far as he could: and yet he laughs, and one laughs at him, whose figure that man has only been. Finally, this was also said there, that he could not be held with chains and custody, yes, that he broke the bonds, and was driven into the deserts; no one could restrain him. This almost agrees with the apostle Jacob [Jac. 3, 8]: "No man can tame the tongue." So they let themselves be restrained by no man's prohibition, by no words of the Gospel, that they should not "break forth" with an untamed tongue, and roam about where they are wont to roam, naked and torn, and uncover and tear other people in like manner. And that I also speak out roughly against this quite abominable vice: Are not the pigs unclean animals, because they eat human dung? But those people dig with tongue and teeth in their own and other people's dung. Is the dung of the body worse than the dung of the soul? For one must speak to the sows in a filthy way, so that they understand. Now when you see a swine eating filth, think: Behold, a man speaking filthy and shameful words is such a beast. The apostle says very rightly [1 Cor. 12:23] that we do the most honor to the most dishonest members, but those also dishonor the honest members by the dishonest. But who could suffer another to expose his backside or his shame or his disgrace to him with laughter? But what shame is greater than the disgrace of sins against us and our neighbor? But the law has forbidden [Deut. 18] that we should not expose our neighbor's shame.

Secondly, it is also sinned by impolite speech when such things are said in front of innocent people.

Boys and girls are called and talked about. But they find guilty of all the sins and all the blood (mortium) that results from it. For the tender age, inexperienced in such things, is exceedingly easily stained, and, what is worst, it retains very firmly such shameful things as it has heard, just as a stain that comes into a clean and tender garment adheres more firmly than when it comes onto an unclean or coarser stuff, which also the heathen have learned from experience, as Horace says: A new pot long retains the odor of that which is first put into it, and Juvenal: If thou undertake anything shameful, beware with all diligence lest a child be offended thereby; do not despise his youth.

But what do those do who are guilty of this? First of all, since it is a very good thing to take good care of the tender age, to preserve and promote it in chastity and a shamefaced manner, as it is said that it is the most pleasing sacrifice to God, to take care of the souls diligently, all should certainly take the greatest care and watch over it, that they guard and protect the boys and girls, so that they do not learn, see and hear anything that is lewd, since they are already full of heat in their innermost marrow, and one must not be careful how one only adds fire and ignites them, but rather that one pours water over them and extinguishes them. But not only do they not do this, but they also do the devil's real work and corrupt innocent souls with their poisonous talk of shameful things. For the devil is called a corrupter of souls, but he corrupts them no other way than through the service of the tongue of those people who adhere to him and follow him. For how can a boy or a girl eradicate a shameful word that he has once heard? but the seed is sown and takes root in the heart even against his will; after that it grows into strange and weird (*incognitas*) thoughts, which he does not dare to confess, and yet does not know how to get rid of them. But woe to you who poured this burden, this danger and this poison into this simple mind that did not know such things!

You have done no violence to the body, but the soul, which is incomparably more noble, you have defiled (as much as is in you). For through the ear you have poured it into him and impregnated his soul with the most harmful fruit (*foetu*). Therefore Baptista of Mantua says: Through the senses, as it were as streams, Venus pours her sharp poison into the mind; if this has taken it carelessly, it causes a wound that can only be healed by the power (*dextra*) of the deity.

Therefore, the shamefulness (*obscoenitas*) of these people is greater than those who were mentioned before, because it is not shamefulness but the murder of innocent souls, and they belong to the family of Herod, who killed many children in Bethlehem Judah [Matth. 2, 16]. But behold, is it not so that no father could suffer his children to be slain after the body? Since you did not want it to happen to you in the bodies of your children, why do you dare to do this to the souls of the children of another, even to the children of God? Saint Louis, King of France, learned from his mother that she would rather see her children killed in the flesh than commit a mortal sin. For in this way his mother had also spoken to him.

But the Lord threatens such people in a terrible way, Matt. 18:6, when he speaks the terrible words: "But whoever offends one of these least ones who believe in me, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were drowned in the deepest part of the sea. See how Christ takes care of the little and innocent children with great concern, that he also ordains a new punishment for those who give them offense; for for no one else did he lay down such a punishment, namely, in expressing his will that they should be martyred before others with a new and peculiar punishment. Then follows [Matth. 18, 7.]: "Woe to the world because of trouble! Trouble must come, but woe to the man by whom trouble comes." And afterwards [v. 10.], "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones. For I say unto you: Their angels in heaven always behold the face of my

Father in heaven." See, he wants that at least out of consideration for the angels of the children one should spare and show restraint towards them. Now if someone wanted to call such people chaste because they play with words, but are in fact chaste, just as their father Ovid lies: "Believe me, my life is quite different from my poems: My life is honorable, my muse jokes, Christ answers and shuts them up [Matth. 12, 34.]: "When the heart is full, the mouth overflows. As the tree, so the leaves.

This is also the cause of the degenerate state of the church altogether; for if it is ever to flourish again, it is necessary to begin by instructing the children. This is said of the shameful words. But that one speaks here also of "foolish things" and "jesting" [Eph. 5:4] does not belong here, although these two things are now so much in vogue among the most respectable and God-fearing people (religiosissimos) that they want to be considered respectable precisely by that, by which they show that they are doing foolish things and useless jesting.

But "foolish fables" are all useless fables, in which there is no instruction and knowledge (scientiae), as he himself interprets it and says [Eph. 5, 4. Vulg.]: "which do not serve the cause". Christ calls the same "useless words"; therefore one should only speak useful or necessary things. Such are the old wives' tales and the ludicrous farces, the histories of the priest of Kalenberg, Dietrich of Bern and all kinds of talk (disputationes) about things that are far from us and out of our reach. The opinions of the philosophers and the glosses on Aristotle, the chatter about dialectics, and the dreams of the astrologers are also of this kind. For he calls these things "foolish things," because they are words not of wisdom but of foolishness.

*Eutrapelia*, or "jest," is witty (facetia) or fine conversation (urbanitas), which Aristotle considers a virtue, namely, when things are said that are neither disgraceful nor foolish, but at the same time pleasant and instructive, so that among the amiable intercourse there is also usefulness. Therefore, such an attitude is

It is commendable that the conversation or loquacity, or fine conversation or humorous speech, which is done in order to lift up in the spirit the sorrowful and the afflicted; but that which is done without cause, only to gratify vanity and the flesh, especially since only frivolity is the cause of it, and only the desire to gossip and laugh moves one to it, does not befit Christians. So also St. Augustine says in his "Confessions" that it is not at all Christian to make jokes with friends; that the Christian's nature and words must have to do with well-founded and great serious things, which require a full seriousness and reliability (autoritatem), as the Psalm [Ps. 35, 18. Vulg.] says: "Among a serious people I will praise you." Further, this buffoonery and jesting becomes the more wicked the more sacred the things in which it moves, as then some with the most brazen levity abuse the sayings of sacred Scripture for this shameful activity, twisting it in a ridiculous and witty manner (jucunde) to where they seek their vanity, while yet these sacred words are always and everywhere due the highest reverence and fear.

1) The third level of adultery is that which consists in gestures, one of which the Lord expressed when he said [Matth. 5, 28.]: "Whoever looks at a woman to lust after her" 2c. Behold, even looking, which is a sign of evil desire, is adultery. Is not this law of Christ very hard? But for this reason it is exceedingly wholesome and undefiled and converts souls. But in this gift all others are understood, since sight is the smallest and most subtle sign. Therefore, some have made five subdivisions (lineas) of love: seeing, speaking, touching, then kissing and doing. And here is also understood another talking than the shameful talking, likewise also another touching, likewise also kissing. But we want to deal with the individual pieces more extensively. But there are more than seeing, hearing and talking,

1) Löschner: "The following was spoken by Luther on the day of Thomas [the 21st of December in the year 1516." - The Exordium Hiezu is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1794.

Letters, intertricks, groping, embracing, laughing, kissing, but not as if there were as many adulteries as someone gave signs; for someone in one adultery can show all these signs: otherwise the work itself would always be a triple adultery, since it does not happen without touching and evil desire.

The appearance is therefore the first. This is the quickest and most frequent of all these signs, because it does its work far and wide and quickly, and perceives very much and very clearly. This is why so much is said in Scripture about taking care of the eyes, since no sense is so easily irritated by so many objects, nor any other sense so horribly wounds the soul; for the clearer the eye perceives a thing, the more deeply it fixes it in the heart, so that there is also the saying: What the eye sees, the heart believes. And Horace says: That which is delivered by the ear excites less than that which the reliable eyes see; and again: It delights more 2c., as is evident from experience, because he who hears of death is not so moved as he who sees it, nor he who hears shameful, carnal, and worldly things so much as he who sees them. As an example may serve Alipius, the comrade of St. Augustine, about whom he writes in the 6th book of the "Confessions" that he was led to the spectacle against his will, and closed his eyes, because he despised it: nevertheless, when he opened his eyes afterwards, he was so carried away by it that he himself added many afterwards.

Therefore, just as it is the highest adornment for young men and virgins to lower and cast down their eyes, so it is something extremely reprehensible if they let them wander and do not keep them, so that some say that it is a sign of corruptionis that they let their eyes wander; and this is true. Sirach 26, 12. [Vulg.] it is said, "A hurish woman is known by the bold lifting up of her eyes, and by her eyelids." 2c. See there. Either it is a sign of a woman who has already fallen, or of one who can very easily be brought down; for a woman who is in truth chaste stares

The woman does not look a man in the face, but becomes coy, as it is written about Rebekah in Genesis 24:64 ff. that as soon as she saw her bridegroom Isaac, she took her veil and covered herself.

Similarly, one reads of a holy man who closed his eyes when he came to Rome with St. Anthony and did not want to see anything of this great city except the church of St. Peter. Similarly, one reads of Sylvanus that he always walked with his eyes covered and did not want to look at the sun. Likewise Job says, Cap. 31, 1: "I made a covenant with my eyes that I would not look at a virgin," that is, a young girl.

But when Dinah went out [Gen. 34:1 ff] to see the women of the land, she was put to shame. And since Bernard had looked at a certain woman rigidly, he punished himself very severely because of it. And St. Benedict was very severely challenged by the fact that he had seen a woman while he was still in secular life (saeculo). Likewise, what did David encounter when he looked at Bathsheba [2 Sam. 11:2], and the children of Israel when they looked at the Moabite women [4 Mos. 25:1 ff]? Likewise, when another was offended by the sight of a woman, and heard that she was dead, he cured his evil desire by the stench of her corpse.

Therefore, not only does the image of the present excite evil desire, but also the impression of past things remains firmly and long in the memory, and causes strange temptations. That is why Jeremiah says in Lamentations, Cap. 3, 51: "My eye eats away my life," and again Jer. 9, 21: "Death has fallen in at our windows," and 2 Pet. 2, 14: "They have eyes full of adultery." See how he shreds adultery into the eyes. Likewise Eve [Gen. 3, 6.] was first moved by the sight of the apple, that it might be lovely to behold 2c. And of the children of God it is written in Genesis 6:2 that they fell by sight, for it is said, "Then the children of God looked upon the daughters of men as they were fair, and took them wives whom they would." Therefore also the wise man teaches [Sir. 9, 5]:

Do not look into the face of a virgin, lest her beautiful appearance disgrace you. Again, a girl should not look into the face of a young man, because of the same danger.

Therefore John says [1 John 2:16]: "that all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the life of hope. By "the lust of the eyes" is meant the desire to experience and know many things through the senses.

One reads of Saint Elizabeth that she was suddenly punished by the Lord when she once looked at her husband lustfully (jucunde) in church. What will happen to those who do almost nothing else in church than what Ovid says: They come to see, they come to be seen; nothing but to see, to be seen, to desire, to be desired? But it is, of course, by a kind of natural disposition, peculiar to women that they want to be desired and loved, and peculiar to men that they desire and love, although it also happens the other way around, that a woman madly desires and loves, but a man seeks to be desired and loved.

It is therefore a strange misery that our own senses are so harmful to us, so that Christ says with truth [Matth. 10, 36.]: "A man's enemies are his own household" (that is, his senses), and the 38th Psalm [v. 12.]: "My loved ones and friends stand against me." For what does the forwardness of the eyes do but contend against the soul? Therefore St. Augustine also calls sensuality a serpent, because it is slippery and easily moved by many objects, which is represented by the serpent in Paradise. Therefore, see that Christ did not teach in vain in the Gospel that we should hate and deny ourselves, that we should hate our eyes and all senses and all members, because they take the soul captive to the law of sin, especially the eyes. Hence says Sirach, Cap. 31, 15. [Vulg.], "What is more mischievous created than the eye?"

But it is not only that which evil desire does through the eye that is evil, but also that it is not satiated, as Ecclesiastes says Cap. 1, 8: "The eye looks at itself.

and Prov. 27:20: "Hell and destruction are never full, and the eyes of men are not satisfied. What is the use, then, of appealing to the lust of the eyes, and when the beginning of sight is ended, of producing an endless desire which has no end? It is better that you immediately keep the eye (visum) in check from the beginning, before it opens the maw of its desire so wide that you cannot fill it.

Therefore, as St. Augustine says in his Rule: "Do not say that you have chaste hearts when you have unchaste eyes. For an unchaste eye is the indication (nuncius) of an unchaste heart. Let no one therefore presume that he is not an adulterer, if he does not perform the work, but yet covets with the eye.

Let this be said of the first and greatest sign.

The other is hearing, by which is indicated the evil desire that burns within. To these belong those who either provoke shameful things to be said or sung (and these are the most wicked), or who listen quietly and gladly, even if they do not give occasion for it; for they delight in these things, nor do they turn away from them as from an impurity and a harmful thing. The third would be those who do not prevent such things, do not punish those who listen to them or teach them better things, do not confront and rebuke people, and show their abhorrence of such things to frighten those who listen. Namely, these sin by omission, because they are not concerned about the blessedness of their neighbor, and do not care to pull him out of his ruin, and are less careful than they should be.

The third is talking, namely with a woman or with a man. For the evil desire brings about that they chat with each other, show each other courtesies (salu (tent), to make a fuss with each other; although these are sometimes honorable things, they are not done for honorable reasons. For that is where the laughter, the jokes, the gossip, the conversation comes from, just so that they please each other and make each other feel good.



Love irritates. And women suffer greatly from this fault when they love. But with a girl not only this talking, but absolutely all talkativeness is very indecent (*turpissima*). Nor is it a sign of constant virginity or chastity when a girl is garrulous and talkative, especially with young men. For behold, when the holy virgin was addressed by the angel with such a great text [Luc. 1, 28.], she said nothing more than this [v. 34.): "How shall this be?" 2c., but, as St. Ambrose says, she did not even return his greeting. Therefore, what do the girls (*quae*), who like to be heard with their singing or talking, and in turn hear the singing or talking of the opposite sex, do other than prove that they burn with evil desire for that sex? If they did not burn, they would not care for the conversation or seek to see it, as they do not care for other things to which they are not attracted by any inclination. But now most girls seek it with great (*tota*) levity.

The fourth is touching, as there is the giving of the hands and the grasping, which can also happen honorably according to the appearance, but in that the evil desire is stirred up inside. Here the fire of unchastity is fiercely kindled, so that St. Jerome also says that the evil desire immediately recognizes the sex by touching. Therefore, one must avoid touching as much as possible, as one reads of a priest (I do not remember the name now) that he had his hand cut off when he, as is the custom, offered his hand for kissing, and felt a tickle by the kiss of a woman.

The fifth is kissing. Let's skip that one.

These signs, however, are nowhere more in the swing and in a coarser way than at the public dances. One must wonder how many and how great sins occur there, what sight and hearing catch, what touching and speaking produce. In short, world is world, yes, impure 1) and

1) *ivundus* - *iillinui*Mus, a play on words that cannot be rendered in German.

an enemy of God, and one must not seek anything good to please God in the world: there one drives and heaps sin upon sin, there one sees the wrath of God beyond measure; yet one laughs, dances and is merry, as if they were quite harmless things, yes, good and useful.

The sixth sign, which is no small one, is the foreign and new adornment, which is now eagerly brought about by so many inventions, arts and efforts that one cannot but say: the world is mad, while there is no other cause than that they want to please and make themselves like the world. For necessity or usefulness, yes, even respectability, which alone are just causes [to adorn oneself], does not require such things, but is satisfied with moderate (adornment). But who can sufficiently speak of those things, since they are quite outrageous kinds of expense and dress? But these things are a violent evil and a tinder of unchastity; although one does not care about them. I believe that at last they will go naked, since they already go half naked. But let go, our customs will also have their time: The wrath of God has finally come upon the world [1 Thess. 2, 16.], and good to him who recognizes that the wrath of God has in truth already come upon those people.

I will also pass over the lovers here, that is the nonsensical, 2) madness, who with nightly service wait on their lovers with play, song and music, and offer everything so that they please them, because the world also judges that it is exceedingly great fool's work; therefore we will pass over it.

Finally, the fourth stage is the inward evil air itself, of which enough has been said above. No one is without it in this life, but we are saved by not giving in to it, as it says in Rom. 6:13, 12: "Neither commit your members to serve sin, to obey it in its lusts." For although the completely pure (*immaculata*) law of God demands that there should be absolutely no evil lust, but a complete and completely un-

3) "*msntium* - "*Montium*, a play on words.

In the meantime, God's mercy bears with us and is pleased that the new man fights against it inwardly, so that all unrighteousness does not reign over us. This must be killed over and over again by groaning, watching, work, prayer, humiliation and other parts of the cross, finally also by death.

From all these things it is evident that this commandment does not only forbid, as it can be seen from the words and the letter, but forbids in the strongest way, namely because it forbids chastity and a completely pure abstinence, inwardly and outwardly. But who would be so foolish as to deny that chastity is something that exists in itself (rem affirmativam)? But it is commanded in a negative way, since unchastity is forbidden, so that it may be understood that it is commanded purely, without all admixture of unchastity, as the 12th Psalm, v. 7, says: "The speech of the Lord is pure as silver refined through, proved in the earthen crucible seven times."

But by this it is now clear how through the law comes knowledge of sin [Rom. 3, 20.], for I did not have to say that evil desire was sin, "where the law did not say, Let not thy desire be" [Rom. 7, 7.], namely because the work alone was considered sin. Therefore it is not enough that you do not break the marriage with the work, not enough that you are chaste in words, and with reputation or any other gift; yes, even that is not enough that you do not consent with the heart, if you do not also finally become pure from all evil impulses that bubble up inside. Therefore nothing else remains but that you sigh for the grace of God with the apostle, Rom. 7, 24: "I wretched man, who will deliver me from the body of this death?"

1)

The seventh commandment follows.

1) It should be read here with our Bible and with the Vulgate: cts corporis mortis Kusus. In contrast, all editions offer: äs worts eorporis Kusus, and even the old translation: "from the death of this body".

## The seventh commandment.

### You shall not steal.

2) We have heard that the fifth commandment: "Thou shalt not kill" forbids the harm (offensionem) of the neighbor to his own person, but the sixth: "Thou shalt not commit adultery", not to harm him in the person who is joined to him and One flesh with him, and both in deed and me in heart, both in thought (affectu) and deed (effectu), so that it is quite evident that the spiritual sense of these prohibitions is the commandment that we should be meek and chaste, inwardly and outwardly, wholly without all bitterness of anger and without the pleasant sensation (dulcedine).

2) Löscher: "The following was preached by Luther on the third day of Christmas lb'or. III. xativ, the 27th of Decembers 1516 preached." The Exordium Hiezu is found in the St. Louis edition, vol. X, 198 and (duplicate) vol. XII, 1800, in both places with the wrong time designation: "Am zweiten Weihnachtstage." The text is that of the third day of Christmas. (Weim. ed. I, 115.)

the evil desire. These two things cannot be had without the love of the spirit, because they are fruits of the spirit, 1 Cor. 43, 1. ff. and Gal. 5, 44. Therefore the love of the law is fulfillment [Rom. 43, 40.]. For it is gentle and does no harm to anyone, but benefits all and desires to be of service to all. It is also chaste and holy; therefore it defiles no one.

Now follows the prohibition that one should not harm one's neighbor's goods, which likewise cannot happen without love, at least in the spirit. Therefore, it should be noted that this commandment is understood in two ways:

First, according to the letter and the wording. Thus, only the work of stealing itself is forbidden here, for it says, "Thou shalt not steal." It does not say: You shall not teach [theft], you shall not instruct [it], you shall not desire [it], but you shall not do it. This is how the Jews understood it, and they are h offährtig ge-

in their own righteousness, as if they were not guilty of any transgression. Therefore, when Christ Himself stated the right understanding of this commandment in Luc. 16, 9. 13. and said: "You cannot serve God together with mammon", and: "Make friends with the unrighteous mammon", the Pharisees, who were stingy, heard all this and ridiculed Him, and He said to them [V. 15.], "It is you who justify yourselves before men, but GOD knows your hearts; for what is high among men is an abomination in the sight of GOD." See how He requires hearts in justification, which comes from His commandments. Finally it follows how the law is spiritual, since he says: "The law and the prophets prophesy until John; and from that time the kingdom of God is preached through the gospel, and everyone enters it by force. But it is easier for heaven and earth to perish than for one tittle to fall from the law." Behold, "doing violence" is necessary in God's commandments, for not only shall not the bowl of words perish, but not one tittle shall perish 2c.

Secondly, according to the spirit and the intention of the one who has it. According to this, he forbids here all desire of the heart in such a way that it is impossible for you to fulfill it unless you are spiritually poor, as it says Matth. 5, 3: "Blessed are the spiritually poor." That is why Christ's faithful are called "poor" in the Psalms, as it were, by their own name. Ps. 10, 2. [Vulg.]: "Because the wicked man is rash, the poor man must suffer." And again [Ps. 9, 10. 1: "And the LORD is the poor man's refuge," and [Ps. 9, 19.): "For he will not so wholly forget the poor man; the hope of the wretched (*pauperum*) shall not be lost for ever." Therefore, the spirit of this letter is poverty in spirit. Therefore, it is quite obvious that no one fulfills this law without the grace of God, since man is covetous by nature, for which the first sin is to blame.

### Corollary.

It follows that the fulfillment of this law in its letter is nothing but a kind of self-deception, as it says Ps. 5:10 [Vulg.]: "Because in their mouth is not the truth.

so their heart is vain." In the Hebrew it is said: "Because in their mouth is not what is right," namely because in this commandment he teaches only the shadow and the letter of the work, "so their inside is falsehood" (*insidiae*), because they deceive themselves, thinking they are righteous, deceived by the appearance of works, so that they do not recognize the evil of their covetousness, therefore they do not sigh for mercy, nor confess their sin, but live along in security (*stant*). Therefore Paul says against them Rom. 2, 21: "You preach that one should not steal, and you steal", namely through desire, even if not in works.

The jurists, however, do not interpret this commandment as extending so far, but remain within the limits of theft; but before God all that is called doing, with which the will has to create, even if the work should not follow. For God tests the kidneys and hearts, Ps. 7, 10. Therefore, we must go over the whole area (*latitudinem*) of the works that lust has in its wake. But oh, dear GOD, how far does this extend! For who has not heard the many complaints about avarice and its various kinds?

The first work now according to the wording of the text is the theft itself. This is again divided into five types, namely simple theft, theft from the church, embezzlement of funds, driving away livestock, and theft of human beings, which the lawyers deal with. For this commandment they do according to the letter exceedingly abundantly and carefully in all its kinds, as their own speech testifies that the legal faculty has to do with the acquisition of bread: Take away mine and thine, then no more right is necessary; and indeed this desire [of other people's property] gives these people an infinite amount of trouble. Now theft is the appropriation of another's property against the will and without the knowledge of its master. If this is done with the goods of private persons, it is simple theft; if it is done with sacred things, it is sacrilege; if it is done with public property, it is *peculatus*; if it is done by taking livestock and other animals, it is *abigeatus*; if people are taken away, it is *plagiatus*. As is well known, the laws of today punish

In ancient times, however, the law did not make theft punishable by death, as we read in Exodus 22:1,4, but for a sheep four were given back, and for an ox five, but only if the stolen animal had been sold or killed; but if it was found with him still intact, only two times as much was given back; but if he could not give this back, he was sold. This law would certainly be good even now; for it is too severe, not to say unjust, that one should take life for the sake of good, and the soul for that which is for subsistence. "Is not the body better than raiment, and the life more than meat?" [Matth. 6, 25.] Hence also the Proverbs Cap. 6, 30. ff., which follow the law of Moses [Vulg.], say, "It is not a grievous fault if a man steal," and this is true if it be theft alone. Hence it follows what kind of theft he means, since he says, "For he steals to satisfy his soul, because he hungers. And if he be apprehended, he restituteth it sevenfold, and layeth up all the goods of his house, and can make himself free: but he that is an adulterer, because his heart is poor, shall bring his life to destruction." But adultery is nowadays punished quite mildly, which is certainly quite unreasonable; theft is punished immensely severely; this should be much more mitigated than that of adultery, especially for theft that occurs because of bodily lack and poverty.

Furthermore, the theft of the church is punished even more cruelly than all, namely with the wheel, while a sacred thing and a secular one are the same, as far as the value and the use are concerned; but because the reverence for the sacred is put out of sight, such a severe punishment is applied. But here, too, there is a superstitious severity among the superiors, who thunder and curse against nothing so much as against those who steal their wretched things (*regularum*), their income, their possessions, namely gold and silver. Here they have a hundred times as many eyes as [the hundred-eyed] Argus, and are more watchful than the most watchful. But that meanwhile so many thousands of souls are neglected, that

they pollute the whole church by profanation, adultery, and other shameful fornications, besides the pool of their insatiable avarice, with their simony, and intrigues, and innumerable frauds: this no one punishes, but rather those are held in honor who do such things. Or do they perhaps punish the lesser things so severely for the sake of it, because it is not for them to punish such serious things, but it is for God to punish them most severely? And I believe that it is certainly true that the harsher they apply the same in lesser things, the harsher punishment God reserves for Himself in the exceedingly severe things. How much safer they would be if they spared the thieves and the church robbers, as they wanted God to spare them. But if they spared them, then they would certainly be forced by poverty to lead a better life. Therefore, they do not spare, so that God will not spare them. But let them go, they are blind. For the other three types of theft, I refer you to the jurists who deal with civil law.

The second work is highway robbery, which is a much more serious crime than theft, because it does not happen because the lord [of the estate] knows nothing about it, but in his presence, and with obvious violence robs foreign property. But these are rather to be called robbers (*raptores*) than murderers (*latrones*), because *latrocinium* includes murder in itself. This sin, however, is now an adornment and a title of honor among nobles, and is sometimes punished in those who cannot defend themselves or offer resistance. Merchants know this sin well enough and know how serious it is, namely those who have already had to suffer from it.

The third work is usury, of which the Roman censor Cato said: The small (*privati*) thieves must spend their lives in prison and fetters, but the great (*publici*) thieves go in gold and purple. Therefore a usurer is called a blood hedgehog of the people, and he is described by this simile: As a worm in an apple or a soot destroys the whole inside, so a usurer devours the fortune of a city.

in many strange and secret ways. The Jews suffer from this vice so much that they think they are allowed to do it, even that they are commanded to do it in the law, where it says Deut. 23:19 ff: "Thou shalt not usury in thy brother, neither with money, nor with food, nor with anything that is usurious, but in a stranger; but unto thy brother thou shalt lend all that he hath need of, without usury." At that time, the Jews were allowed to do this for the sake of their hardness, so that they would be all the more willing to refrain from usury against the Jews, since they could practice it very freely against the Gentiles. But the Christians are considerably worse than the Jews, because they also usurp their brethren; and this evil is so common that in the 15th Psalm [v. 5] it is also cited as a rare praise of the righteous, that he does not give his money to usury. Now when many abstain from it, they do so out of fear, not from the heart, for avarice is an exceedingly deep corruption.

The fourth work is deception in trade. It is written in 1 Thess. 4, 6: "Let no man defraud his brother in trade, for the Lord is the avenger of them all. But this extends so far that it cannot be shown now in the individual pieces, for how could I remember all the individual dealings and trades, how one does too much in them, remains in the right middle, or does too little?

Therefore, the rule of love, which the Lord gives in Matthew 7:12, should be observed by all in general: "Whatever you want people to do to you, do it to them. Therefore it is necessary that each one, in everything he does, first see how he would like it to be done to him if he were in another's place, and act in such a way, and then he will be safe. This is called the law of nature; indeed, it is the law of love. For it is love that looks at what is in the other's place, and first considers what he would like to be done to him, so that he may do the same to his neighbor. For this reason the Lord added this to his speech: "This is the law and the prophets," for the law and the prophets are fulfilled by love alone. Therefore, when sman says that] it is a law of nature, the healthy and uncorrupted nature will

which is the same as love. But he who does not observe this rule easily commits fraud before he realizes it, because in all business there is a danger that fidelity will be violated if it is not kept with all power (*vi aliqua*) and with diligence alone.

But how many scams there are nowadays! Every house and every alley is full of them, and everyone complains about it. For even the peasants, who are otherwise simple-minded, are very skilled in cheating. And indeed, this one commandment alone sufficiently shows what the world is, that it is nothing but one robbing another of his goods. And, what is still more to be deplored, deception has become so common that people do not even feel conscience about it, even think that they have done something good when one has deceived and cheated the other. But woe to the world!

So now go through all the individual transactions in their work (*officia artium*) and count the frauds, since new ones are invented every day, so that it is something very dangerous to have dealings with people: they turn the light into darkness and the darkness into light. Yes, it has come to the point that all sellers demand more and the buyers offer less than the thing is actually worth, namely because no one believes the other's word, since it is the custom for one to deceive the other.

But what is said of the works of this commandment and of its spiritual meaning, namely that poverty of spirit is its true intention, so that the insatiable beast may be killed, the cursed hunger for gold, avarice, the love of money and greed for money, the root of all evil, as the apostle says [1 Tim. 6, 10.], which today has laid innumerable snares and is making more and more of them, is not to be understood from poverty in fact, but according to the disposition to it (*affectu*). For even beggars and monks can be very rich in their covetousness and inward avarice, and before God the greatest thieves, envying those who have something and coveting their goods. And the apostle calls [Col. 3, 5.] this vice idolatry, as also the 78th Psalm [v. 58. Ps. 106, 36.] says that they worship idols.

(sculptilibus) Canaan served, that is, the pennies. For Canaan is called a merchant and a trader; now how could we believe that by his idols (sculptilia,) something other than gold and silver, which is melted, coined and minted together, is represented?

Finally, that the worshippers of gold are also the servants of it, is also shown by the 76th Psalm [v. 6. Vulg.], where it says: "And all the men of wealth found nothing in their hands." He does not say: riches of men, but "men of riches," so that you understand that the men are possessed [of riches] (possessors viros) who possess riches (possidentes divitias); those serve, this one is served; therefore those are servants, this one the master. 1)

Since this vice is exceedingly well known to all, I will now briefly summarize the matter in conclusion. This commandment is fulfilled if you not only abstain from the work, yes, it is also not enough that you do not desire with your heart, but it [is necessary that you also] bear it quite indifferently if someone takes away what is yours. For it is of no use if you do not desire other people's good, but love yours in an ungodly way. Just as in the fifth commandment a man can be a murderer in himself, even if he kills no one else, or is angry with no one, and in the sixth commandment he can be an adulterer with his own wife, as has been said, so also in his own goods he can be a thief and a miser, by loving his own too much. But who should not believe that a man who kills himself will not also kill another, or at least not grant him life? and whoever abuses his own wife to unchastity, who should not assume of him that he will also defile another, at least in his evil lust, since he is completely raging with unchastity? In the same way, who will believe that he who loves his own too much does not also desire other people's good? Therefore, a man should behave quite indifferently with regard to any goods.

1) This paragraph is missing in the old translation; perhaps because of the difficulty. For also otherwise difficult passages are omitted.

(neuter esse): he shall not grieve when they are lost, he shall not rejoice when he obtains them, according to the words of the 62nd Psalm [v. 11. Vulg.]: "Rely not on injustice, nor set your desire on robbery; if riches come to you, do not set your heart on them." But this the corrupt nature cannot do, but must fetch it from Christ, who became poor for us.

Yes, a man should not stop at this stage either, but also see to it that he is much more willing to share his goods with others than to covet other people's goods; for this brings about love, which alone fulfills the law, that he not only keep completely away from his neighbor's goods, but also becomes his neighbor by sharing his goods if he can. For there is no doubt that everyone would like people to act in this way toward him, namely, to share with him, and that no one should desire what is his own, but should grant him everything with a sincere heart. And in this commandment, which is given for such intricate dealings, no better rule can be given than that each one, in all that he has to do with his neighbor, should first of all keep in mind this word of Christ, which is the spiritual interpretation of all commandments [Matth. 7:12], "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them"; and the saying of Tobias [Tob. 4:16], "Do not do unto others as you would not have them do unto you." For anyone who considers this will easily be able to see what and how he should do in any case that may arise in connection with this all-encompassing commandment. For if thou grant thyself riches, but not thy neighbor, then thou hast already no love, but evil desire, and hast sinned against this commandment. For you are a thief before God, because you have taken from your neighbor what you owe him, namely, that you grant him his goods.

From this it is evident how many people have an abhorrence of thieves and theft, who are themselves much greater thieves, since without grace there can be no one whose heart is not defiled by avarice. But those thieves the emperor hangs, these however the creator of all things will spoil. Therefore, this commandment is not only a prohibition, but also a commandment.

The commandment is exceedingly strong, namely, that man should be charitable, willing to give and generous toward his neighbor; but he cannot be like this if he is not completely pure in spirit from theft. Therefore, this prohibition is stronger than if it were in the form of a commandment, since someone could be generous, namely, when he begins to fulfill this commandment (ut in statu incipientium), but not yet without covetousness (for other people's goods); therefore, he does not yet fulfill this law perfectly. A perfect fulfiller of the commandment must be generous out of a pure heart. 1)

2) The question is also raised whether gamblers are thieves and must return what they have won. That gamblers sin through covetousness and greed (at least those who gamble for the sake of gain), and are therefore thieves before God and covet other people's goods, is quite obvious. For no one plays with another because he wants to give him what is his (for he could do that even without playing), nor so that he might lose what is his, nor to seek the other's benefit as if it were his own, and therefore the play is always contrary to love and proceeds in evil covetousness, for he seeks his own with the other's harm, or at least what is the other's, not as his own. But still he is not held to restitution, because he does not steal from men, nor does he take other people's goods against the will of the master, who rather gave his consent to this by the agreement that they wanted to play (per pactum ludi). For both put their own at risk with knowledge and will, therefore the losing party loses with knowledge and will. For it is a quite just law that he who loves danger perishes in it, if they do not play fraudulently. But the best punishment would be, if it could happen that both of them

because this would be the right of the game, since each of them gives free rein to his lust against his neighbor at his own risk; or at least that the treasury (fiscus principalis) would deprive both of their profit, because by gambling they act against the commandment [of the prince] and the spiritual law of the church. But it is obvious that it is not necessary to return such things, because there would be no other cause for it than that such profit is obtained with sin and against the law. But if all such things were to be restored that are obtained with sins, then also the whores would have to give back their profit, yes, everything would have to be restored by the merchants and traders that is sold or bought with lies, false deception (whereby, by the way, deception against one's neighbor and false statements [dolo] regarding the thing in question must be excluded) and evil desire. This would be quite inconsistent, because in these things no wrong has been done to the neighbor, but GOD has been offended and the law transgressed. Therefore, he owes restitution, not of what he has brought to himself, but that he let go of his evil will, which he let run its course there; this happens through repentance and penance.

The same is to be said of priests and religious who either do not perform their prayers, or do not perform their satisfactions, or possess more benefices than one; they are not guilty of restitution, but that they repent of the abuse, for the pope has the power to bestow these goods; but you who obtain them or force your way into them, only beware. In times past, people fled from the priestly office and had to be dragged into it, therefore they were loved by the people; but now they rush into it, while the people would like to keep them out of it, therefore they are hated. But this avarice grows nowadays in a frightening way when taking sinecures. But if benefices are obtained without fraud, there is no need for restitution, although it does not seem quite possible that anyone can impose himself without fraud, especially on the office of pastoral care (curarum).

1) The foregoing was preached by Luther on the Day of the Innocent Infants (December 28) 1516. To this belongs the Exordium, which is found in our edition, Vol. XII, 1804. However, we do not know at which point Luther began with it, since Löscher does not indicate it. (Wein., Ausg., Vol. I, 504.)

2) Löscher: "Luther preached the following on the Feast of the Circumcision [1 January] in 1517. The Exordium belonging to it is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. X, 1276.

because the pope and the people will be deceived if he is not such a man as such an office requires. But who would dare to say that about himself? And yet one is not ashamed to ask for such an office for himself.

Finally, the contract of redemption now also serves avarice, to the great detriment of the whole world, since interest (census) is only bought for the sake that the profit may increase and the property (substantia) be secure without work and danger, not so that they can serve God all the more undisturbed or escape necessity, while one can see that the Pope's intention was and still is not that they should be idle; for Genesis 3, 19. 3, 19. labor and sorrow are laid upon all men: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread," and Job 5, 7. it is said [Vulg.], "Man is born to labor, as the bird is born to fly." Therefore let us indicate some causes on account of which interest may justly be purchased. Namely, first, if they are old people, children and sick people,

Secondly, those who are occupied with other work [by which they can acquire nothing], namely, those who serve God, as religious, priests and prelates, who have to do with study and the word of God; then also those who serve the commonwealth and foreign need, as princes, councilors, the rulers in cities and villages. Otherwise, when God returns to each one according to his work, what will the idlers receive who misuse their money only for profit, profit only for idleness, idleness only for pleasure, pleasure only for sin? So those are not safe who serve only themselves with the purchased interest; not as if buying interest were so evil, but because it is sin that one serves avarice in it and seeks nothing but secure wealth.

The eighth commandment follows.

1) Added by us.

## The eighth commandment.

**You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

<sup>2)</sup> This is the vice of the tongue, which the apostle James calls a world of iniquity. It is the most sinful member after the heart, and no member sins in so many ways except the heart, which sins in every way. For the sin that the tongue commits by swearing, vowing, praying, teaching, taking the name of God in vain 2c. is forbidden in the first tablet in the second commandment, that is, every word that is outright sinful against God. Likewise, it is forbidden in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and now eighth; indeed, in all the commandments except the first, ninth, and tenth, which concern only the soul.

2) Löschner: "The following was preached by Luther on the Sunday after the Feast of the Circumcision [January 4, 1517]. The Exordium Hiezu is no longer available.

For against the third one does, if one does not pray, does not give thanks, does not read [God's word] on the feast day; against the fourth, if one addresses the parents in a hopeful manner, answers them disrespectfully, scolds them 2c.; against the fifth by cursing, speaking ill of the innocent 2c. Against the sixth by unchaste speeches; against the seventh by counsel and incitement to steal, by excusing and defending the theft; against the eighth, as we shall now see, by lying, flattering, 2c. As it is therefore forbidden to do harm to one's own person, or to the persons belonging to him, to his earthly (corporalium) goods, so now all harm is forbidden to the goods concerning good reputation, praise, honor, name.

Sin against this commandment:

Firstly and quite actually the scholars, but especially the theologians and all those who have the



Both of them do so in two ways, either knowingly or unknowingly, and according to this they sin more seriously or more easily. First of all, I will say about the theologians, because of all they sin most seriously against this commandment, when they pervert the holy scriptures and the word of God and interpret them wrongly or do not apply them correctly. For this is why something that is spoken falsely kills souls or at least tortures unhappy consciences.

Among the first of these are the heretics and those who invent peculiar opinions out of their own heads, 1) who adapt God's word to their opinions and imprison it in their obedience, while they should act just the opposite, namely in the things concerning faith and blessedness. This is considered by God to be such a great sin that no other sin is so frequently and so sharply punished in Scripture by all the examples and prophecies. Therefore the 4th Psalm, v. 3 [Vulg.] says: "Children of men, how far goes your hardness of heart! How fond you are of vain things, and how you seek after lies!" and the 5th Psalm, v. 6. f.: "Thou art hostile to all evildoers; thou destroyest liars," where it speaks of such teachers, as is evident from what follows [v. 11. Vulg.]: "Let them fall from their thoughts," that is, from their pretensions 2c. And in the first Psalm it is said, "Blessed is he that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor treadeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth where scoffers sit." And everywhere the Scripture speaks of the false and of false tongues, and punishes these false martyrs, that is, the false tongues.

Therefore I say: Are they excused, since they do this in good opinion and out of zeal for God? For this is how heretics excuse themselves, as our neighbors, the Picards in Bohemia, do. I answer: Not at all. Rather, they are only the more accused because this zeal arises from arrogance, that they do not want to be taught and do not want to listen, because they have become their own masters. Therefore

1) In all editions: Hlonü singulares. Instead of Monü, Löscher suggests Xlomi. The Weimar edition remarks: "It is probably the Greek

Rom. 10, 2: "I give them the testimony that they are zealous for God, but with ignorance", and Gal. 5, 10: "Whoever causes you to err will bear his judgment", and Gal. 1, 9: "If anyone preaches the gospel to you otherwise, let him be accursed" 2c. For such people have a good zeal, but they are not afraid, because they are sure of their zeal, as if they were not mistaken, because they have the good opinion, and they chat that all sin is in the free will (est voluntarium), and as the opinion is, so is the work (intentio nominat opus). But we, they say, have a good opinion and a godly will; and so they become obstinate and sure. To these it must be answered that they have an altogether evil will and an exceedingly poisonous opinion. I do not say of the one they feel and assert, but of the deeper one that makes them proud and deaf, that they do not want to hear anything but their good opinion, and believe no one but their godly will. For they do not want to see this inward pride of theirs, and adorn it with the fictitious and violent good opinion and the godly will. For the right good opinion and the thoroughly good will never stands in safety and without fear, for he fears, like Job [Cap. 9, 28. Vulg.], because of all his works, yea, because of his words and thoughts, therefore he does not base himself on his good will and godly opinion, and is always more ready to yield to others than to believe himself, however exceedingly beautiful an appearance his opinion may have. Through this fear it happens that he does not bring anything new on the track, preserves unity, keeps peace and promotes harmony.

The second are those who do not teach falsities so as to kill, but teach only superficially and less than they should. Therefore they are crucifiers of consciences and tormentors of souls. Among them are those who leave faith in Christ untouched, but teach the righteousness of works; rarely faith, more often works. Of these, the Revelation Cap. 9, 5. seems to me to say that the locusts did not kill men, but tormented them for five moons, namely because they teach that

that by works they have done enough for their sins, and yet by these they never have rest of conscience, which faith in Christ alone gives.

Since the holy Scriptures are to be handled in fear and humility, and since they are to be penetrated more by study under fervent prayer than by keen understanding, it is therefore impossible that those who teach them should not harm themselves and others. Therefore, it is impossible that those who rely only on their intellect and fall upon it with unwashed feet, like swine, as if it were only a kind of human science, should not do harm to themselves and others whom they teach; so much so that they make no distinction and treat it without any reverence. Hence it comes about that so many so soon submit to be teachers, who immediately after having learned grammar, without having studied anything at all, set themselves up as teachers of theology, and say: Ah, the Bible is something quite easy. But this is especially done by those whose bellies are swollen with the trumpery of swine, that is, of philosophers. Therefore St. Jerome complains about these people, who interpret the Scriptures, which dispute against them, according to their will, and already a proverb has become from it: the Scriptures have a waxen nose. This is what these tasteless and unrhymed dreamers have brought about, who play their game with the literal, figurative, moral and higher understanding 1) of Scripture, and are called scholastic teachers, and that by their very proper and right name. For they are scholastics, 2) that is, ridiculous people and children of play (lusores), yes, also people who make a mockery of themselves and others (illusores), who have not recognized either what is letter or what is spirit. And the treatment of the Scriptures according to this fourfold interpretation would still be tolerable, if it were regarded only as a first instruction for the beginners. But now they put in this playfulness the summit of erudition, and never come to the right understanding, which can never be attained without purity of heart.

can. But also the most godless people do this quadruple. See St. Jerome's preface to the Bible on the same sacrilege of those who treat the Scriptures.

Secondly, the jurists are to be spoken of, because they act against this commandment according to your letter, when they seek nothing else in their labyrinth, that is, in their Hadermarkte (foro contentioso), than to win. They lead everything, they search for everything, they take everything that can serve for them against the adversary, where then by a new miracle one and the same text must serve for things that are just opposite to each other, and this study has become full of exceedingly many dangers. But they say: No one is guilty of making a confession about himself and accusing himself. But what does the Lord say? "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," citing that for thyself, ivas against him whom thou knowest to have a righteous cause. But the lawyers have a great privilege, that no one may speak against them or judge them; but this is: that no one may justly punish what he does not understand. But the understanding of law is infinite and inexhaustible, and one has not yet found a jurist who knows everything. If, therefore, one were not allowed to judge them until one had understood all their matters, one would never be able to judge, for they would always say that one does not understand what one punishes.

But one thing must be said, which is also contained in the rights themselves, although one almost does not pay attention to it, namely that the purpose, the life and the power of all laws consists in establishing peace, love and harmony. If someone does not have this in mind, he does not use the laws, but abuses them. For he who for this reason seeks an evasion in a gloss against the text, in order to prolong and increase the strife: do you think that he has the living law? Rather, he seeks the letter of death and works against peace. But whoever does not do this nowadays, it is to be wondered at if he is long taken for a lawyer, or becomes rich. For if they sought peace as much as strife, they would not need so many books and so much work.

1) Cf. Tischreden Cap. 82,? 8. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. XXII, 1341.  
2) a person who has nothing to do, The one who goes around daydreaming, or who gets silly ideas; the drip, the simpleton, the fool.

Nor where and how you can twist them and keep them in suspense (ponderare), but look at what they intend, namely to put an end to the dispute and to kill the discord. But here it would be quite suitable to look at the sixth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, where the apostle rebukes them [v. 3. 7.], that they were right with one another for the sake of worldly things, that is, for the sake of temporal things, which serve to support themselves, and did not much rather let deceit pass over them. Likewise Christ commands that one should also give the coat to the one who takes the skirt 2c. [But it is said that these are counsels, not commandments, which are only to prepare the heart. But I do not understand this strange preparation of the heart, which never comes to light and comes to work. And St. Augustine, who cites the example of Christ, that when he received the stroke of the cheek before Annas, he did not also offer the other cheek, is, I think, not rightly understood, and thus they are defended very badly.

1) These may also include the wretched people who deceive and struggle with the extremely false pretence (nomen) of Aristotle's philosophy, since they neither understand nor teach Aristotle himself, 2) and in the meantime take and leave the believing souls with false and fictitious interpretations, yes, rather deceive them, since they believe that this is philosophy, which it is not, and have to do only with fool's antics. And the poets and any fable tellers are much better off than they, especially since the poets, even if they tell fables, as St. Augustine says, do not believe that they are true, but only have their amusement in the trivial matter; but these believe that their fables are true. For if Aristotle were to be read according to my advice, a man of mediocre intellect could learn him in half a year; but then

one should not read it, as has been done until now, with the same faith and devotion (religione) as the holy Scriptures, or even with greater reverence, but like some other minor and remote object (extranea materia), just so that one would know it, not that one would defend it. For truly, we have been seduced by Aristotle and his little friends, and if there were no other reason [to set Aristotle aside], 3) this would be one reason enough that in this pagan beast there are so many sects and heads, which is like the serpent (Hydrae) in the Lernaean swamp; for there are the Thomists, the Scotists, the Albertists, the Modernists; and Aristotle has become four-headed, and his kingdom divided into itself, and it is to be wondered at that it is not laid waste; but its desolation is at hand. For how is it possible that the truth should be there, where so many opinions pass confusedly through one another? For since they are contrary to each other, they must necessarily be false.

But if these teachers and masters sin and act against this commandment, where will those dreamers and wicked people stay, who preach false miracles, show lying legends, fabricated relics, pretend their blasphemous faces? Here one boasts with an insolent brow that he talked and laughed with Christo and his mother; I mean, he will have danced [with her] too. Another has hay on which Christ lay; but it grew this year and was gathered up in a barn. I have heard as a fact that a certain woman, at the instigation of the devil and out of God's decree that she should have such a foolish follower of such a superstition, cut off the hair on her pubis, gave it to him, and persuaded him that it was the head hair of St. Catherine, which had been brought across the sea. That monk (cucullus) believed it and held it out to the people as a relic to be kissed and worshipped. And behold, what happened? The hair from the shameful place also began to perform miracles, and not unjustly, so that the people who had been touched by

1) Eraser: "Here in the manuscript something is inserted by the physicians." Luther deleted this during the revision.  
2) It seems to us that instead of äoosuntur in the editions should be read äoosunt. After that we have translated.

3) Added by us.

Lies are deceived that do not serve the truth [2 Thess. 2:10, 11]. Behold, this is so unclean and shameless that it cannot even be told in front of chaste people; yet it happens. Now these speak false witness, not against men, but against God and His saints who are already in glory (regnantes). Such is also that recently a certain man is said to have shown hay, which he found by chance, and said that it was the hay on which Christ or I don't know which saint had slept. Now such fables are multiplied everywhere by the unlearned priests, but still more by the monks who go about as relic merchants (stationarii), 1) and the parish priests take great delight in the fables of legends and indulgences and all things that can only be said, except the Gospel, because those things bring profit, while the people turn their ears away from the truth and turn to fables. But woe, woe and woe upon such fable preachers! Here a very great reformation of the church would be necessary, so that it should not be permitted to preach anything, however godly and good, unless the certain truth and according to the right faith have been invented (authenticum et canonicum). For under such a pretense of godliness, those strange fables are equally torn down, so that the preachers of the church almost surpass the pagan poets in fables and lies. Yes, I would venture to say that it is not quite certain that proven legends and miracles are preached in such a way as to give rise to the custom of setting aside the Gospel altogether. For they are not to be considered the most important part of the sermon, but only to be interspersed with the preaching of the Gospel, where they serve the matter, but not to be dealt with in a whole sermon.

Secondly, every lie is forbidden, that is, false testimony against one's neighbor. The lie, however, as St. Augustine distinguishes, is threefold: the joke lie, the white lie (officiosum) and the harmful lie.

The joke lie is actually not a lie, because you immediately perceive that it is a lie

and also the one who lies in this way is eager to speak in such a way that one can see that he is speaking the untruth and joking. Nevertheless, it is sin, for it is shameful speech or foolishness and useless gossip. But it happens that some are so simple-minded that they are also deceived by such things, especially when this joke happens in sacred things (religionibus), as when it is said: If you have lost something, give a warm roll as alms, and sprinkle consecrated salt on it, namely on the lost thing, and you will find it. This is what the simple understand, that the salt should be sprinkled on the bread, and they believe that they will then find what they have lost.

A white lie is one that is told to someone as a service or favor, for oneself or for one's neighbor's salvation and benefit, without harming anyone, as if a woman's chastity were in danger and someone said she was not where she was, or something else of the sort. Such a lie was told by the wives of the Hebrew women in Egypt. Likewise Michal, David's wife, against Saul. See both stories in their place [2 Mos. 1, 19. and 1 Sam. 19, 14.]. To the question whether one may make use of them, Augustine answers: By no means, but he tells the truth as far as he can, in other words, as he says of a certain bishop in his book "of the lie", who answered a judge who questioned him because of an accused who had fled to him: I will neither lie, nor be a traitor. But this is not a mortal sin if the white lie is told for a reasonable reason and in sudden consternation.

The harmful lie is the one that does harm. For a falsehood is told in order to harm another, and the one who lies in this way deceives his neighbor in such a way that he would not want to be deceived himself. About this the Lord says through Zechariah [Cap. 8, 16. Vulg.]: "Speak the truth, each one with his neighbor", and again [v. 19.]: "Love truth and peace" 2c. For this is what pleases me. This evil reigns nowadays exceedingly wide, harmful and mighty in mercantile dealings, han-

1) Cf. Tischreden Cap. 27, § 143. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XXII, 923.

The people have forgotten this rule in their contracts, covenants, letters, seals and in all their dealings with each other, as Hosea says: "Lying, stealing 2c. has become rampant," because they have forgotten this rule: What you want done to you, do to another, and what you do not want done to you, do not do to another, for they have become blinded by selfishness 2c.

0 But behold what an abomination is the human heart. Even if all other sins do not defile man,' yet this vice is most contrary to man's nature. First, what does every man by nature desire more than to know [the truth]? What is more repugnant to him than to be deceived? As St. Augustine says that the soul desires nothing so much as the truth, and yet man does it against it, and does it gladly. Secondly, although man has in common with many animals gluttony or indulgence, anger, envy, sloth, covetousness, he, together with the devil, surpasses them in this vice, because man alone is a liar, and the devil is the father of lies. For man alone is given reason and speech, whose office it is to speak the truth. And therefore I believe that among all malicious words none is more bitter than to say that someone is lying to his face. For this word is more grievous than to say that a man is a dissolute, a drunkard, a wrathful man, a proud man, and I believe that nature feels this more easily because lying is the most unnatural vice for man, indeed, the greatest enemy of human society.

Third, against this commandment is sinned against by flattery, under which are included the ear-blower, the "two-tongued" man, and the false tongue, and all the vices of the tongue. You can see other things in the fifth commandment. But no man is free from this vice, unless he will soon be beaten to death and incur the hatred of all people, viz.

1) Löscher: "The following was recited by Luther on the day of Paul's conversion f25 January in 1517." The Exordium Hiezu is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. X, 976.

He who, because his heart is right, does not conceal the truth from any man, as the fifteenth Psalm, v. 4, says: "He who does not respect the wicked," that is, who does not fear any wicked man, however powerful, rich, wise, just he may be (for before him there is no respect of person, nor does he care for any man), but who brings honor to the fearful, however weak, poor, and foolish they may be. Therefore, one must either flatter the world or suffer the hatred of the world, which has been sufficiently shown to us in Christ and all the saints. Although this vice prevails everywhere, it nevertheless has the greatest, undisputed dominion (triumphat) in the courts of princes and in the whole camp of bishops. For there are people who wear soft clothes and have delicate ears, and there is certainly no place in the world from which flattery should be farther away, and yet where it is more frequent and exercises greater power than elsewhere), since if a prince is seduced to evil, or he is kept from doing good, all subjects necessarily suffer harm, and there is no more harmful ruin for kingdoms and countries than a flatterer at court. For what do we complain about wars or swords or weapons? The tongue of the flatterer is above all swords; therefore, flatterers should be driven away from the courts as much as possible and punished most severely. One reads that the Emperor of Rome, Alexander, was so hostile to flatterers that when he saw someone flattering him in a groveling manner (*molliore gestu*), he would not let him go unpunished, or at least ridicule him if it was a gentleman. And when Diogenes was asked which of all animals was the most harmful, he answered: Among the wild animals a tyrant, among the tame a flatterer.

One finds few outstanding flatterers and examples of them in Scripture, perhaps because it is such a heinous vice, for the first and foremost above others is Doeg the Edomite, who, as 1 Sam. 21:7. and afterwards [1 Sam. 22:9, 10, 18, 22.] are told, flattered Saul in all things and was the cause of all the priests in Nob being slain, but then also many other

brought suffering upon David. Then follow the Siphites [1 Sam. 23, 19], who betrayed David, finally Siba, the servant of Mephibosheth, who also betrayed King David [2 Sam. 16, 3]. But one should pay attention to the end of Doeg and Saul [1 Sam. 31, 4. f.] whom he flattered; but also his son, who unhappily followed his father in flattery, was immediately killed by David, 2 Sam. 1, 13. ff. Therefore the whole 52nd Psalm speaks thundering words against this Doeg [v. 3.s>: "Why do you defy that you can do harm" 2c. The flatterers may hear what follows [v. 6. f.]: "You like to speak everything that serves to ruin with a false tongue. Therefore also shall GOD utterly destroy thee, and break thee in pieces, and pluck thee out of the tabernacle, and cut thee off from the land of the living." Behold, with how dreadful imprecations he goes forth against the flatterer! For they love words of destruction, that is, words by which they may overthrow their neighbors, bring them to ruin, displace (absorbent) them among the princes, that they alone may reign and stand in favor 2c.

Finally, false testimony is used to sin in the public courts, which was also discussed above. Here we are dealing with the danger in which lawyers, notaries, legal advisors, advocates and judges stand. Here even the most sacred rights suffer the fate of the rose, from which the bee gathers honey, but the spider poison, and they say fine to excuse themselves: To him who is vigilant, rights come to his aid; and again: One must take refuge in the remedy of law. These are two very useful rules, first, to postpone the execution of justice, second, to sow discord, third, to fill the purse of the lawyers; not as if those rules were bad or wrong, but because they are

are almost nowhere in good use. This becomes evident if you pay attention to what they mean by "remedy of the law" and "take good heed of the law," namely, that if someone has a very bad or at least a doubtful matter, even according to the testimony of his own conscience, he does not listen to the counsel of the spirit: Keep the certain and let the uncertain go, but rather is only concerned about how he can make a very good thing out of the exceedingly bad thing, namely, because the thing is sick, he applies the remedy of law to it, and this is their watchfulness. For "they watch over wickedness," as the prophet says [Isa. 29, 20. Vulg.], and so it happens that they draw poison and honey from one and the same text of the law: the one who defends unjust things. Poison, the other, which promotes the just cause, honey.

But what shall I say here? I can only deplore the misery of Christians, who put all their efforts into quarrels, lawsuits and judgments, and no one is willing to pay attention to the word of Christ [Matth. 7, 12]: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. I beseech thee, dear man, try, examine, inquire of thyself, if thou hast any matter against thy neighbor. Do you not want him to let you go in peace, not to be right with you, not to believe you? So you want another to do this to you: why do you not do the same to him and give way to him? But, you say, it is a counsel, not a command. I answer: How can it be a counsel and not a commandment, since Christ immediately added, "For this is the law and the prophets"? Is a law then only a counsel? Does there then remain no commandment, no law? What follows from this but that we forget both Christ and the law of nature and grope in the midst of darkness? Therefore, the study of law today is extremely dangerous, since it does not serve to make peace, not to settle disputes, but to incite and prolong them.

But, you say, if one had to act in this way, it would soon come about that we would be trampled underfoot and robbed of everything we have. Here I say, this is what the

1) Löscher: "The following was recited by Luther on the 3rd Sunday after Epiphany, in 1517." "The 3rd Sunday after Epiphany fell on January 25, 1517; "the preceding piece belongs to a sermon from January 25, 1517: therefore, an oversight on Löscher's part can be assumed; perhaps the manuscript reads 'Oom. IV. post limpi, [Feb. 1." (Weim. Ausg.] The Exordmm Hiezu finden sich Walch, St. Louiser Ausg., Bd. XII, 1814.

Scripture wants. For this reason it calls us little children, orphans and widows, poor and oppressed, because we who keep the gospel suffer much evil for the sake of his word, since we do not take revenge, do not repay like with like, even pray for those who persecute and slander us, so that we may be children of our Father in heaven, because he is also kind to the ungrateful and evil [Matth. 5, 44. f.]. And we should rejoice that we are esteemed worthy of the name "little children" because Christ is their protector. If we now reclaim and quarrel, how can we then be little children? But they have also turned these salutary commandments into counsels for us, saying that they are to be understood from the preparation of the heart, and do not take into account that cases keep coming up to put this preparation into practice, and yet they do not do so. And here see God's exceedingly mighty wisdom and His exceedingly wise power. He has said [Luc. 21, 33.]: "My words will not pass away" and [Matth. 5, 18.]: "Not one jot of the law will pass away until it is all done." Behold, I say, how true it is [Ps. 33:9.], "As he speaketh, so it is done."

Those who do not want to give the skirt to the one who takes their coat, are forced to give him 1) the shirt as well, against their will, because they did not give the skirt willingly, and thus the commandment is fulfilled by them against their will, which could not be fulfilled with their will. For it happens very often when two people dispute about a matter that they would both be satisfied by a part of the disputed matter by making an amicable agreement with each other and each yielding to the other, while if they agree with each other they consume far more about it and waste twice as much on the advocates as they should have yielded to the opposing party. But how does it work now? Some have to spend twice as much on the matter as it is worth, and still lose the matter itself. Here it is time to sing [Ps. 119, 137]:

1) We have adopted Mi with the Basel, the Wittenberg and the Jena editions, instead of ilis in the other editions.

"Lord, you are just and your judgment is right. Give twenty guilders to an ungrateful, foreign lawyer, who also mocks you, for the trial, because you did not want to let your brother off ten guilders for the sake of peace. For who is to be blamed here other than you, a completely blind man, who squander your money on unworthy people with sins, which you could have left to your brother, who is your adversary, whom God has counted worthy to have it? Even if you win, you still have your victory with sins, and you will be found naked in twofold death.

But this is said of private persons, for public persons must watch that no one is wronged and, if called upon, avenge wrongs done. But to demand this is permitted to the weak, but forbidden to Christians.

Finally, it should be noted that, as the apostle Peter says, no one should suffer as a thief or an evildoer [1 Pet. 4:15], that is, he should not confess that it is right for him to do so if he is innocent, but should report his guilt to the one who takes something from him and leave the sting of conscience with him. For this is what the holy martyrs Attalus and his companions did. When the accusation was made that all Christians secretly eat children, they constantly denied it until death. Thus Zechariah, when he was killed by King Joash [2 Chron. 24, 22.], said, "The LORD will see it and seek it." And St. Thomas of Canterbury was killed, not because he did not want the goods to be taken, but because he said that those who took them had no right to do so. For he allowed the goods to be taken without resistance, and did not oppose them in any way. Yes, St. Stephen also declared so strongly that his persecutors did not do right, that he also prayed for their sin. Thus St. Jerome writes of the woman who was struck seven times [by the executioner with the sword], that she did not fear death or anything else, but wanted to maintain her innocence. Yes, for this reason Christ gave Malchus a harsh answer, denying that he had spoken evil [John 18:23], so that he might

not to think that he had acted rightly. That is why he answered Caiphas that he was the Son of God and refuted their false testimony, and yet he allowed his life to be taken, indeed he wanted it. So we too should let our goods go, but uphold our righteous cause.

Now let us repeat it and summarize it in a summa: This commandment is fulfilled if we not only do not speak false testimony, but also do not want to hear or allow anyone to be talked about (as those do who either believe the flatterers or agree with the slanderers). Yes, he is still guilty of this commandment who is not eager to excuse and cover up his brother's wrong, shame and disgrace, or at least, if he can do no more, to belittle them, to contradict those who speak evil, accuse, slander; for every one would have it done against him. And so he becomes a child of the Spirit of God, who is called the Comforter, because he speaks good things for us, and bears witness to our spirit against all the testimonies of the devil and of our own conscience. Furthermore, one should also teach those who do not know God and do not know God's will, who do not know God's will.

Admonish the erring, resist the deceivers and heretics and other deceivers of souls, as the apostle says (Tit. 1, 9. f.). Therefore, this commandment requires a truthful, just, wholesome, harmless tongue that is completely at the service of the brother, and in such a way as to do him good from the bottom of the heart. This is the love that does not drive the will to anger and is not jealous (1 Cor. 13:4). Therefore, although it is not necessary for you to confess to the priest, if you have not excused your brother, since he has been accused, defiled with false testimony, oppressed by flattery or slander, and are perhaps satisfied that you have not done so, you will still be condemned before God as a culprit because of such ungodly silence and evil disuse of your tongue, which was given to you for such distress of your brother and for his service. But again, if you do this, you will bring everything down on your neck and will soon be killed. And this is what God wants, so that the sooner we will be cast out of the world and killed for the sake of His word, and the sooner we will receive the crown of righteousness. This is the right and spiritual understanding of this commandment.

## The ninth and tenth commandments.

**You shall not covet your neighbor's house. Neither shall you covet his wife, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that is his.**

1) This is included in the sixth and seventh commandments, since according to the interpretation of Christ all desire and coveting of the wife and the goods of the neighbor is forbidden there. For "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her in his heart" [Matth. 5, 28]. He also condemned covetousness and the coveting of goods to such an extent that he also commanded to give the skirt to the one who took the cloak [Matth.

5, 40.). But in my judgment, it seems to me that by these two commandments the tinder and the insurmountable desire are forbidden, I mean, the very root of evil thoughts; so that it must be understood that in the sixth and seventh commandments the assent of the heart and the gestures of the members are forbidden, the word of the mouth and the work of the evil body, but here also even the first stirrings together with the tinder, which is the origin of those. For we must become so pure before we can enter the kingdom of heaven that there are no evil impulses in us, nor any tinder that tends toward evil, but complete health of body and soul, absolutely without any infirmity, which, of course, is not possible in this life.

1) Probably the sermon on the day of the Purification of the Virgin Mary [2 Feb. 1517] is the exordium to the following piece (Weim. Aug.). This introductory sermon is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1266.



is not in our power. For who can boast [Prov. 20:9] that he has a pure heart? Who can quench this deep inward fire? For even the apostle complains of "the law in his members" and of "the law of sin" [Rom. 7:23. f.]. And therefore we resist the eyes, the ears, and all the senses, inwardly and outwardly, lest sin should reign in us; but the evil desire no man can resist. This is why the merciful God decided to turn our bodies into ashes and to burn them by the great fire of the last day (universal fire), so that all the infirmities of our flesh would be consumed by fire: that is how much God hates this impurity. And from this it follows that it is these two commandments alone that no man, however holy, fulfills even to some extent; all others fulfill them because they forcefully curb the work, the word, the consent, but here they remain guilty and sinners because they fulfill none of these commandments, because they are infected by the insurmountable evil lust of the flesh and the desire of goods: therefore they are "sinners all at once and lack the glory they should have in GOD" [Rom. 3, 23]; therefore all pray, "Hallowed be thy name, thy will be done, forgive us our trespasses"; therefore all despair of their merits for fear of their impurity, and put their trust in the mercy of God, that in such a way it may be established that the Lord is pleased with those who fear him, who wait for his goodness [Ps. 147, 11^

This also puts an end to the dispute of the scholastic teachers as to whether these two commandments forbid something different from the sixth and seventh, as well as whether they are two different commandments. And they labor in vain in understanding these two commandments of the works of the heart, since they cannot deny that these are forbidden in the sixth and seventh commandments, and that then the same would be repeated here, and these two commandments would be set in vain, since they would be the same with those. Nor can they say that the work is forbidden there, the thoughts here, or the hands there, the heart here, because Christ himself teaches against this, saying.

that those two commandments are to be understood by both.

So it only remains that we follow the apostle Paul, who combines these two commandments into one and says: "I did not know of lust that it was sin, where the law had not said, 'Do not lust'", Rom. 7, 7. And there he explains in detail that all saints are affected by this commandment, including himself. So here the evil of tinder and, that I say so, the essential and causal impurity in us is forbidden. Whoever therefore lets himself think that he has fulfilled all the previous commandments, sees at least here that he is unclean and needs the purity of Christ, who was sacrificed for him and accepted by God, the Father of mercy.

But what the Jews, or rather the sows, understand here is not worth mentioning in the discussion of these commandments. For they say that in the sixth and seventh commandments only the work is forbidden, and in the ninth and tenth an outward attempt and an obvious sign that one intends to do the work, just as among the jurists the attempt (conatus) is punished, as if someone has made preparations (inciperet) to kidnap someone's daughter, or has stood after another's life, he is beheaded. And so thoughts and words are free with them, which are full of malice and anger and bitterness and, as Christ says [Matth. 23, 27. f.], "full of all filthiness," because they keep pure what is outside, but their inside is full of avarice and all unrighteousness. Therefore, the synagogue is the woman who, because of her shameful nature, has received a letter of divorce and has been cast out.

These are "the ten words", as Moses says, in which every salutary commandment is completely contained, and although they can be brought to a smaller number of huts, they could also have been divided into more commandments. But it pleased God to give them in the number ten, which is the number of a complete whole (universitatis) and of a perfect sum, so that, as once everything happened in the model (figura), also this number ten of the commandments was chosen for the sake that it should represent the sum of all commandments.

Now that the Ten Commandments have been completed, the many kinds of sins must be included among the commandments, because there is no sin that does not go against a commandment of God. For I do not know whether it is of use to those who want to confess that they burden their memory with so many different kinds of sins and tire the priest, as there are: 1. by doings and omissions; 2. by the heart, by the mouth, by works; 3. by the five senses; 4. by the six works of mercy; 5. by the seven sacraments; 6. by the seven deadly sins; 7. by the seven gifts [of the Holy Spirit]; 8. by the eight beatitudes; 9. by the nine strange sins; 10. by the ten commandments; 11. by the twelve articles of faith 2) 12. by the twelve fruits of the Spirit. In addition to these, there are the four main virtues and the three theological virtues, as well as the dumb sins, the heaven-sent sins, and finally the sins against the Holy Spirit. I beg you, what is the use of such confusion and distraction of the mind? This is done in such a way that it is considered necessary to enumerate the names of these different divisions and distinctions, of course only to waste time, to stupefy the confessor and to confuse oneself, so that one spends more effort to remember these things than to think of true repentance, then also to hinder others. Due to the ignorance of the teachers, this untidiness (tumultus) has arisen in confession, while confession should be short and open, so that both confessor and child could soon be finished.

Now let us first consider the deadly sins, whose number, as it seems, was taken from John Chrysostom. For he also interprets the seven nations of the Canaanites 5 Mos. 7, 1. in a moral way (moraliter) as seven vices, by wanting all sins to be understood under the same, more on the basis of the seven number, which is a whole.

. 1) Löscher: "The following was preached by Luther on the Sunday of Septuagesimä [February 8, 1817]." The Erordium belonging to it is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1816.  
2) "The twelve articles of faith" are the apostolic creed. Cf. Table Talks Cap. 54, 8 13. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XXII, 1358.

than that the names contain such things in themselves. For some make eight, others nine mortal sins, adding disobedience and vain teaching; still others divide mothers into daughters, and genera into species, the whole into parts belonging to it (integrales) and subordinate (subjectivas): from these they have derived an infinite number, yes, whole seas of sins, but in the meantime have not taken care of the right understanding of the commandments.

Therefore, there are not only seven deadly sins, but this is an arbitrary division, which has no necessary reason nor proof [from Scripture], but there can be both fewer and more, depending on a different figurative speech (tropologia) occurring in Scripture. Therefore, St. Augustine divided it into two parts, namely, a kindled fire and a suppressed fire, that is, love, which ignites evil, and fear, which humbles in an evil way.

The first mortal sin is hopefulness, which is twofold: the external, which takes place in physical goods, and the internal, which expresses itself in spiritual goods, and is therefore always against the first commandment. This is obvious, for to have no other God means to trust in nothing, to have no pleasure in anything, to rejoice in nothing, to delight in nothing, to enjoy no thing but God alone. But hope puts its trust now in wealth, now in strength, now in beauty and clothing, now in power and honor, now in noble lineage; likewise inwardly in wisdom, art, understanding, justice, virtue, holiness, takes pleasure in them, and honors these created goods in such a way (eo actu) as is due to God alone. For pride always entails two things: first, that one may please oneself; second, that one may arrogantly despise others. For this reason it includes vain honor within itself; if this breaks outwardly, it is all the worse. That is why the arrogant one, who sees something good in himself, does not honor God in it, nor does he thank Him for it by praising God, but stands on himself, takes pleasure in himself, and is vain in his thoughts. But then, at the same time, he pays attention to the one who does not have such gifts; if he now compares him with himself, it follows with necessity

He despises him and says: he is something, he is nothing, and the word Rom. 1, 22. is fulfilled: "Since they said they were wise, they have become fools"; since they speak in this way (namely inwardly, to themselves) that they are righteous, beautiful, rich 2c., they have become unrighteous, ugly, poor. Revelation 3:17: "Thou sayest, I am rich, and am full; and knowest not that thou art poor, and miserable, and bare."

Thus, hope has no real essence (substantiam) in itself, except that the hopeful can compare himself with a lesser one, and looks down, as it were, from above. On the other hand, the essence of humility is only there where the humble man compares himself with a better one, and looks upward, as it were, to the highest things. That is why this horny and cowardly calf has four feet, namely:

|   |                             |          |
|---|-----------------------------|----------|
| Ignorance of his bishop. Knowledge of His GoodGod               | Thus is the right ignorance |          |
| Ignorance of the foreign good. Knowledge of the foreign evil of |                             | oneself. |

The antithesis of this quadruped has four feet of humility, 'namely:

|                            |                               |         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| Ignorance of his good.     | Knowledge of His EvilGod      |         |
|                            | This is the right knowledge < |         |
| Ignorance of foreign evil. | Knowledge of the foreign good | itself. |

Therefore it is not necessary that you confess that you are inclined to hope, because we are always all hopeful, and no man is without all hope, but only when you have obeyed their evil desire and consented to it by word, work or heart. The rest you have to complain to God in secret sighing and hidden confession in the closet, so that he by his grace eradicates this evil, the old root.

It has been said of godliness, as it was forbidden under the first commandment, for godliness is the beginning of sin, or, which is the same thing, the beginning of sin is to fall away from God, namely, to become an idol to oneself, to please oneself, to delight in oneself more than in the Lord, and thus to honor in oneself another god. This is the most serious and first sin, although there is no one who has come from Adam, as long as we live, who does not in some way practice this idolatry in himself, and for this reason must always repent and groan about pleasing himself.

Now it is necessary to speak of avarice, which is a craving and, as the apostle says

[1 Tim. 6, 9. f.] says, likewise "a root of all evil," "for they that desire to be rich fall into the snares of the devil, and many foolish and hurtful lusts."

This vice is forbidden in two, even in three commandments, namely in the seventh: "Thou shalt not steal" and in the last: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods" and in the first. For since in the seventh commandment (as has been said) all taking (tractatio) of other people's goods is forbidden, and every commandment (as has also been said) is so spiritual that it forbids not only the work and the fruit and the leaves and branches, that is, the works, words and deeds, but also the root and the sap, that is, the evil desire from which such things come, it is evident that covetousness is forbidden under theft, since in a thief and a covetous man there is the same root, that is, covetousness. Likewise, since in the last commandment the coveting of one's neighbor's good is forbidden in the letter, it is evident that the source and head of this coveting is also forbidden in the spirit; but this is avarice. Therefore, the very last commandment actually forbids the last and most vital vice, which is reborn in the elderly and is alive in the dying.

But the apostle Paul, who wrote Eph. 5, 5.

1) Löscher: "Luther preached the following sermon on the Sunday of Sexagesimä" [February 15, 1517]. The Exvrdium Hiezu is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1822.

in his mind goes higher, says that a miser is a servant of idols, that is, a worshipper of them, and so he puts this under the first commandment. The same is done by Baruch, Cap. 3, 17: "They that gather silver and gold, in them men put their trust." And the 78th Psalm, v. 58. [Ps. 106, 38.], says in spirit, "And they served the idols of Canaan." Canaan means a merchant; what could their idols more appropriately mean than money and coins, gold and silver vessels, houses and other possessions? Yes, therefore we are chiefly forbidden in the law not to make gold and silver gods, and the first idolatry of the people was with gold, under the golden calf [Ex. 32:4, 1, but in like manner also the greatest idolatry in the days of Jeroboam, under the golden calves [1 Kings 12:28.]. Therefore the apostle correctly understood by gold an idol, calling the miser a worshipper of idols, and in Latin aurum sounds almost like auarum; auri auro, auari auaro are merely different in One letter, so that aurum [gold] seems to have received its name from auere [to desire fiercely]. Now since the apostle calls the miser an idolater, he thereby sufficiently interprets the first commandment, that the heart of man should trust in God alone. For on the same opinion he says that also the gluttons and the unchaste are worshippers of the belly, and says [Phil. 3, 19.f: "To whom the belly is their god." But in this sense all the commandments are contained in the first commandment as in their head. For every sin is a contempt of God, and just thereby against the first commandment, and no commandment can be violated without at the same time also violating the first, which contains all of them in itself. For God's will is transgressed in all the commandments and is made inferior to our will [, if one does against them], and thus God is not honored, but rather another [God] is honored instead of Him. But the apostle has actually stated that avarice is against the same, because it delights in the images of gold and silver, very similar to right idolatry. All other sins, however, do not have such idols and images.

Therefore, we must again conclude that no one is completely pure of stinginess, as Isaiah and Jeremiah say [Isa. 56:11, Jer. 6:13], "They are all stingy. Small and great." But blessed is he who for the sake of this follows less this inclination of his depraved nature. All must therefore groan before God, but only confess the work, whether internal or external, before the priest. And whoever would say that he does not have this desire would certainly arrogate to himself the highest perfection of purity in great arrogance. Therefore, blessed are those who mourn [Matth. 5, 4], for they have reason (materiam) in themselves to mourn over themselves, as the Lord said to the women who followed him [Luc. 23, 28].

1) The third mortal sin is unchastity, the types of which are sufficiently indicated under the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and no one doubts that it belongs there; therefore, it may suffice that this is indicated.

The fourth is eating and drinking, the sister, indeed, the inducement and the suitor and servant of unchastity, as the pagan also says: Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus [Without food and drink, unchastity thrives nothing. The apostle Phil. 3, 19. puts this vice under the first commandment by saying: "Whose belly is their god." He does the same in Rom. 16, 18: "For such serve not Christ, but their belly." But it can simply be placed under the sixth commandment, for where unchastity is forbidden, surely all occasion and stimulus to unchastity is also forbidden. But among all stimuli to unchastity, the greatest and strongest is eating and drinking. The cause of this is that this is something internal; everything else, as looking, talking, hearing, touching, is external. But eating and drinking makes the veins swell and moves the whole body to unchastity. For even the pagan Pliny says that drunkenness is followed by terrible unchastity. And St. Jerome says

1) Löscher: "The following was recited by Luther on the day of Matthew [February 24, 1517]." The Exorbinm Hlezu is found in Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XII, 1762, and again, in improved translation, Vol. XIX, 754.

in his writing to the Eustochins and elsewhere, that nothing so moves to unchastity as undigested food. Therefore, a gluttonous man (gulosus) willingly gives himself up to unchastity. In the same way, idleness and laziness, sleepiness, soft bedding and all other things that arouse unchastity are forbidden, which can undoubtedly be seen from the sixth commandment. And if a man who has overdone in eating and drinking (gulosus) does not immediately occupy himself with much work, he will be taken in by insurmountable unchastity and tickling. Hence St. Jerome says: A belly that glows with wine soon seethes with unchastity. See how unchastity is, as it were, the natural foam of gluttony, just as smoke rises naturally from fire, and foam rises from wine that has just been poured in, and boiling water throws out bubbles. Who can prevent this, except with the greatest violence? Therefore, he who commands chastity undoubtedly commands the means that serve chastity, such as temperance, watchfulness, work, prayer, reading, reflection, study, serving one's neighbor, cold, heat, poverty 2c.

Here, however, this is to be noted: Many people have a greater conscience about vomiting than about binge drinking and drunkenness, just as many consider the nocturnal defilement to be something greater than the cause of it, the evil thoughts and gluttony. But surely vomiting is not evil, nor is it ever a sin, since it takes place both against one's will and in pain. Therefore, the drunken should not only not flee vomiting, but even seek it, as Sirach Cap. 31, 25. says [Vulg.], "If thou hast been compelled to drink much, 1) stand up and cast it out, and it shall refresh thee, and thou shalt not bring sickness on thy body." This advice of the wise man is to be accepted, and not without reason. For he says, "It will refresh thee," that is, it will relieve thee. For the purpose of this discharge is that the veins may not be so distended and tickling of the flesh may arise, since the little that remains may be more easily consumed.

dant. For it is better to escape unchastity by vomiting than to fall into unchastity by being full.

Secondly, because sickness of the body is avoided, as, injury to the head and all the senses and powers. But who should not believe that it is a greater sin for the whole body to be injured by being full and keeping the comrade, than to be freed from this danger by vomiting? For to shorten life is a greater sin than to vomit; yea, to vomit is no sin, but that is evil, that thou hast filled thyself and overcharged thyself so as to vomit. And would to God that a law were given that all drunk and full people were forced to vomit! I hope that they would finally abhor drunkenness, knowing that they would soon have to spit out what they drink. Even though they soon have to leave the water and go to the chair, they do not turn back to it. But that the Scriptures sometimes punish spitting, as [2 Petr. 2:22]: "The dog eats again what he has eaten," and Isa. 28:8: "All the tables are full of spitting," is understood by the spitting out of the good and wholesome word, which he should have kept.

Thirdly. If someone has drunk poison or something else that is harmful and spits it out without sin, why should he spit with sin who has drunk wine or another drink in such a way that it causes harm similar to the poison? Therefore, one must have a conscience about the pouring in, not about the giving out, since there one serves many evil things against God's commandment, but here one serves many good things, against no commandment, yes, for God's commandment.

I pass over the types and differences of gluttony because they are not always mortal sins, since eating and drinking are not always mortal sins either, indeed rarely, unless they have become a habit.

The fifth mortal sin is anger, about which enough has been said in the fifth commandment.

The sixth is hatred, which should not have been distinguished from anger [as a special sin], since it is nothing but ingrained anger, as St. Augustine says in his Rule: Do not let anger become hatred,

and make a beam out of the splinter. For anger is a young rice, but hatred is a tree and a great beam. Therefore this also belongs to the fifth commandment, for which we have the apostle John as a guarantor [1 John 3:15]: "He who hates his brother is a murderer."

The seventh mortal sin is sloth, which is the disinclination to do good, laziness, Greek This is twofold. One is in the figurative and external worship, such as attending church, hearing the Word, praying, reading, contemplating, singing, and in this way this vice is forbidden under the third commandment: "You shall keep holy the holiday," as is sufficiently evident. The other is more subtle and inward and takes place in the whole service of God and in every kind of it, and in this way it is nothing other than trusting in the righteousness begun and carelessness in increasing; that one stands still in the way of God, is lukewarm, becomes secure, forsakes the fear of God. All Scripture speaks of this vice of the hypocrites. For this slothfulness makes sure saints of works, before whose eyes there is no

is the fear of God, and "the judgments of God are far from them" [Ps. 10:5]. Afterwards it will be worse with these people than before [Luc. 11, 25. f.], because the devil finds their house decorated, but empty and safe. Therefore the devils go in and dwell there. O what an exceedingly dreadful word, that the devils dwell there, because men who are of this sort, after their righteousness begun, become much more hardened than before, as we see in experience, that they are not moved to what they hear, but think it does not affect them, and in truth have become a brood of vipers [Matt. 3:7, 12], a chaff prepared for the eternal fire. So this sin is found in all the commandments, since one should increase in each one. But I do not know whether one should confess it. I believe that one should not do it, because it is a spiritual infirmity, which one should open to God alone, who alone can heal it.)

1) In the Basel, Wittenberg, and Jena editions, there is added at the end: "End of the sermons on the Ten Commandments, which the venerable father Martin Luther preached to the people in Wittenberg in 1516 and 1517."

# D. The Ten Commandments of God

with a brief interpretation of their fulfillment and transgression.

Made by D. Martin Luther, Augustinian.\*)

Anno 1518.

## The first commandment.

### You shall not have other gods.

To have one GOD, that is, to have one from whom he provides, to be promoted in all good, to be helped in all evil; that wants to be, and is, the one true GOD Himself.

## The other commandment.

### You shall not put on the name of God your Lord uselessly.

For God's names are also these: Truth, Wisdom, 2) Kindness, Power, and Everything

2) "Wisdom" is missing from Weimar's.

\*) As we can see from the beginning of the immediately preceding sermon on the seven deadly sins (Col. 1344), confession had become a cruel torture of consciences due to the infinite multiplication of types of sins. Therefore, Luther wrote for the poor afflicted souls at the beginning of the year 1518 an instruction, how one could briefly arrange the confession according to the holy ten commandments, both in Latin and German. The Latin writing has the title: Instructiv pro conkcssionc pscatvrnm adbrsvianda ssuncuin ckcoalAUin. Author v. Zl. luitü. äнно HlvVIII. and is found in the Latin Wittenberg edition (155V), Dom. I,

Good name is his name; let no one attribute it to himself.

**The third commandment.**

**You shall sanctify the holiday.**

The best celebration is that the soul waits with all activity of the same day for Him who fills the hungry and the single with goods, Luc. 1, 53. For celebration means to be single.

**The fourth commandment.**

**You shall honor your father and mother.**

The honor is not in greeting or inclination alone, but in doing and not doing everything that is their will or need.

**The fifth commandment.**

**You shall not kill.**

Not only does the one who causes death or harm kill, but also the one who does not resist them and comes before them, as Augustine says.

**The sixth commandment.**

**You shall not commit adultery.**

He calls the worst fruit of the lust of the flesh alone, to prove how evil all lust is, from which such vice comes.

1) Weimar edition: "hn"; likewise in the immediately following "short resolution of the ten commandments": "yr yn", that is: their them.

**The seventh commandment.**

**You shall not steal.**

To take foreign goods is a fruit of avarice and covetousness; therefore the tree with the fruit is forbidden here, avarice and what may follow from avarice.

**The eighth commandment.**

**You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

**The ninth commandment.**

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, daughter or maid.

**The tenth commandment.**

**You shall not covet your neighbor's house or goods.**

**A brief resolution of the ten commandments.**

Christ Himself says: "Whatever you want men to do to you, you do to them, that is the whole law and all the prophets," Matth. 7, 12. For no one wants to suffer ingratitude for his good deed, or to leave his name to another. No one wants to show hope against him. No one wants disobedience, wrath, unchastity of his wife, robbery of his goods, lies, deceitfulness, and the like.

col. 199; Jenaer (1579), IVnn. I, col. 1753; Erlanger, SXSA. opp., IVnn. XII, p. 219 and in the Weimar one, vol. I, p. 257. The only single Latin edition of this writing, which is given in the Weimar edition, appeared only in May 1520 with Silvanus Ottmar in Augsburg under a title modeled on that of the German edition. The German edition is, as can be seen by comparing the writing: "Kurze Form, die zehn Gebote, Glauben und Vater-Unser zu betrachten" (Walch, St. Louiser Ausg., Vol. X, 153-159), by Luther himself; in the latter writing, he only changed the first part completely, but expanded it in the indication of the transgression and fulfillment; in all other respects, it agrees with our writing from word to word. "A special edition of the German adaptation of 1518 cannot be proven, but we have an imprint within the following writing of Caspar Götzel: 'Jhesus. Ein fast fruchtbar Buchlein von Adams wercken, vnd gottes genade mit vnterricht wie recht beichten, bussen, vnd das hochwirdigst Sacrament selig tzu empfaen im Augustiner Closter tzu sandt Anne vor Eisleben dise heiligste fast gepredigt vnd gegeben. 1518.' (Printed by Melchior Lotther in Leipzig.) Here the instruction is found in German, Bl. Ciiij u - Dij b, in the middle of the fifth chapter; it was thus already in print in the Lent of 1518." (Weim. Ausg.) In the Weimar edition, under the title we have given, nine individual aliases are listed, none of which appeared in Wittenberg. Several of these are without date, namely two with Jobst Gutknecht in Nuremberg, one with Adam Petri in Basel, one with S. Otinar (Ottmar) in Augsburg, one with Jörg Nadler in Augsburg; in 1519 one with Wolfgang Stöcke! in Leipzig, one in 1520 with S. Otmar in Augsburg, and there in 1522; one with Hans Froschauer in Augsburg in 1523. In the collections: in the Eisleben one, vol. I, p. 21; in the Altenburg one, vol. VIII, p. 894; in the Leipzig one, vol. IV, p. 86; in the Erlanger, vol. 36, p. 145 and in the Weimarschen, vol. I, p. 247. In the various editions there is a great difference in the arrangement of the text, which stems from the fact that in the lost original text (as well as in the Latin Wittenberg and Jena editions) several sentences were printed in the margin from top to bottom, or inverted, which were then arbitrarily inserted here and there by the editions. Also the conclusion of the bids is differently placed. The Weimar edition has indicated in its introduction a reconstruction of the original. We have subsequently given the sentences their position at the end of the relevant sections and have made them recognizable (just like the Weimar edition) by having them printed indented. These pieces must be thought of as being printed from bottom to top in the sections preceding them (the commandments themselves, their transgression and their fulfillment).

1) To suffer after-talk; but to invent love and friendship, thanksgiving and help, truth and faithfulness from his neighbor. All these things are commanded by the Ten Commandments.

So the commandments teach.

**Transgression of the Ten Commandments.**

**The transgression of the first commandment.**

Who in his repulsiveness seeks sorcery, black art, devil's confederate. Who uses letters, signs, herbs, words, blessings and the like. He who practices divination, treasure conjuring, crystal seeing, cloak driving, milk stealing. He who directs his work and life according to chosen days, celestial signs, and the diviners' discretion. He who blesses and invokes himself, his cattle, house, children, and all kinds of property against wolves, iron, fire, water, damage, with fictitious prayers. Who ascribes his misfortune and repulsiveness to the devil or evil people, and does not receive with love and praise all evil and good from God alone, and brings it home to Him again with thanksgiving and willing serenity. He who tempts God and puts himself in unnecessary danger of body or soul. He who is hopeful in his piety, understanding or other spiritual gifts. He who honors God and the saints, forgetting the distress of his soul, only for the sake of temporal benefit.

**The transgression of the other commandment.**

He who easily swears without need or out of habit. He who swears a false oath or breaks his vow. He who vows or swears to wrongdoing. He who swears in God's name. He who speaks foolish fables about God, and recklessly perverts the words of Scripture. Who does not call on God's name in his repulsiveness, and does not give prayer in love and sorrow, in happiness and unhappiness. He who seeks fame and glory and name from his piety

wisdom 2c. Whoever calls on God's name falsely, as the heretics and all hopeful saints.

**The transgression of the third commandment.**

Who eats, drinks, plays, dances, is idle and unchaste. Who laziness, office of God oversleep, miss. He who takes a stroll, or engages in useless chatter. He who works and acts without special need. He who does not pray, does not consider Christ's suffering, does not repent of his sin, and desires mercy, thus only celebrating outwardly with clothes, food and gifts.

**The transgression of the fourth commandment.**

He who is ashamed of poverty, infirmity, contempt of his parents. He who does not provide them with food and clothing for their needs; much more, he who curses them, beats them, talks after them, hates them, and is disobedient to them. Who does not think highly of them from the heart for the sake of God's commandment. Who does not keep the commandments of the Christian church with fasting, feasting 2c. He who dishonors priests' status, insults them. He who does not honor his lords and authorities, being faithful and obedient, be they good or evil. Herein are all heretics, apostates, apostates, exiles, hardened 2c.

**The transgression of the fifth commandment.**

Whoever is angry with his neighbor. Whoever says Racha to him, these are all kinds of signs of anger and hatred. Whoever says to him fatue, you fool, these are all kinds of shameful words, cursing, blasphemy, backbiting, judging, judging, taunting 2c. He who reproves his neighbor's sin or infirmity, and does not cover and excuse. He who does not forgive his enemies, does not pray for them, is not kind, does not do good. And herein are all the sins of wrath and anger, as deaths, war, robbery, burning, quarreling, strife, mourning his neighbor's happiness, rejoicing in his misfortune. He who does not practice the works of mercy.

**The transgression of the sixth commandment.**

Whoever weakens virgins, commits adultery, 3) incites bloodshed, and works such unchastity. Who unnatural way or persons (the

3) In the Weimarsche, "ehebriecht" is twice. Erlanger: Adultery.

1) Weimarsche: "wars". This reading seems possible to us after the "rsksl lionsm" in Latin, but not probable, because the Wittenberg and the Jena have in the corresponding place of the "short form to consider the ten commandments, faith and Our Father"; "triegen".  
2) Weim. Ausg-: "sein sich" instead of: sein Vieh.



are silent sins). Who with shameful words, songs, histories, pictures, the evil desire äugēt 1) or shows. He who tempts and defiles himself with sight, grasping, willing thoughts. Who does not avoid the cause, as eating, drinking, temperance, laziness, sleeping, and female or male companionship. Whoever incites others to unchastity with other jewelry, ornaments 2c. He who does not help to preserve another's chastity with counsel and action.

### **The transgression of the seventh commandment.**

In addition to thievery and robbery, usury is also a great sin. He who uses weights and measures falsely, or spends evil goods for good. Whoever takes unjust inheritance and interest. He who withholds earned wages and denies guilt. He who does not lend to his nearest needy, or lends without any allowance. All who are stingy, and hasten to become rich, and how else foreign goods are kept or brought to themselves.

### **The transgression of the eighth commandment.**

Who keeps silent and suppresses the truth in court. Whoever lies and witnesses harmfully. All harmful flatterers and ear-blowers, two-faced people who cause dissension and discord. He who misinterprets and reviles his neighbor's good life, works and words. He who gives way to the same evil tongues helps and does not resist.

### **The transgression of the ninth and tenth commandments.**

These two last commandments do not belong in confession, but are set as the goal and the time for us to get there, and to work towards it daily through repentance, with the help and grace of God. For the evil inclination does not die thoroughly until the flesh becomes powder and is created anew.

The five senses are included in the fifth and sixth commandments. The six works of mercy in the fifth and seventh. The seven deadly sins, truce 2c. in the first and second. Unchastity in the sixth. Wrath and hatred in the fifth. Gluttony in the sixth. Sloth in the third, and probably in all. The foreign

1) eugen - to let see. Weimarsche: eugent. Walch and the Erlanger: übt.

The sins are in all the commandments; for with hot, counseling, and help, against all the commandments may be sinned against. The calling and silent sins are against the fifth, sixth and seventh commandments 2c.

### **His own love, and God's and neighbor's contempt.**

Take from God what is his and take from him what is hers.

Take from your neighbor what is his, and do not deprive him of what is yours.

So does nature, left to itself, through Adam's first sin.

## **The fulfillment of the ten commandments of GOD.**

The fulfillment of the first commandment.

God's fear and love in right faith and firmly trusting, standing quite purely, loudly, calmly in all things, be they evil or good.

### **The fulfillment of the other commandment.**

Praise, honor, dedication, and invocation of God's name, and to destroy his own name and honor altogether, that God alone may be praised, who alone is and works all things.

### **The fulfillment of the third commandment.**

To prepare oneself to God and to seek grace. This is done by praying, listening to Mass and the Gospel, and considering Christ's suffering, and thus going spiritually to the Sacrament. For this commandment requires a spiritually poor soul, which sacrifices its own nothingness before God, 2) so that He may be God, and receive His work and name in it, according to the first two commandments.

### **The fulfillment of the "fourth" commandment.**

Willing obedience and submission to all violence, for the sake of God's good pleasure. As the apostle St. Peter says [1. Ep. 2, 20.], without all barking, complaining and murmuring.

2) This sentence reads in the Weimarschen: "die do yres nicht sein vor got opffert". In the Wittenberg and in the Jmaer this sentence is printed in the short form: "die da jres (nicht sein) für Gott opffert". The meaning is: who sacrifices her own, namely "not being", to GÖtte. At the conclusion of this passage it is thus expressed, "The love of God 2c. deprives him of her mere nothingness."

**The fulfillment of the fifth commandment.**

Patience, meekness, kindness, peacefulness, mercy, and above all, a sweet, kind heart, without all hatred, anger, bitterness toward any man, even toward enemies.

**The fulfillment of the sixth commandment.**

Chastity, discipline, shamefulness in works, words, verden 1) and thoughts. Also moderation in eating, drinking, sleeping, and everything that is conducive to chastity.

**The fulfillment of the seventh commandment.**

Poverty of spirit, gentleness, willingness to lend and give one's goods, living without all avarice and covetousness.

**The fulfillment of the eighth commandment.**

A peaceful, wholesome tongue that harms no one and pampers everyone, that atones for the disagreeable, excuses and defends the reviled; that is, truth and simplicity in words.

**The ninth and tenth fulfillment.**

This is perfect chastity and contempt of temporal lust and goods thoroughly accomplished in that life alone, amen.

The love of God and neighbor, and his own contempt. Abstains from the goods and names of God, and deprives Him of their mere nothingness. Abstain from your neighbor's goods and deprive him of yours and yourself.

So does the grace of God through Christ our Lord.

Note that it is a great error for someone to go to the Holy Sacrament relying on the unfaithful pretense that he has confessed, prayed, and is not aware of some mortal sin. For they themselves will receive judgment [1 Cor. 11, 29.]

not become pure nor worthy by such their works or consciences; rather, by such presumptuous purity they become impure. But he who believes and trusts that he will obtain grace and purity in the sacrament, this faith and trust makes him pure and worthy, who does not rely on the above-mentioned works, but on the pure, faithful and kind word and promise of Christ, when he says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden with sins, and I will refresh you." In these comforting words of discretion and sure confidence one should approach, and those who approach in this way will not be put to shame. For we can never be sure from our works whether we are without mortal sin, and yet he who wants to go to the sacrament without harm must certainly be without mortal sin. Therefore the certainty stands on the word and promise and call of the faithful Savior of Christ, as it is said.

Paul also means this [1 Cor. 11:28], saying, "Let every man examine himself, and then eat of this bread." But he that examineth himself aright, forgetting another man's evil, and judging not, but feeling himself to be laboring, and burdened with many sins and infirmities, and so becoming desirous of the grace and help of Christ; this is the very noblest and nearest preparation for the Sacrament. For, as St. Augustine says, "Food seeks no more than a hungry, alive soul; neither do they feast, for those who are full and hopeful, who judge and [dim] one another, than those to whom the apostle writes these words. For if the apostle had charged us in these words that we should search ourselves until we were sure whether we were without mortal sin, he would have charged us with impossible things, and deprived us all together of the sacrament of salvation. Therefore, it is enough that you do not know a mortal sin, in a certain gross way, or a certain intention to commit mortal sin; put that behind in the grace of God, and let your faith be your purity, and you will be sure."

1) Walch and the Erlangers: Desires.

# III. interpretations on the fourth book of Moses

## The blessing,

When one speaks after Mass about the people, from the fourth book of  
Moses at the sixth chapter, interpreted by D. Martin Luther.\*)

Preached probably in 1527, published in 1532.

**Deut. 6:22-27 And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron and unto his sons: Thus shall ye bless the children of Israel, saying: The LORD bless thee, and keep thee. The LORD make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. For they shall put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them. The LORD bless thee, and keep thee.**

1. the first part of this blessing concerns bodily life and goods, as Genesis 1:28 and elsewhere is often said: "And God blessed them, saying, Grow, and be fruitful." Hence also in Scripture (Gen. 27, 34. 36. 38.) the common way is to say, "Give me a blessing." "Hast thou no more blessing?" that is, Give me something, as goods, bread, raiment 2c. For all things are the gift of God, and by His blessing we have what we have; and therefore also is called a blessing,

that is, a gift from God that He gives us through His blessing.

2 This blessing wishes the people that God may give them happiness and all good things, and also protect and preserve them, namely, that they may first of all be fruitful in their own bodies, have a faithful spouse, food, clothing, and everything that is necessary for this bodily life, be it house, farm, field, livestock, and servants. And when he gives it, and we have it, that he also keep it and preserve it; as, the body from sickness and plagues, the cattle, house, field from fire, water, storms and all kinds of damage.

3 And such blessings teach us that we should be thankful and realize that our body and life, together with all goods and necessities, are not made or won by our work or labor, nor are they preserved or maintained by our diligence and care, but it is all God's blessing, God's guard and care [Ps. 127:1, 2],

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In the twenties, Luther preached continuously on all five books of Moses, as we can see from the beginning of the book: "Auslegung über etliche Kapitäl des fünften Buches Mose". However, nothing is preserved from the sermons on the third book of Moses, and from the fourth book only the present writing. It appeared in 1532 under the title we have placed above it in two individual editions; one with Nickel Schirlentz in Wittenberg, the other with Kunigund Hergotin in Nuremberg. If this writing belongs to Luther's continuous sermons, we can assume with considerable certainty that it was preached in 1527. In determining this time, we base ourselves on the following: In Buchwald's "Andreas Poachs handwritten collection of unprinted sermons by M. Luther" we find Vol. I first half, p. XXIX in the index to Poach's lost sermons in 1528 twenty sermons listed, which Luther preached on the fourth book of Moses: on March 8, 1528 he preached on the 15th chapter of this book, and on December 13, 1528 he stood at the 31st chapter. Therefore, we may conclude that Luther preached on the sixth chapter in 1527. Because Luther preached only in the afternoon on the books of Moses, but the index in the years preceding the year 1528 only rarely mentions an afternoon sermon, so the news about it is missing in it. In the collections we find this writing: Wittenberger (1556s, vol. V, p. 245; Jenaer (1566s, vol. V, p. 480d; Attenburger, vol. V, p. 956; Leipziger, vol. IV, p. 89 and Erlanger, vol. 36, p. 155. This writing is also translated into Latin and is found in the Latin Wittenberger edition (1554), Vorn. III, col. 111>. We give the text according to the Erlangen edition, which brings the original print, comparing the Wittenberg and the Jena.

Not that we should therefore walk idly, neither working nor tending, but should do our part, working and tending, yet knowing that God must give prosperity and good in our work and care, as St. Paul teaches 1 Cor. 3:6: "I planted, Apollo watered; but God gave the prosperity."

(4) For we see how innumerable sicknesses and infirmities can befall our own bodies, wives, children, and servants, how innumerable journeys and plagues can befall the cattle, how innumerable damage and vermin can befall the fruits and other goods, and befall them daily, that it is not possible for us to preserve or keep a chicken or a piglet, or even a grain or a small stalk, by our power or wit, let alone that we should make or create it. The Creator, who creates and gives it all to us, must also keep and preserve it all; without our having to work, and not to be idle nor idle.

#### **V. 25 The LORD make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.**

The other part concerns the spiritual being and the soul, for cattle and goods are not susceptible to such blessings, but remain in the first part, since they have the common blessing with us after the body.

(6) And here we must learn Hebrew, and be accustomed to the language. For it is nothing at all in German when I say, "God enlighten his face upon thee. And yet it cannot be given in any other way, nor can it be translated, so we must repeat it in Hebrew and leave it at that. And in German so much is said: God the Lord show Himself to you kindly and comfortingly, do not look at you sourly or angrily, do not make your heart afraid, but laugh at you cheerfully and fatherly, so that you may be glad and confident of Him, and have a joyful, heartfelt confidence in Him. This happens when he forgives our sin and does not reckon with us, but by his Word and Spirit absolves our sorrowful, stupid conscience, so that our heart may feel how God will not look upon our sin, but will forget it forever, and will always be gracious, kind, comforting and gentle toward us.

7. just as the dear sun, when it shines on

When she goes and scatters her rich radiance and mild light in all the world, she does not do otherwise than illuminate her face over all the world; that is, she shines brightly and joyfully, and delights not only men, but animals, birds, and everything that is in heaven and earth, she makes light and equal to newly created. But when she hides her clear, lovely face or goes down, all things look sour, sorrowful, gloomy, black, as if they were dead and in hell.

8 So you should also understand the text of the blessing here. When God gives His word, He makes His face shine joyfully and brightly upon all consciences, and thereby makes them joyful, bold, light, and as new hearts and new people. For it brings forgiveness of sins, and shows God as a gracious, merciful Father, who mourns and pities our sorrow and grief. But when he takes away his word, then he hides his face, then it becomes dark, black, afflicted, sorrow and grief in the conscience, then one feels vain anger and no mercy.

(9) This blessing (if I may pronounce it in German) desires that God may make His gracious word shine abundantly to us and thereby make our consciences joyful, that sin, conscience, law and devil do not frighten us, nor make us despondent, stupid and sorrowful, that we do not feel His wrath, but His favor and love in our hearts. This is the right, spiritual, great blessing that gives spiritual and eternal life, which cannot be given to animals, cattle, birds 2c.

10 But he adds, "And be gracious to you," and does not let it be enough that he makes his face shine or shine upon us. For there are also two parts in this blessing, which St. Paul is wont to call differently, *gratia et donum*, grace and gift. The first is grace or favor, when he turns his wrath and looks upon us graciously through his word, and forgives us all sin, and so makes our heart secure and joyful toward him. After this he also gives the rich and various gifts of his Spirit, by which we do much, both in ourselves and in all the world; as, teaching, comforting, counseling, helping, baptizing, administering the sacrament, performing miracles, and the like; as 1 Cor. 12:4 f. Paul tells us.

(11) Just as the sun, when it rises, not only makes all the world happy with its lovely, beautiful light, but also works, gives, and helps so that both men and animals can do all kinds of things, work, walk, stand, and use all their limbs; it warms and drives all kinds of plants and fruits until it makes everything ripe and perfect. So the blessing also says here that God not only wants to shine brightly for us with the word of grace, and make us happy through the forgiveness of sins and the display of His favor toward us, but also to be gracious to us, that is, to graciously press upon us, to strengthen us with spirit and gifts to do all His will. Therefore this word "to be gracious" means as much as to pardon or to give graciously; as the archfather Jacob, Gen. 33, 5, uses this word, and says to Esau: These are my children, whom the Lord has pardoned, given, or graciously given to me.

(12) And this blessing teaches us once again that we should be thankful and realize that we cannot get rid of our sin by any merit or work, nor can all the holiness and wisdom on earth, all the other preachers and teachers, whoever they may be, still or comfort a single conscience in the least sin, but the light of the divine word alone must do it. Not that we should therefore do no good works, or live wickedly, but that we should practice good works, and yet know that a happy conscience comes from no other way, for where God lets His face shine upon us, that is through the forgiveness of sin, out of pure grace and mercy; Nor are we able to preach or confess, nor to undertake, much less to accomplish, any truly Christian work or word, where He is not gracious to us, that is, where He does not graciously grace, strengthen, and drive us with His gifts.

**V. 26. May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.**

The third part also concerns the spiritual being and the soul, and is a desire of comfort and final victory under the cross, death, the devil and all hellish gates, along with the world and other evil lusts and desires.

of our flesh. For although he has been gracious to us, forgiven our sins and graced us with his spirit, we still have to fight against the devil and other sins.

For the devil also, when he perceives that we have God's gracious word, and are plucked out of his kingdom, and become the children of God, he also becomes mad and foolish, and sets upon us the power of the world with sword, fire 2c., and the wisdom of the world with heresy and error, and the holiness of the world with false brethren and hypocrites: that it is necessary not only to begin to enlighten us, and to give us the Spirit, or, as St. Paul says in Romans 8:23, the firstfruits of the Spirit, but to continue over us, that we may obtain the fullness of the Spirit, and at last all the victory. For not he who begins, but he who perseveres will be saved, Matth. 24, 13.

(15) And here we must learn to speak Hebrew, for it is nothing in German when I say, "The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee afar off. And it cannot well be given in German. For the opinion should be this: If God lets His face shine upon us, then the temptation and persecution of the devil, of the world and of our flesh make such a storm in our hearts that it seems to us that the dear light of the divine word wants to go down and leave us in darkness.

16. Just as when the sun rises beautifully and finely, shines joyfully and shines sweetly, and yet a cloud and storm rises against it and takes away its light, so that one no longer sees the sun, and it is as if it wants to sink, and let the storm overcome and suppress it, so that one may well say to the sun: Hold fast, dear sun, and do not let the clouds and weather oppress you, or turn the day into night; but raise your beautiful light above all clouds and weather, and preserve the day for us, so that the clouds and weather do not retain the victory with their darkness, but you prevail and retain the upper hand with your beautiful light. So here also this blessing wants to wish that God the Lord will raise the light of his word over us, and thus keep it that

that it shines higher and stronger in our hearts than all the temptations of the devil, death and sin, despair, despondency, fright and all misfortune can be. For if he does not do this, the devil with his weather and clouds is too powerful for us, and darkens and obscures for us the dear light of his word that we have begun with, and brings us so miserably about it that [it] becomes worse with us afterwards than it ever was before; as we see and experience daily in those who fall from the word, pressed by force or seduced by heresy.

For, as Christ says, "When the unclean spirit has been driven out, it comes back with seven worse ones, so that it is necessary to bless and pray, to call and wish that God would lift up His face over us, that is, to keep the light of His precious Word in our hearts and let it soar against the murderer and liar, the devil, who wants to suppress and dampen the same Word in us through murder and false doctrine.

18 And this third part of this blessing also comprehends two, namely. Lifting up of the countenance, and peace. For he desires not only that we be strengthened and comforted by the lifting up of his countenance against the devil, 2c, but that he also give us a peaceful heart and good courage in such struggle and turmoil, so that we may not only endure and finally succumb, but also have peace in the midst of the struggle and turmoil, praise and thank God, and not grumble nor become impatient against his divine will, as St. Paul says. Paul [Col. 3, 15] teaches: that peace should have the victory in our hearts, that we should do nothing against God or man through impatience, but both inwardly and outwardly, toward God and man, quietly and peacefully.

until the final and eternal peace comes.

19 This blessing is not far from the other common blessing given in the Latin language, which in German reads: God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit bless you, Amen. For to the Father is committed the work of creation, which this blessing of ours also touches, and expresses more clearly, as it says: "The Lord bless you and keep you," that is, he graciously gives you life and limb, and all that belongs to it. So, to the Son is assigned the work of redemption, which this blessing also touches and declares, saying, "The Lord make his face to shine upon thee," 2c., that is, he help thee from sins, and be gracious to thee, and give thee his Spirit. And to the Holy Spirit is assigned the work of daily sanctification, comfort and strength against the devil, and finally the raising from death, which this blessing also touches and declares, saying, "The Lord lift up his countenance," 2c., that is, he would strengthen and comfort thee, and finally give thee victory, as said above [§ 13 ff].

20. But the fact that God commands them to use His name over the children of Israel when they bless, is due to the fact that He wants to forbid the blessings of the idols, such as the god Baal, the god of Dan, and the like, with which the false prophets, under the appearance of the true God, used to bless the people, as one hears lamented from time to time in the prophets; just as in our country the priests and monks have blessed us by the holy names, as one finds in the collections, where they pray unashamedly: May God give us this and that for the sake of this and the saint. These are idolatrous prayers and blessings that are not made in the name of God alone, as they should be 2c.

# IV. Interpretations about the fifth book

## A. Luther's Notes on the Fifth Book of Moses. \*)

Presented to his monastic brothers from February 23, 1523 to the beginning of 1525. Published before May 1525.

Newly translated from the Latin.

### [Luther's dedicatory letter.]

Grace and peace to the venerable father and Lord in Christ, to the Lord Georg von Polenz, the righteous bishop of the church in Samland, to his father who is to be highly honored in the Lord Christ.

I have resolved, revered father, to dedicate the fifth book of Moses, which I have treated for my brothers in casual conversation at home, and which is to go out publicly at their request, to your name and to offer it to your reverence. This I have had in mind for a long time, but have been prevented by business; now at last I do it also through this Brie, since God has graciously permitted it; not thinking as if all that my humble self has attempted on the most distinguished and principal source (auctore) of all sacred books were of such a

great man, because the prestige and majesty of it should rightly deter me and any man from the interpretation, as it is written [Ps. 50, 16. Vulg.]: "To the sinner God has said: Why do you declare my rights?" But necessity and the consideration of salvation have forced me to submit to it, in order to learn and teach godliness and worship (religione).

But in order to finally show my heart's attitude towards you, I have taken this opportunity, so that I may at least somewhat belong to those who bear witness to your sincere faith in Christ and your active love for his brothers. So we believe, if the Lord should deign to do so

\*)This writing is a collection of the lectures on Deuteronomy, which Luther gave to his monastic brothers in the Augustinian monastery from February 23, 1523 onwards (Buchwald, Andreas Poach's Sammlung ungedruckter Predigten D. M. Luthers, p. XV1) until the first months of the year 1525 (Köstlin, Martin Luther, 3. Aufl., Vol. I, p. 615); it was published, with a dedication by Luther to Georg von Polenz, Bishop of Samland, who was fond of the Gospel and was responsible for its spread, in April 1525 at the latest, because the first reprint appeared in Strasbourger as early as May. The first edition appeared under the title: Dsutsronornion Lloss ourn unnotutionibus. LInrt. Dutor. IVittinbsrMS. 1525. After the dedication to Polenz follows another title: Dsutoronoruion ^loss sx Dbruoou oustiMtus ourn nnotnt. Murtini Dutsri. IVittorubsrMS 1524. at the end: VuittsrnborsMS, npnck Dobnnnsn Imkt. In the same year, reprints were published in Strasbourg by Johannes Knobloch (Nsns ZInjo) and in Basel by Adam Petri (Onlsnckis chuliis). A German translation was also published in the same year in Strasbourg (without indication of the printer) under the title: "Verzeychnungen über das Fünfft Buch Mose, Dsutsronoiniuiin genannt" 2c. In the collections Latin: Wittenberger (1549), Dorn. III, col. 14b, without the dedication; Jenaer (1603), Dorn. III, toi. 74b and Erlanger oxsZ- oxp., Dorn. XIII, p. 1. The arrangement of the text in the Wittenberg and Erlangen is such that the Latin text of the entire fifth book of Moses, improved from the Hebrew, precedes and is followed by the notes; in the Jena, however, the notes follow the text of each chapter. The dedication is also found in Latin in Aurifaber, vol. II, p. 285 and in De Wette, vol. II, p. 647. In German translation, the text is found in the Wittenberger (1556), vol. VIII, p. 149, without the dedication; in the Altenburger, vol. V, p. 1031; in the Leipziger, vol. IV, 92 and in Walch. In the German editions, of course, the printing of the text of the entire fifth book of Moses has been omitted. We give a new translation of this scripture according to the Erlangen edition, comparing the Wittenberg and Jena editions.

that, inspired by your so new and extraordinary (singulari) example, also some other bishops and princes may delight the Church of God with a new miracle, rejecting the statutes and human opinions, and accepting, honoring and spreading the pure Word of God, as their profession and office requires. For, praising the gifts of GOD in you, we do not praise you, but extol the glorious wonder of the grace of GOD, which, ivie we see, is strong, reigns, and triumphs in you, and hear it with joy that, as Amos speaks [Cap. 3, 12. As a shepherd snatches two knees or the lobe of an ear from the mouth of a wolf," so the Lord has chosen you alone among all the bishops of the earth and has delivered you from the jaws of the devil, which he has opened wide like hell and devoured them all. For we see nothing else in the other bishops (although I hope that there are still some people like Nicodeinus among them) than that, after the emperor and kings and princes have turned (subversis), they rage and rage against the returning or rather rising gospel, so that they may fulfill anew the word of the second Psalm [V. 2]: "The kings of the land rebel, and the lords counsel with one another against the Lord and His anointed," by which they at the same time cause God to fulfill in them what follows [v. 4]: "But He who dwells in heaven laughs at them, and the Lord mocks them. He will one day speak to them in his wrath, and with his fury he will terrify them."

But you have been given the very special and wonderful grace that you not only accepted the word and believed it, but also freely confessed it publicly, taught it and, according to your episcopal standing, saw to it that it was taught in your entire diocese (dioecesis), you also provided abundantly for those who work on the word: when the wicked see this, they are angry and gnash their teeth and harden themselves about it in vain. This grace that God has shown you, I could not pass over with silence, but had to apply it, as Paul does [1 Cor. 8, 1. ff.] with the Macedonians against the Corinthians, to every

I have not shied away from spreading, praising and singing your praises for the glory of God, for the spreading of the Gospel, for the growth of faith, for the consolation of the weak and of those who suffer in various places among us, for the uplifting of the fainthearted; finally also for the terror and disgrace of the enemies of the Word and of the idols who sit in the place of the bishops, who know nothing else nor can do anything else than to exercise tyranny over the wretched people. I have not been afraid to burden you with the hatred and envy of the other bishops, kings and princes by this praise, or even to put you in danger of your life, since nowadays no shameful deed is so great as this one, and is considered equal to the highest desecration of the sanctuary, namely that one confesses the Gospel of God, for the sake of which many have already shed their blood with the greatest constancy. Among these, especially Heinrich and Johannes stand out, who were burned to death by the Louvain Sophists, and after them our Heinrich von Zütphen, the evangelist of Bremen, who was killed by the Ditmar beasts not only with a fire or a kind of death. God knows what is still waiting for us, if we should otherwise be worthy to become comrades of them, and also to suffer disgrace for the sake of the name of the Lord. I say that I have not shied away from exposing you to this danger, since I am firmly convinced that He who honored you with the word of the cross will also strengthen you with the spirit of the cross, and will also triumph in your flesh, not only over the blasphemies of your name and the hatred and rage of the powerful in the world, but also over the powers and violence (if it should be necessary to suffer them) of Satan with his whole kingdom. For we know that he who is in us is greater than he who is in the world [1 John 4:4].

Moreover, so that this grace and gift of God would be even more abundant, the Lord has added this and provided it by His goodness, that you have a sovereign who loves the Gospel with all his heart, that famous hero Adelbert, from the lineage of the Margraves of Brandenburg, the Grandmaster



Prussia, which is given in the same spirit, to speak with the words of the prophet [Is. 32, 8.], to have princely thoughts. Thus it happens that under the Christian protection of both of you, the people of Prussia, who perhaps have never had the Gospel other than obscured or falsified, now, as it runs far and wide and produces fruit, hear it quite purely and clearly through the ineffable beneficence of God. For I believe that up to this time the Gospel has never come to Germany completely clear and shining in full light, although I do not doubt that the Lord has always known how to save His own everywhere, even in the midst of Sodom and Gomorrah. And behold the strange fate: to Prussia the gospel runs in full course and with full sails, where it was not called and where it was not sought, but in Upper and Lower Germany, where it came and arrived of its own free will, it is blasphemed with all fury and nonsense, pushed back and driven away, so that one can see fulfilled in this the remarkable (egregiam) fate of the gospel, of which Paul Rom. 10, 20. f. (Is. 65, 1. 2.) says: "I am invented by those who did not seek me, and I appeared to those who did not ask for me." But of Israel he says, "All day long I have stretched out my hands to the people who will not be told and who contradict, who walk in ways that are not good." But I will return to you.

Therefore, dear bishop (praesul), let this booklet be attributed to you, so that through you and in you Christ may be praised on this occasion, and at the same time, under your name, those may be served who have not previously understood the fifth book of Moses as well as it is given to me. For there are many, and among them some, who have made themselves believe that they are certainly the masters of all, who consider Moses and the whole Old Testament to be of very little value, since they think (velut) that one should be satisfied with the Gospel; from their opinion every Christian man should keep completely away. For it is certain that, just as the wise of the world say that Homer is the father of all poets, the source, indeed, a sea of all learning and wisdom and eloquence, so our Moses the

is the source and father of all prophets and holy books, that is, of heavenly wisdom and eloquence. But since at this time (hoc saeculo) everything is beginning to be restored, as if the day of the restoration of all things were at hand, I have come to undertake this, whether perhaps Moses also could be restored, and I could lead the little books back to the source. For it is very sweet and, both for the understanding and to support the memory, very convenient and useful to see the footsteps of the later prophets in Moses, as they have read him, learned him, taught him and had him in their hands day and night. From his cornucopia (copiae cornu) all their treasures are taken, so that they themselves can also say about him: Of his fullness and abundance we have all received, as he himself saw beforehand and foretold that it would come to pass, in his song [Deut. 32, 2.]: "Let my teaching drip like the rain, and my speech flow like dew" 2c.

But I have taken care that I first of all treat everything in the most simple way, and have not let myself be carried away to the (so-called) secret interpretations, if sometimes, as it seems to some, inconsistent and foolish laws occur. First of all, Moses teaches the right godliness by preaching the faith in detail and abundantly, with attached! very beautiful ceremonies, by which the ignorant people must be caught and held, so that they do not invent their own, which God hates. Then he has to deal with the order of the civil regime and the preservation of love among each other, by establishing everything with very appropriate and reasonable laws and making decrees about it. There is nothing foolish or void, but everything is necessary and useful, which will be easily understood by those who know what it means to hold the office of authority among a people that is very free (paulo liberiore) and wise in its own eyes, as this Jewish people was, where necessity not infrequently compels one to order and do and permit such things, which otherwise would be laughed at and ridiculed with good reason.

I also don't believe that GOd will come out of a

He said that he wanted to form this people by such ceremonies for another reason than because he saw that the great house of the people would be most moved and taken in by these larvae and outward appearances. In order that they should not be empty larvae and a mere spectacle, he added his word, as it were, as a weighty content and essence of the larvae, so that they would become serious and important (graves), and they [the Jews] would know that God himself liked what they [the ceremonies] contained, lest, if they set up others without the word itself, they should become mere games and buffoonery. Such are our ceremonies in the kingdom of Pabst, which are devised after the example of the Mosaic ones. Because these have no command in God's words, by which they become serious and important, they are nothing but quite meaningless and ridiculous imitation of the Jews.

However, I have subsequently also added short allegories, almost in every single chapter, not as if I cared much about it, but in order to forestall the foolish efforts of some who have a desire to deal with allegories, as we see in Jerome, Origen, and other ancient writers that they had a not at all happy and wholesome way of using all allegories.

They have been concerned only with allegories, i.e., with speeches about distant things (alieniloquia), so that readers might be deceived by a false pretense of allegories. In order that the readers may not be deceived with a false semblance of allegory, I have thought it worth the trouble to show them that they are rightly concerned with allegories when they find in them, as much as possible, the service of the Word or the course of the Gospel and of faith. For all the figures and meanings in the law and in the people of Moses, however many there may be, go to this.

But the Lord, who works all things in all, who has also begun his good work in you, keep you and let you increase, so that you may become a truly great bishop in the word of God even in this life, and in the life to come, when the arch-shepherd of shepherds and bishops will come, receive the unfading crown [1 Pet. 5:4]. To him, I pray, commit me in your holy prayer, and in his grace prosper you. Amen. Wittenberg 1525.

Your D. Martin Luther.

## Notes by M. Luther on the Fifth Book of Moses.

This book is called Deuteronomy, that is, the other law. For this is what Moses himself calls it in Deut. 17:18 ff, where he commands the one who would be king in Israel to take this other law from the Levites and read it every day, and in Deut. 31:10 ff he commands that it be read before all Israel for seven years at a time, when the year of Jubilee is celebrated, at the Feast of Tabernacles, in the place the Lord would have chosen.

But it is called the other, not because it is different from the one given on Mount Sinai, but because it has been repeated anew in a new covenant through the ministry of Moses before those who have the

The first time that the Lord's words were spoken in the wilderness, the first time that the Lord's words were spoken in the wilderness, the first time that the Lord's words were spoken in the wilderness, the first time that the Lord's words were spoken in the wilderness.

Therefore this book is a short epitome [of the books] of Moses and a summa of the whole law and the wisdom of the people of Israel, in which, with omission of that which concerns the Levites and the priests, only that is taught which is necessary for the people and the common people to know. And if you want to call this booklet really for our use, you can rightly call it an exceedingly rich and quite excellent interpretation of the holy ten commandments. If you know these, you will not lack anything that is necessary for the understanding of them.

It is necessary for the people to know the ten commandments. For it teaches this people to live rightly according to the Ten Commandments, both spiritually and physically, and orders the inner realm of the conscience, at the same time also the worldly rule concerning

The first is the way in which the goods are presented, and the second is the way in which the ceremonies are performed with divine fairness and wisdom, so that in the whole area of life there is nothing that is not ordered in the wisest and cheapest way.

# The first chapter.

## V. 1. 2. These are the words 2c.

This is a description of the land. The Hebrews use one and the same word "beyond" [XXXX, trans] when they want to say on that (ultra) or on this (citra) side of the Jordan, so that one can only judge from the position which the speaker and the hearer take whether one must say "beyond" or "this side".

Furthermore, a desert is called with them not because there are no people or things there, since in the Scriptures many cities which are situated in the desert are described, but because it is a woody place. The Hebrew XXXXX. is therefore correctly translated with "Gefilde", because it actually means a plain, where without forests and mountains flat areas (campi) extend far, from German: ein Feld. And see that Moses [4 Mos. 22, 1. 33, 48.] here makes "the fields of Moab" in the desert, by contrasting, as it were, the fields of the desert, as if it were a field in a wooded area (silvestribus).

"The red sea" it is called by the Greeks, but in Hebrew: the sea that is called, which is full of reed grass or rushes. It seems that Jerome [in the Vulgate translated the word XXXXX] wrongly: "Where there is a lot of gold", since it is more probable 1) that "Disahab" is the proper name of a place, which means abundance of gold. For also elsewhere the same man makes generic names out of proper names and vice versa. This mistake can easily occur in the Hebrew language.

But the following description of the country,

Since he says, "toward the Red Sea, between Paran and Thophel, Laban, Hazeroth and Disahab, eleven days' journey from Horeb, through the way of Mount Seir to Kadeshbarnea," let us leave it to the inhabitants of those places, so that we will not labor in vain over uncertain things.

## V. 3-5. And it happened in the fortieth year 2c.

This is the description of the time. The fortieth year here is the exodus from Egypt; in the eleventh month, ain first day of the month, namely at the end of the life of Moses, who should still be with them almost two months, in which he makes his will and tells them valet.

But notice this: "He spoke to the children of Israel all things as the Lord had commanded him. He speaks nothing but what the LORD commanded him, for he repeats it and inculcates it to the utmost, so that he teaches that one should speak nothing among the people of God but what one is sure is the word of God, yes, even that is not enough, that one is sure it is the word of God, but by the commandment of God each one must be compelled to proclaim the word of God, as he says here: "All that the LORD had commanded him." He does not say: what the LORD had inspired him with, as ungodly men vainly please themselves 2) because of the inspiration (afflatu) of the Holy Spirit, since they make themselves believe that they do not err in their essays and counsel. For what is said here: "It was Moses' task to interpret the law" also includes that he spoke nothing but what God commanded.

1) Instead of vero simitius in the editions we have assumed Vrsiniilius.

2; It seems to us that plaount is better read instead of placonilb. After that ww have translated.

## V. 6. The Lord our God spoke to us at Mount Horeb, saying: You have been long enough at this mountain 2c.

Here begins the narrative, in which he repeats the whole story beautifully and summarizes it briefly, citing the benefits and miracles of God and at the same time the works of ungodly men, so that he may praise the glory and honor of God, in order to entice the people, instructed by experience, to trust in the goodness of God and fear His wrath, so that they may in this way be sent to receive His law from the heart. For this is the very best preparation for hearing the law, and for stimulating the listener, which is done through the evangelical praise of God's mercy and wrath.

"Horeb" and Sinai are the same. Furthermore, Jerome is somewhat obscure here, since he says [v. 6.]: Sufficit vobis [It is enough for you], likewise [v. 7.]: Revertimini [Return]. For he does not command them to return, but after they had stayed at Sinai almost a whole year, during which they had received the law, built the tabernacle, and ordered the priesthood and the authorities for the right government of the people, When the people had been divided and numbered into bands and armies, and everything had been put in order, he commanded that they should set out in the second year, in the second month, and go in order and armed on a straight road to the land of Canaan, where they could come by the way of Mount Seir in eleven days. This is what he says here, "You have been long enough at this mountain; turn, and go, that you may come to the mountain of the Amorites." And so they departed and came to their twenty-third camp at Pharan or Kadesh, which is also called Zin, as the 4th book of Moses [Cap. 20, 1. and 3.], 36.] teaches.

## V. 7. f. To the mountain of the Amorite 2c. (Ad montem Amorraei).

Let it be said here once and for all for unlearned people that mountain (montem) here and at

1) According to the counting of the camps in the 33rd chapter of the 4th book of Moses, the twenty-first camp was at Kadesh after the exodus from Sinai [v. 16.s.

The word Ephraim is taken in similar passages, in which it indicates countries and peoples, for mountainous regions, or rather for a whole country in which there are various mountains. Therefore we often read: On the mountain Ephraim, on the mountain Juda. So also here: "The mountain of the Amorite." Then the singular Amorraeus stands for the plural or for the name of the people, not for a single person.

## V. 9-12. Then I spoke to you at the same time 2c.

Namely, while you were still at Mount Sinai (of which he had said [v. 6]: "The Lord spoke with us at Mount Horeb"). But he said this 2 Mos. 18, 14. on the input of Jethro, before they had received the law. Therefore this subject is set later in the narrative, which in fact happened earlier than the previous.

Dear one, note here that one looks around for persons and authorities rather than the laws are given, because laws are made in vain if the people are not there who administer and execute them; and at the same time that the authorities are an office which must bear the work, burdens and quarrels of the people, that they recognize themselves as a servant and do not consider themselves a master, as love requires. Those, however, who seek their benefit, idleness and rest in the magisterial office, wrongly bring it about that the people must rather serve them, and use the people's disadvantages for their own good will.

"Toil" [v. 12.] he calls the constant busyness and perpetual (paratam) affliction for the people to govern them, by which they [the rulers] are deprived of rest and repose.

He calls "burden" the exceedingly kind patience in bearing the weakness and uncouth customs of the people. If a person in authority is not gifted with this, and wants to enforce everything according to the severity of the law, he will rather spoil the people than raise them up. One must know the saying of the Emperor Frederick the Third: He who cannot see through the fingers cannot govern.

"Hader" are the trades that the people among

2) We have adopted xsrvarss with the Wittenberg and the Jena instead of parvorsii in the Erlanger.

In order to settle these, the authorities are necessary. Thus nothing comes from the people to the authorities but trouble, care, patience, complaint and work, as that Bias rightly said: Regiment shows what kind of man one is, yes, as the scripture says, they are called gods [Psalm 82, 6.], because they shall shine in completely divine virtues, far above the pale of men, because they shall blessedly provide for the weak and manifold common people (*varium corpus vulgi*) under the empire of Satan in hostile country.

The interpolated words [v. 11]: "The Lord make you many thousand times more" 2c., are also in use with us, and indeed even Christianly, where one says of children or of cattle, about which it is well: God keep you, or God bless you. Namely, this has been handed down from time immemorial, or taken from this example of Moses, where immediately after saying that the people were multiplied like the stars of heaven, he adds: "God make you much more," as if he feared a spell, as our women are wont to suspect when the little children are praised to their faces by someone.

#### **V. 13-16. Create wise men from among you 2c.**

The animals are governed by force and art. Men must be governed by wisdom and understanding, because man has his strength (*viaget*) in reason, which cannot be attained by putting a rope on him or thrusting a sword into him, but by the word, which comes to him through the ear; but when reason is taken captive by the word, the whole man is drawn and governed [and brought] whithersoever thou wilt.

And here you see that the authorities are to be chosen by the votes of the people, which also reason prescribes. Therefore also here the people is caught in this way by the word of Mosi, obeys willingly and praises Moshe. For that the authorities are imposed on the people against their will is dangerous or harmful. He calls them "well known people", because the people should know them, much

but more, because they are supposed to be people who are experienced and knowledgeable in things, so that you must understand that the "well-known" and the "knowledgeable" (*scientes*) people are the same. "Wise" are those who understand divine and human things, namely, who know the laws and rights and all that is necessary for the life of men. "Wise men" in Hebrew are called those who are observant and observe with keen judgment, or who have a watchful mind, so that they can make a right and sound judgment about all things, and understand what equity requires. For many things lead the wise astray if they are not also understanding, and many things deceive them if they are not experienced and knowledgeable.

So you see that in divine law no consideration is given to the rich, powerful, noble, strong, friends, in the administration of a magisterial office, as the world is wont to do, but to the wise, understanding and experienced, even if they are poor, despised and weak 2c.

And one has rightly (*sane*) raised the question whether it is better for a prince to be good but not understanding (*imprudens*), or for him to be understanding but at the same time also evil. Certainly Moses here requires both [that he be good and also understanding], however, if one cannot have both, it is better if he is wise and not good, than if he is good and not understanding, because a good [prince] absolutely does not rule in anything, but only lets himself be ruled, and that only by the very worst people. Even though a wise prince does harm to the good, he rules the bad at the same time, which is more necessary and suitable for the world, since it is nothing else than a great bunch of bad people. Moses also seems to approve this opinion here, since he first deals with the wisdom of the princes, and only afterwards with whether they are good.

#### **V. 17, 18: Do not look at any person; likewise, do not shy away from anyone's person.**

This is the highest and most difficult virtue of princes, namely equity and impartiality (*simplicitas*) in the court. For it is easy to judge the poor and the ignoble,

But to condemn powerful people, rich people, friends, to put blood relationship, honor, fear, favor, profit behind, and to look only at the matter, that is divine virtue. No prince does this who has not been made brave by the Holy Spirit through faith in God. That is why the world is full of princes, "but who will find one who is righteously pious?" says Solomon [Prov. 20:6]. How often this saying is repeated in the prophets, where they are accused of oppression and injustice against the poor, orphans and widows.

**For the office of judgment is God's.**

This passage is also strong for the civil authorities. For just as he says afterwards Cap. 32, 35, that vengeance is his, he also says here that judgment is his order. He says this for the comfort and admonition of the authorities, so that they may know that they are not doing their own thing, but God's, and that they may be sure that they are God's servants and are doing God's work and are in a blessed (salutis) state, so that they may dare to judge rightly and badly (simpliciter).

See also this, that before the law was given, he appointed judges to lay equity to our hearts. For the judges find living laws or the soul of the law. Therefore they are more and higher than the laws and also than the sword. Therefore, although they are to pass sentence according to the laws and execute it with the sword, they are to have both the law and the sword in their power, so that they do not use the laws against the laws, like those foolish people who stare unblinkingly at the law, do not look at the circumstances of the matter, and have only this in their mouths: Thus it is written, so let it be done. But of this elsewhere.

**V. 19-26 [v. 20] You have come to the mountain of the Amorites.**

Kadeshbarnea is near the land of Judah at noon. Therefore, when they had already reached the borders of the land of promise, Moses encouraged them and soothed their faith by repeating the promises.

so that they would go in without fear. But here faith falters, and unbelief overpowers the people, [us] to a miserable example, so that when they were already at the entrance of the land they were to take, they had to go back for punishment, and wander in the wilderness for thirty-eight years, until they all perished and no one entered, except Joshua and Caleb; only two of such a great number.

But this falling into unbelief began with a small and beautiful looking doubt, since they pretended that it was necessary to send scouts to explore the way; and they do not trust in the word of God, who had given them the promise, who had also led them through the Red Sea, where a way was impossible; as if he could not or would not also lead them in an open land well provided with ways. Thus do those distrust God in small things who had believed Him in great things, so that you may know that faith is not a work of free will, but of God's grace alone.

But this work of God is also wonderful, as are all His works. For the Jewish people had to fall, since they were already on the neck of the Amorites, so that the long-suffering of God would be praised, which would give those Gentiles, who were already to be killed, room for repentance, and they would be converted. Thus, with harm and danger for His own people, He also cares for the Gentiles, by striking the one, sparing the other, so that He may show that He is not only God of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles [Rom. 3, 29]. However, this kindness and long-suffering of God becomes a snare and an offense to the Gentiles because of their blindness, so that they harden themselves and add impenitence, so that the wrath and the righteous judgment of God must come upon them in multitudes [Rom. 2, 5].

For who doubts that the Amorites, when they saw that the enemy had retreated and perished in the desert, and that they were now safe and free, accepted this conviction that they had God for themselves as a fighter against their enemies? And this work of God will be a trap for them, so that they will be measured because of their merits, and the wrath of God will be far from their hearts.

to other peoples, so that they now continue in their sins without fear. This is what the Psalm [Ps. 66, 5. Vulg.] says: "He is terrifying in his counsel over the children of men," and we see here an example on both sides of what unbelief and the blindness of men do in the world.

In the fourth book of Moses, Cap. 13, 2. f., Moses writes that the spies were sent by order of the Lord. How then does he say here that they were sent at the urging of the people? The whole of Scripture is like this, that it wants to interpret itself by comparing the passages from everywhere with each other, and that it wants to be understood by being the master (magistra) alone. And this is the most certain way to investigate the meaning of the Scriptures, if one strives for the right meaning by comparing the passages and observing them closely. Thus Moses said above that he had said, as it were, of his own accord: "Create wise men from among yourselves", while according to 2 Mos. 18, 17. he said this at the suggestion of Jethro. So it is certain here that the spies were sent because the people in their unbelief insisted on it, and that the Lord saw their weakness and gave in, and so said to Moses, Deut. 13, 3: "Send" 2c.

But the people sinned through this anxiety, and they began to base themselves on human counsel, not on the word of God alone. That is why such a great fall followed this little doubt, and, as Paul says [1 Cor. 5:6], "a little leaven leavened the whole dough". Thus the serpent struck down Eve, who at first doubted only a little, and soon was completely struck down by the unbelief with which he corrupted the whole human race. The word of God and faith are not to be joked about.

**V. 27-33. The LORD is grieved for us 2c.**

Behold, what a great fall is finally brought about by that very slight beginning of doubt and reliance on human counsel.

For now they have completely forgotten all the promises and miracles of God, have drowned in their counsel alone, and have become worthy of hearing false messengers and preachers, and, as Paul says 2 Thess. 2, 11: "God sends powerful errors to those who have not believed the truth." Those preach greater things than the thing itself, and these believe it, and instead of the right word of God they base themselves on the lies of men.

Only now the walls are built up to the sky, now the people are big and high, now there are Enakim, now the land eats its inhabitants [4 Mos. 13, 33]. After the word of God is lost, unbelief rages, and in vain Joshua and Caleb inculcate in them the promise and truth of God. The godlessness wins, and the lie gets the upper hand, the truth is beaten to the ground. Here is the fruit of human prudence and virtue in divine things.

At last they proceed to blaspheme, saying, "The Lord is grieved with us." Now this is the gratitude for so many miracles that have been shown to them. And who can duly magnify this exceedingly wicked example of unbelief? Notice, then, that unbelief makes the dangers more and greater than they are, but it regards the word of God as nothing. On the other hand, godliness considers all, even the greatest dangers, to be nothing, and considers the word of God to be a power of God, Rom. 1, 16, as Moses also says here [v. 29]: "Fear not" 2c., promising God's power and repeating the past examples to build up their faith, and contends powerfully by the word of God; but he does not judge anything.

Note: If Moses, who was equipped with so many words and signs of God, is not believed, but is forced to abandon the whole people to unbelief, why are we surprised that few believe us today, and the whole world rages in unbelief? Out of such a great number, only two adhere to Moses; yet even then he does not desist, or leave the ministry of the word and cease to be their leader (ducatus), but preaches in vain to the unbelievers. This is a great history and an excellent example of the divine word.

1) We have adopted with the Wittenberg and the Jena "SN8NIN instead of sensus in the Erlanger.

and human counsel, in which one can see how the almighty power of the Word stands in the world.

**V. 34-39. But when the Lord heard your cry, he was angry and swore 2c.**

From this passage is taken the verse in the 95th Psalm [v. 11]: "I swore at them in my wrath" 2c., and the example of this history is gloriously acted in the epistle to the Hebrews. But what is it that Moses [v. 37] says that the Lord was also angry with him for the sake of the people, since he had deserved this through his own sin, as is written in Numbers 20:12? Of course, he is hinting at a secret here. But according to the history I understand it in such a way that Moses, caused by the fact that he had to govern such a rebellious and unbelieving people, finally fell into unbelief, and he describes this here in such a way that the anger of the Lord struck him for their sake.

But this again is written for our learning and comfort, that we may not despair when we have sinned, since in this temptation not only many of the people, no doubt great and holy men, have fallen, but also that excellent man and exceedingly great leader of the people, Moses, together with his holy brother Aaron, that we may fear the Lord and mistrust Him, since we are all that we are by His power alone.

**V. 40. But you turn and go 2c.**

This is the plague, that they are forced to go back from the entrance into the land to the Red Sea, not to Egypt, but to the desert, so that they would be destroyed there in thirty-eight years.

**V. 41-46. We have denounced the Lord, we want to go up 2c.**

This one passage would be enough to refute free will, that we could know that nothing else is good for anything but what God works in us, as He says here [v. 42]: "For I am not among you." For what do they omit here that human counsel and strength can do? They have remorse, it does them

They are ready, they take up arms, they go up, and there is absolutely nothing lacking here that man can do. And yet, not only is it useless, it does no good, but it is also forbidden and condemned. Likewise, even after the punishment, and after they have suffered the defeat and weep and lament, he does not accept them, although they did so without hypocrisy out of all the powers of free will. But because they presumed to serve and please God by themselves and their work, and to deserve grace according to equity or justice (*de congruo aut condigno*), and did the works that were chosen by them, not commanded by God, they did everything in vain.

But this too was done to harden the Amorites, so that by multiplying their sins they hastened their downfall, since they came out victorious and believed that GOD was favorable to them. And behold the unsearchable judgments of GOD: to his people, who are presumptuous of their own strength, he allows nothing to go out happily; he allows them to be defeated and beaten, as if he were not their GOD; But the enemies, the Amorites, who trust in their own strength, he allows to be fortunate and victorious, so that you may know that it is more to be feared and a conspicuous sign of the constant wrath of God, when the wicked prosper in his way and gain victory in things that God has neither commanded nor works, but which he arranges according to his own counsel and in his own strength, as God has hitherto allowed to those who have been fortunate in their deceitfulness with human statutes.

**Of the secret dentitions (mysteriis) in this chapter.**

What I have often reminded elsewhere, I repeat here and want to remind again that the Christian reader, above all, applies his effort well by seeking the so-called literal sense, which alone is the whole essence of faith and Christian theology, which alone stands firm in tribulation and temptation, and overcomes the gates of hell with sin and death, and triumphs to the praise and glory of God. The



But allegory is often uncertain and unreliable and not at all certain to support faith, since it often depends on human guesswork and opinion. If someone relies on it, he relies on the cane of Egypt. Therefore, one should beware of Jerome, Origen and similar fathers, or read their writings with free judgment, yes, also of the whole Alexandrian school, of which the Jew Philo mentions (as Eusebius and Jerome testify) that it once excelled in such efforts for allegories. For the example of these, which has been praised and accepted too much, later writers have imitated in an unfortunate way, and at their discretion made and taught everything from the Scriptures, until some have drawn the words of God on the most incongruous oddities (*monstra*), and, as Jerome also complains about his time, bring the Scripture with itself in contradiction by inappropriate (*incongrua*.) testimonies; of which misdeed he himself was also guilty.

Such people are those who nowadays interpret almost all the Scriptures of the Holy Virgin, where they find only one word that is of the female gender; Likewise, those who build monasteries out of the little town of Martha, make *magistros nostros* of the strong in Israel in the high schools, and similar, innumerable sillinesses (*portenta*), until at last one is found who has applied the whole *Metamorphoses* of Ovid to Christ, about which Jerome is justly indignant in the Epistle to Pauline, and calls them *circulatores*.

Therefore, Paul's rule must be followed here, that allegories should be regarded as something subordinate (*secundo loco*), and that they should be used to strengthen, adorn, and emphasize (*locupletanda*) the doctrine of faith, or, as he says in 1 Cor. 3, 11. f., that they are not the foundation, but are built upon the foundation, not as hay, wood, and stubble, but as silver, gold, and precious stones. This happens when prophecy, as Rom. 12, 7. prescribes, is similar to faith.

1) Luc. 10, 38. stands the word *oustünui*, which is, a fortified town. In Greek which is translated in our Bible by "market".

is that you take a certain saying before you that is found somewhere in Scripture, which is acted upon in the literal sense, and only then apply your allegory, which comes to the same thing (*idem sonantem*), not as if the allegory should prove or support the saying, but that it should be proved and supported from the saying, just as a building does not support the foundation, but is supported by the foundation.

In order for us to be able to allegorize safely, Paul has preceded us in 2 Cor. 3, 7. ff. where he deals with the whole of Moses in a very rich allegory by comparing the clarity of the face of Moses with the clarity of the face of Christ. According to this example, you can make an allegory in the right way by making the office of the law and sin and death out of Moses, just as the office of the gospel, grace and life out of Christ, as Paul teaches beautifully in the fourth and eighth chapters of the letter to the Romans. Furthermore, Paul makes of the One Face of Moses 2) one that can be seen in two ways, one veiled and one revealed. The veiled one he attributes to those who are only brought to works and hypocrisy by the service of the law. These never understand the power of the law, but their hearts remain blinded by the reading of the Old Testament, so that they neither recognize the glory of Christ nor sigh for it. He attributes what is revealed to those who do not do works through the law, but recognize sin and are killed, so that they long for grace.

The description of the place and the description of the time means the place itself, where the law is taught, that is, the people of the law, namely the synagogue, to which all words are appropriate, which Moses puts here, namely: 1. "Beyond the Jordan", that is, since one has not yet passed from the law to grace, the gospel is also not yet taught publicly. 2. "In the regions of Moab," because there is the people who boast that they come from the fathers. For "Moab" means from the father. "We are Abraham's seed," they say. And "the fields

2) Instead of *Lloss* in the Erlanger and the Jenaer is to be read with the *Wittenberger Llosi*.

Moab" are what they have from the fathers, namely the name, the customs, the goods, the lineage and the promise of things to come. 3. "In the wilderness," because it is a barren and uncultivated people, when compared with the revelation of grace. 4. "Against the Red Sea" because this people has an abhorrence of the cross and the killing of the old man who was drowned in that sea. (5) Paran means boasting and glorying, and comes from the Hebrew, for this is what the generation of hypocrites is wont to do. (6) Tophel means falling, because they fall more and more every day, and it becomes worse with them, as the Christians are renewed every day. (7) Laban means white, indicating their beautiful appearance of godliness. (8) Hazeroth means courts, because the righteousness of the law is in the flesh by heart, and is never admitted to the sanctuary of the Spirit. 9. disahab is abundance of gold; the righteousness of works swallows up the riches of the world. (10) Eleven days' journey is but one removed from twelve; for the ministry of the law is very near to the apostolic ministry of the gospel, and yet it is distant from it. 11. "The way of the mountain Seir" is the way of the laborers of the law, which is hard, mountainous, and rough, and "Seir," that is, full of brushwood; but the way of Christ is lovely, easy, and pleasant in the spirit of grace. 12. "The kings of the Amorites," who are slain beyond Jordan, mean that through the ministry of the law of God the efforts of men are outwardly rejected, and that they boast of the law of God alone, but still cannot reach it in spirit. For "Amorite" means an eloquent or garrulous man, namely philosophy and human theology, whose first king is "Sihon", that is, a desolator, because this kind of teacher devastates the Scriptures of GOD in an unbelievable way with various interpretations (aequivocationibus) and perverting the words to their opinion. The city "Hesbon", which in Hebrew means arts and reason, or everything that is conceived by reason and art, undoubtedly denotes the rational (rational) wisdom and (like

one says) verbose (verbosam) theology, which is imputed to the words of God; which makes godless Amorites, that is verbose seducers, and devastates everything, as then the Pharisees, and as now the high schools and the papacy do. The other is "Og", which is a cook who takes care of the belly. "Bashan" means fatness, because the kingdom of the Amorites with its godlessness and talkativeness deserves riches and abundance for the belly, as the examples are before our eyes.

"Ye are long enough" 2c. (V. 6.). That here the Lord commands that they should go from KadesBarnea to the land of promise means that another doctrine would be, that of the Gospel, to which the Law and the Prophets bear witness, to which the Jews were to enter at the time of the New Testament. For "Kades" means something holy, "Barnea" a wandering or unstable son, as the people are, who trust in a worldly sanctuary and in uncertain works, but never have rest in their conscience. Therefore, this word was fulfilled at that time when John the Baptist and Christ began to teach that they should move from the righteousness and holiness of the flesh into the kingdom of God, saying [Matt. 3:2], "Repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand," that is, the right land of promise.

This is where the wretched apostasy of the unbelieving synagogue begins, and all the disputatious men die under the wrath of God, as the epistle to the Hebrews treats in a dignified manner by giving this example of the unbelief of those who did not want to enter into the rest of God, pointing fingers, as it were, at KadesBarnea, the restless holiness. But the Jews did just this also in the whole time of the law, as often as they did not believe the holy prophets who commanded them to go out from Kadeshbarnea to the true righteousness, to the righteousness of faith; but especially this happened under Christ.

"The spies" who were sent out were the masters and teachers of this people who saw the glory and riches of the promise, but through distrust and out of fear of the cross and unwillingness to accept the

They went back to kill the flesh and turned the people away from the faith by ungodly teachings. Even during the whole time of the synagogue, they did not go in themselves, and resisted those who wanted to go in: There are giants, enakim, fortified and

large cities, a great and tall people. So the Jews said [Joh. 11, 48.]: "Lest the Romans come and take away our land and people", because they fear the power of the world. What "Enakim" and others are, we will see hereafter.

## The second chapter.

### V. 1-6. And compassed the mountain Seir a long time 2c.

This is (as he himself says in the text) thirty-eight years, so that the godless murmurers would perish gradually and the Gentiles would be given room to repent, and the unbelieving Amorites an annoyance, that they would be hardened by this weakness of God's people. But this journey was in stony Arabia (for Idumea is the largest part of it) from Kades-Barnea at the border of the promised land in the south to the Red Sea; after that, after a long journey, they turned back to the east to the Moabites. Then follows:

"Ye have now compassed the mountains enough; turn ye toward the north," [v. 3.] namely, leaving the Edomites on the left, and the Moabites and Ammonites (who dwell east of the promised land) on the right, so that they turned straight way northward to the Amorites, but afterward, when the Amorites were conquered, turned westward, and passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan, as may be well seen in the map (tabula). But Moses writes in this place that the three nations, the Edomites, the Moabites and the Ammonites, were exempted by the Lord, while he says in Numbers 20:21 that the Edomites forcibly prevented Israel from passing through. But this happened in different places. What is written in the fourth book of Moses happened in Kadesh, on the border of Edom and the Amorites, where they could cross over to the Amorites by a short way. But the

The Lord made it so that the Edomites refused. In this passage he writes about the border of the Edomites and Moabites, after the very long detour in the mountains of Edom, through the way of the Red Sea, where those nations, already frightened by the miracles and the power of God, which had been shown in Israel, needed the protection of God. But the Lord took care of them because of what their fathers Lot and Isaac had earned, who had believed in God, so He did not want their name to be blotted out.

But sweetly and kindly he commands that they not raid and plunder the Edomites, inculcating and telling them of the benefits and promises God has received:

### V. 7-23 For the LORD your God has blessed you 2c.

As if he wanted to say: It is not necessary for you to be full of worry or stingy, and do not let it be burdensome for you to buy from them what is necessary for you, because you have superfluous that you can buy 2c.

Notice, however, that the history of this people, when viewed in detail (in specie), seems to be like the pagan histories, for in the same way victory and defeat alternate, soon there is abundance and soon there is lack, and even if miracles are shown so often, God hides himself so much that it seems as if everything is governed by human cleverness and chance. Without a doubt, this is how it appeared to all the godless pagans, which is why they set themselves against them and acted against them as if there were no God.

God would be in Israel. Therefore, 1) the histories of this people must be separated from all the histories of the Gentiles as far as heaven is from earth. In the histories of the Gentiles one can see either the greatness or the littleness of the works, but in this one only this one thing is to be admired and revered, namely the word of God, by whose guidance and according to whose will everything is carried out and happens. Yes, they are truly called holy histories, not because those things are done by holy people, but because they are done according to the holy word of God, which sanctifies all things, and in his holy name and in God's stead.

Therefore, although the deeds of all pagans are also nothing but miracles and works of God, they do not have the testimony of God's word and pleasure. Therefore, their things and histories are only testimonies (*testes*) of God's wrath, very terrible manifestations of God's terrible judgment. Therefore, the histories of the whole world, if taken in a heap, are incomparably less than a single one, and that is the very least history of this people. And that is why the arrogant and carnal people are deceived by the simplicity of the things in the Scriptures, because they do not take God's word into consideration and only take the things into account.

"He knoweth thy way" [v. 7. Vulg.] is a figure of speech (idiom) peculiar to the Hebrew language, as Ps. 1:6: "The LORD knoweth the way of the righteous"; Matt. 25:12: "Verily I say unto you, I know not your way." This is a word of excellent consolation, by which faith is kindled, as we say in German, "Er nahm sichs an," he recognized it and made it his concern, so that it denotes the heart rather than the mind, as is implied by the word-formation and the words of this sacred language. For if you show by deed that you know or do not know someone, then in truth it can be said of you that you know him or you do not know him.

"Elath" and "Ezeongaber" [v. 8] are cities of the kingdom of Edom, situated at the Red Sea, which are also famous in the holy scriptures. "Ar" [v. 9] is the capital of the Moabites, like Rabbah that of the Ammonites, and Sela, that is stone, that of the Edomites, from which the stony Arabia has its name. Further, Moses here makes a distinction among the giants, who in Hebrew are called by a common name Rephaim (XXXX). Those who were driven out of the mountains of Seir by the Edomites he calls "Horites" [v. 12.]; the Moabites called theirs, whom they had driven out, "Emim" [v. 10. f.], the Ammonites theirs "Sammesumim" [v. 20.], the Cananites theirs "Enakim" (v. 10.). Therefore the same tyrants were called by different names by different people. With this agrees Gen. 14, 5. where he mentions that by the king of the Elamites the giants were defeated in Astharoth (which later belonged to the kingdom of Ogs in Bashan), and the Susin and Emim and Horites on their mountain Seir. Likewise Gen. 6, 4. he calls the giants before the flood Niphlim.

But the Rephaim have their name from healing (XXX), namely because those noblemen and heroes of the country also wanted to be called fathers of the fatherland and saviors. Emim comes from XXX, which means terror; they are called terrible and fearful people, because they rage with violence and weapons. Horites (XXX) are called noble, distinguished, shining (*candidi*), the best (*optimates*), of the white color (*candore*), either because the princes in the Orient wear white clothes, like the Latins wear the state dress (*trabea*.) and purple, or because they are handsome before others. Sammesumim comes from m, which means crime or shameful deed, namely because they were outstanding murderers and robbers, and subordinated everything to themselves as they pleased. Enakim comes from wearing a necklace, as if they had been provided with a necklace (*torquati*). Niphlim comes from fall (XXX), because they invade, prostrate and oppress by force.

Of that Moses writes that the "Avim" [v. 23.] were driven out of Hazerim by the Cappadocians, One does not know for certain what he

1) Here begins the postscript to the prefatory sentence begun in the beginning of this paragraph: "although the history of this people" 2c. Here, instead of "therefore" (*läso*), "nevertheless" (*bumsn*) should be placed.

unless he sets an example by which he wants to show that when the Lord commands and changes the kingdoms as he wills, one people drives out the other, so that he is God not only of the Jews but also of the Gentiles, as he says here [v. 9, 19]: "For I have given it to the children of Lot to possess," and [v. 5]: "To Esau I have given the mountain Seir." For that almost all here make the Cappadocians out of "Caphthorim," I know not whether they are guided by the resemblance of the name, since the Cappadocians are in Asia; unless they mean that only a small crew of the Cappadocians broke out against the Avim. Furthermore, those whom Jerome calls Avim (Έvαιοs) are not the Hevites (Hevæi) in the land of Canaan, which were handed over to the children of Israel, because these are called Hivi (XX) in the XXX, written with n, but those Avim (XXX), written with X. With this name Jos. 18, 23. also a city in the tribe Benjamin is called. "Hazerim" but seems to be the same as Hazeroth, one of the storehouses, Num. 33, 17. of which ersuch said above Cap. 1, 1. "Gaza" is certainly the city in Palestine. So it seems that the Avim dwelt between the land of Canaan and Egypt, at the back of Mount Seir or Arabia, adjoining the Midianites.

#### **V. 24. Go over the brook Arnon.**

Everywhere the words read as if "Arnon" was the name of a brook, although Jerome says it was the name of a high rising rock between the Moabites and the Amorites. If this is true, then the brook must have been in the cave under the rock, to which Moses also alludes in 4 Mos. 21, 28. where he tells that one sang in the folk song: "The fire has devoured the citizens of the height Arnon", and at the end of this chapter [V. 36.] he seems to separate "the brook" from "Arnon", since he says of the city, which lies at the brook, and does not add "Arnon".

#### **V. 24. 25. Behold, I have given Sihon into your hands 2c.**

The promise is renewed, and God's word is sent ahead, according to whose command and direction the matter is to be carried out in faith.

not by presumption or human counsel, as we have said. But it is a glorious promise that the king Sihon is given into their hands, so that they are sure of victory, and not only this, but that he predicts that also the terror of the name of Israel will come upon all nations, so that they can be sure everywhere that there will be no enemies either from the side or from the back to come to the aid of the Amorites, and that the Israelites should not care about anything but how they kill the Amorites.

#### **V. 26-29. Then I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth.**

"Kedemoth" is listed in Jos. 13, 18. among the cities of the tribe of Reuben, although others want to infer from this passage that it is also the name of a desert. But I believe that Moses wants to say: I have sent messengers from the desert, which belongs to the city Kedemoth, so that it is only the name of the city, namely that Moses wants, he was not in the city, but in the desert near the city, namely in the beginning of the area of the Amorites.

But you see here that peace is also offered first to the enemies, of whom 5 Mos. 20, 16. is commanded that they should be completely destroyed, so that everything is killed, which is why the whole community (vulgus) in the book of Joshua Cap. 9, 18. grumbled against the rulers, because they had made a covenant with the Gibeonites. This must therefore be understood in such a way that they first had to offer peace to all; whoever rejected it was to be killed; but those who surrendered were to become interest-bearing [Deut. 20:10 ff].

#### **V. 30-35. The LORD your God hardened his spirit.**

Here the glory and power of the free will is praised, namely that it is nothing but nothing, as it is also said in Rom. 1, 24: "God has given them over to the desires of their hearts," and Cap. 9, 18: "He stifles whom he wills. So if he is able to do anything, let him do it, so that he will not be hardened by the Lord. But to harden means to allow the hearts to be stiff, proud, and

and become secure, or be not afraid, that they may be presumptuous of all things, fearing neither wrath nor judgment.

**V. 36. 37. From Aroer, which is on the user of the stream near Arnon.**

He mentions two cities, Aroer, which is situated higher than the bank of the brook (super ripam), the other one at the brook. I understand this to mean that Aroer was on the summit of Mount Arnon, as Jerome says; this mountain has a stream flowing down the valley to it, on which the other city was located. But Aroer he [Moses] gave to the tribe Gad, Jos. 13, 24.

Notice here how there seems to be a great lie in Moses. The king Sihon had only a kingdom so large that two tribes, Reuben and Gad, took it, that is, a people about six times smaller than that of Moses. What a glorious victory, then, that such a numerous people should have been able to take the kingdom.

people of Israel overcame such a small nation? What need was there here of the promises of God? or where is here the so beautiful appearance of a great miracle? But, as I have said, for these forty years he had humbled his people in the wilderness, and had ruled them, as it were, as a fugitive; after that he had permitted them to be smitten at times by the Amalekites and Canaanites. Therefore the enemies, the Amorites, were puffed up and forgot themselves to defeat them with small crew. Meanwhile, however, the people of God had learned to rely on the power of God alone. This is how the Lord always governs His people, so that it seems as if they are completely defeated and their enemies have completely gained the victory, and this is how He fulfills His miraculous deeds.

We have seen the secret interpretations of the kings and the names in the first chapter. And the killing certainly means the killing of sin by the word of God.

## The third chapter.

**(V. 1-17. [V. 2. Fear not 2c.] 1)**

Again, a promise is made beforehand, when they are to fight with Og, the king of Bashan, so that the history may be sanctified by the word of God, and the cause may be directed by the wisdom of God alone. Everything else is clear, for the names of the places and the mountains, Argob, Bashan, Gilead, Hermon, which is also called Sirion and Senir [v. 9], and the rest also occur very often in the following books.

King Og must have been a particularly large giant, who alone, even after he had heard that king Sihon was defeated, dared to fight with the Israelites, did not come to the aid of king Sihon, namely because he trusted in the size of his strength, as it is written here that he was nine cubits 2) long. And

1) Inserted by us.

2) A cubit is the measurement from a man's elbow to the tip of his middle finger, which is a foot and a half long.

Without doubt, not only was he so great, but his kingdom was ruled by such giants, each of whom presumed to kill many of Israel, as they say of "Enak's children" (Enakim) in Numbers 13:34: "Compared to them, we appeared as locusts." If the Enakim were many, it is believable that the giants of King Og were also many, so that the work of faith in the people of Israel and the wonders of God's promise would be the more conspicuous. For under Saul all the Israelites fled from One Giant, which Og also hoped would happen here, and it would have happened if the faith of the people and the true promise of God had not worked a miracle.

That which we have interpreted: Sub scatebris Pisga [unler den Quellen Pisga^, has Jerome: Ad radices Phasga [at the foot of Phasgah] and reads in Hebrew: Affedoth Pisga. And it is not yet certain whether it is a proper name or a generic name, although I am inclined to think that I almost believe it is.

It would like to be the name of a city, moved by Jos. 13, 20 [Vulg.], where among the cities of the tribe of Reuben Assedoth Pisgah is enumerated, that is, Assedoth at the foot of the mountain Pisgah. But also Jerome says in the book "of the Hebrew localities" (locis) that it is the name of a city. Otherwise it means gushing water, springs, outpouring.

#### **V. 18-20. Now therefore go armed before your brethren, the "children" of Israel.**

This he says to those of the tribe of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh. But this reads as if he wanted them to wage war out of their strength. But this is done so that there may be room for faith and the divine promise, and so that God may not be sorely tried. For although God creates, nourishes, sustains and governs all the children of men, He does not want anyone to be idle, but has given the members by which one is to beget, nourish and govern the other, by which God is given the opportunity to create, nourish and govern, so that it may be perceived by faith that the hidden power of God works everything under the human work, and the unbelievers are deceived, who only look at the work of man and do not know the power of God.

So also here they are commanded to use weapons, and yet they are forbidden to trust in weapons. They go along in God's works with their powers, and yet they are not presumptuous of their powers. What, then, where faith and the Word prevail, are human powers but a kind of larvae of God, under which, hidden, he works his wonders, while by the weakness of them he challenges against himself the trustworthy, the strong, the wise, and the holy? and when they have begun, he soon destroys them, and triumphs over them, and makes a public display of them [Col. 2:15]. Blessed is he whose members and arms serve God in this way! Yes, he who recognizes that God's power and wisdom is such, trusts completely, not in the larva of God, but in the word, which is mighty under the larva.

and is able and does great things, yes, all in the Lord. Thus it will happen that he will be able to walk freely and securely, far from (in medio) presumption and despair, so that he will not tempt God, since he has what he can use, nor despair if he lacks what he could use. For God, who works with him among the things he has, will also work with him without these things when he has nothing, so that in this way he has neither abundance nor more when everything is present, nor lack or have less when everything is lacking. For he has GOD on both sides, as Paul [Phil. 4, 12.] says: "I have learned to have abundance, I have learned to suffer lack" 2c. But the ungodly are puffed up by the goods at hand; if they lack, they are beaten down, because they alone grasp the larva of goods; the rest, who will not use what is given them, tempt GOD.

#### **V. 21-29. And Joshua I commanded 2c.**

He repeats the promises of future victories and the appointment of a leader, and at the same time he inculcates the past in order to strengthen their faith both by the promise of future things and by the reproach of the past, since he himself was not to go over the Jordan with them, nor could he obtain this from the Lord through his supplications. And so in this chapter he concluded the story he had begun, in which he briefly repeated the entire history. In the following chapter he begins to exhort and interpret the law, and Deuteronomy begins.

But why is Moses not heard, since it is likely that he prayed in the spirit? This is written for our example and comfort. For although the Lord does not hear him, because of which Moses realized that he was angry with him, as he says here, yet he does not leave him and commands him to go up to the mountain and see the land, and to give the command to Joshua. So we too should not be surprised if we are not heard, since we do not know how to pray, but at the same time we should also look at

Do not doubt in any way that we are pleasing and dear to God, and take hold of His goodness under wrath, so that we will not be despondent.

**Secret interpretation.**

The fact that Moses does not cross the Jordan into the promised land, but is commanded to leave this to another leader, is the great secret that, as it says in the letter to the Hebrews [Cap. 7, 19], the law could not make anything perfect. For the law also does not give the spirit of grace, therefore it does not lead into the kingdom of God, where the right inheritance of the Lord is. Moses indeed kills two kings on the other side of the Jordan, that is, the law humbles sinners and shows that they are killed, and leaves nothing alive, that is, no trust in any thing, for it leads to hell and is an office of death, but leaves the cattle and goods unharmed, which become a prey. For the law does not kill a man bodily, but only the confidence of the heart; when this is killed, all that the man

is and has, into the service of the law as a bark, and it lives the wretched man with all his powers as a prisoner of the law.

But because it does not preach the forgiveness of sins, which it has stirred up through its service, it must die in the land of Moab outside the kingdom of God. For it is not fitting that the people of freedom should be taught the constraint of the law that kills, but the gift of the Spirit that gives life. Therefore, the whole law falls here, so that nothing is left of it, so that even man does not know where it is buried.

Joshua, who means Christ both in name and in deed, although he was a servant of Moses, nevertheless, after his master died, he leads the people in and distributes the inheritance of the Lord. Thus Christ, who was first put under the law, served it for us; but at last, when it came to an end, he instituted another ministry, that of the gospel, by which we are led by him into the spiritual realm of a happy and secure conscience toward God, where we reign forever.

**The fourth chapter.**

**V. 1. And now hear, O Israel, the commandments and the statutes 2c.**

After the narration and short repetition is finished, he has addressed an exhortation to the hearers of the law in this chapter, which he will begin in the following chapter. But it is a very rich exhortation and, as is the nature of this language, also in many words. For here, as elsewhere, he repeats it so often that if a carnal reader were present who did not understand what it was about, he would be annoyed. But it comes to us to hold down our displeasure, because we know that it is God's words that we hear. But to hear God is blessedness, even if He speaks one and the same syllable over and over again, how much more so if He speaks so many and so diligently? Therefore, it is due to us,

to pay attention with fear not only to the words, but much more and above all to the person of the one who speaks, namely God.

But this frequent repetition serves that we, who because of our flesh always fall, are always cold and lazy to do good, always inclined and disposed to evil from our youth, may constantly have a disciplinarian and driver who keeps sin in check. At the same time, this shows the actual nature (virtus) of the law, to which it is peculiar that it persists, presses, and, until grace comes to the rescue, does not cease from weariness, accusation, condemnation, as the apostle says [Rom. 4:15]: "The law only causes wrath."

In Hebrew there are about six or seven words for law: XXXXX, XXXXX,XXXX XXXX, xxxx, xxxxxx.



Firstly XXXX actually denotes the law, and has its name from teach (XX), therefore it is called teach.

XXX is a commandment, as is often read in Moses, "As the LORD commanded me."

refers to ceremonies, and I like that. For actually it means the custom and the manners in holy things, which I call commandments (statuta), as in the 2nd Psalm, v. 7.1 will tell the commandment of the Lord", where in Hebrew it is said: "I will preach the custom and the statute", namely the new way and the right ceremony, which is to believe in Christ, the Son of God, as follows there, in whom all (omnes omnium) ceremonies are fulfilled, and to whom they refer.

XXX, that is actually what the Latins call mandatum, in German: "befehlen". For the verb XXX means to visit, to appoint, to order, to judge (censere) and to command in general. Hence in the 109th Psalm, V, 8th, XXXX, which is called in Greek XXXXXXX or xxxxxx.

"And his bishopric shall another receive" [Acts 1:20], that is, the office or government commanded him. Our translator renders it almost everywhere by justification.

XXXX is testimony that God testifies by His law and word that He is present and cares for us, so that we have an awareness (conscientiam) of God, whom we otherwise neither see, nor feel, nor recognize.

XXXXX translate it constantly by judgment, and not badly, only that it is necessary to know how far this word extends in Hebrew. For it likewise signifies the office or administration of justice, as in the first Psalm, v. 5: "The wicked shall not stand in judgment," where some would say, in regiment. Likewise in the 72nd Psalm, v. 1. "GOD, give thy judgment to the king." Hence also the book of judges has its name, which in Latin would be called the book of princes, of regents, of chiefs (consulum) or of persons in authority. Likewise Ps. 110, 6: "He will judge among the nations", that is, he will

1) sk instrusão . . vocAtur instrumsiitum.

rule. Secondly, it denotes the work itself and the execution of the judgment. Therefore the word is found everywhere in the Scriptures: to establish judgment and justice [Ps. 103, 6.]: "The Lord establishes judgment to all who suffer injustice," and [Ps. 17, 2.]: "From your face come my judgment," and: "He has spoken judgments with him."

Finally, it actually means what is called in Latin jurisprudence, namely, the laws by which men come to the settlement of their disputes among themselves in civil life in worldly affairs (disponuntur), hence it is also more often taken for custom and usage than, for the law of nations or natural law, as 2 Mos. 22, 17. "According to the law of daughters he shall deal with her," 2) and Ps. 119, 132. "As thou wilt do (secundum iudicium) to them that love thy name." This broad meaning of the word creates obscurity and ambiguity everywhere in Scripture. Therefore, it is necessary to be careful.

XXXXX means to observe something (observantiam) or to pay attention to it (custodiam), namely a general name that goes beyond all those mentioned before, indeed, if we look at it closely, there will be only two or three words that actually denote the law, namely rPn and XXXX, commandment (statutum) and law, one of which teaches that by which we are instructed (ordinamur) to behave rightly toward God, namely XXX, the other that by which we are instructed to behave rightly toward men, namely XXXX. And these two are sufficient, and this difference seems to me to be proven and constant. For thus also Moses begins in this chapter, "Hear the commandments and the statutes which I teach you," comprehending with these two words, as it were, everything, as if to say: I will teach you how to live rightly before God and man.

Now the other words are all general, indicating the meaning (vim) and essence of the commandments and the rights, namely XXXX that they instruct and instruct us, 3) so that

2) In the Jenaer it says: kamt instead of: kamst.

3) Instead of instruiert and sruäint in the Erlanger is to be read with the Wittenberger and the Jenaer iustruant and sruäiaut.

that we are not animals and act in darkness. XXXX that they bind and compel us, so that we do not insolently (libere) despise what we have been taught. that they are commanded for us to keep, so that we have something to deal with, so that we are not idle. that they are (as I have said) a testimony to us that God takes care of us, and we safely rely on Him being present with us everywhere and always. XXXXX that they require that we be careful and attentive to them, so that we are not sluggish and sleepy in doing them.

Besides these are also these expressions: XXX, XXXX, XXX word, speech, saying; likewise XXX 1) and XXX, but these two are rarely in use, as Ps. 119, 66. The word XXX means "good, and knowledge, for which we have (in the Vulgate) bonitatem et disciplinam, and denotes almost the behavior (gestum) which we call giving and mannered conduct (habitus corporis), as it is said in the 34th Psalm, "David hid his giving before the king Achish," as the title of this Psalm says.

So there are only these two left: XXX and XXXX, commandments and judgments, which are very frequent in the Scriptures, from which come the judges and the judicial power. But from that word [XXX] comes the master to rule in spiritual things, whom the Scripture calls Gen. 49:10, XXXX, "Yet a prince from his thigh" [Vulg.], where the Hebrew text has, "Yet a teacher from his feet," that is, there will always be such in Judah who teaches divine things and has disciples at his feet, and will not be taken away from them until Shiloh comes.

**V. 2. You shall not do anything to it that I command, nor shall you do any of it.**

Before Moses commands or teaches anything, he takes care first of all that it is preserved unharmed and unchanged, so that nothing is done to it or from it. And this passage condemns in short all human laws, and decides that in matters of conscience nothing is valid but God's

Law and God's Word. And in this the will of God should be sufficient, which so judges, even though reason and necessity require the same. For since we are drowned in blindness through Adam's sin, so that we do not know God at all in all His will and counsel, it is not only foolish, but also impossible for us to make of ourselves the light and the way by which we can reach God and grasp what He wants us to do, as the writer says in the Book of Wisdom, Cap. 9, 14, 13: "The thoughts of mortal men are miserable and uncertain. For what man can know what GOD wills?" Therefore, if GOD does not reveal His law by which He makes His will known to us, there remains only this statement about us (nostrum elogium), Ps. 116, 11.: "All men are liars," Ps. 39, 6.:] "all men are nothing at all"; and Isa. 55, 9.: "As much as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways." Therefore it is an exceedingly foolish reason of proof of the Sophists for free will: I have the freedom to govern a cow, to throw away money, therefore I have the freedom to do what pleases GOtte and to serve him. This is the same as saying: I can tread the earth with my feet and walk on the earth, so I can walk in heaven and walk on the clouds.

It is true that man has the knowledge and the ability to rule over that which is inferior to him and to act freely with it, but to rule himself and to do what pleases him who is above him, he does not know, nor is he able to do. There free will ceases; [there it does not rule,] but is necessarily blind, incapable, yes, dead and damned. Therefore, he must not presume on anything here, or choose anything he wants to do, but must base himself solely on the word of God, and do nothing to it or from it, so that if he is not quite sure that God's word is there, he will not do it at all, but if he is sure that God's word is there, he will not depart from it. O a necessary admonition!

But you will say: Why are so

1) Instead of jnn probably nxn should be read, which is found in Ps. 119, 66. It occurs probably rM, but not snff.

added many books of the prophets? And David commanded that the tabernacle of Moses should be taken down, and that a temple should be built, and set up the ordinances of the Levites; and Joshua did many things, and commanded the people; and so may be said of many other things. I answer, That is not to add to or add to the words of Moses, if any man teach the same thing in other or more words. This is how Moses taught and interpreted the prophets, not how they themselves were taught and interpreted, and according to his law they judged and punished the kings and the people.

Then Moses says here not of God, but of the people: "You shall not do anything to it" 2c. For who doubts that God Himself can add to it or subtract from it according to the circumstances of the time? For He, whether He adds to it or detracts from it, always remains true, and His word is always true, and faithfully guides and protects us. Thus David testifies in the first book of Chronicles [Cap. 28, 6. ff.] that he did not command according to his will (for God had rejected that, although he was praised by the prophet Nathan [1 Chron. 18, 2. ff.]), but at the command of God that the Temple should be built, and appointed the Levites. Thus Joshua had the command of GOD that he should command what was to be commanded. If all the prophets taught something different in this way, the Lord revealed this to all of them, just as he did to Moses, or as Peter says, they were driven (*inspirati sunt*) by the Holy Spirit, so that they had to speak.

### **That you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God.**

See Moses here, who asserts that nothing must be added to the words of God, nor must anything be done about them, lest this result in the commandments of God not being kept. By this statement he shows that the statutes of men in holy matters conflict with the words of God, since they oppose them and cause trouble because the commandments of God are not kept. For this reason, Paul also gives them an evil name in Titus 1:14, teaching that they pervert the truth, and Romans 16:18, that they deceive the innocent hearts, and that Christ is the one who is the cause of their disobedience.

commands [Matth. 16, 6.] that we should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and [Matth. 7, 15.] of the wolves in sheep's clothing.

### **V. 3. 4. Your eyes have seen 2c.**

Moses composed his admonition from various things, so that they would reject the additions and counterfeits of men and adhere to the pure word of God alone. First [he takes the admonition from] the very obvious example of Baal-Peor; since he [God] corrupted so many children of Israel because of his worship, because it was invented by men over (*ultra*) the word of God [4 Mos. 25, 9.], he shows sufficiently how he does not want anything added to his commandments.

It is also not valid if someone wants to claim for the statutes of men: The Moabites were idolaters and sacrificed to the devils, but we served the true God with our ceremonies, and they were invented in godly opinion and out of a good zeal, therefore our conduct (*studia*) is not similar to that of those people.

I answer: The Moabites and other pagans did not serve the devils in such a way that they knew they were devils, but believed that they served the true God, no less than the idolatrous Jews, yes, than all our Papists, even the holiest and most spiritual, but their impiety was that they took the right name of the true God, and worshipped him with customs which God did not command, but which they had invented.

For those who do this think in their hearts that the true God is like this: He wants to be worshipped, and it is pleasing to Him what people, even those who are still godless, do without God's word. But he is not such a God to whom godless beings please, as the fifth Psalm, v. 5, says, but he is the God of the righteous, and wants to be worshipped by godly and righteous people who are justified by his word and grace, not by their own powers. Therefore, the thoughts of those people about God are necessarily a mere fiction and lie, and the God whom they invent and form in such a way is not the true God,

but an idol of their heart, under which they worship the devil, the master and father of this lie. And so, in truth, under the right name of the true God, they worship idols and devils in false conceit.

Therefore, in the Scriptures, "other (alienos) gods" must not be understood as if their worshippers had completely denied the name of the true God, yes, they claimed it for themselves most stubbornly, as we read in the Prophets, but because they, retaining the name of the true God, without a true knowledge of God (which the flesh and man cannot have of themselves), made thoughts of God that seemed to them to be right, as if God could be given a form and were changeable according to the imaginations and conceits (visiones) of their hearts, while He cannot be formed (informabilis) and is unchangeable. Therefore, where the word of God is not, there is no right knowledge of God; where the knowledge of God is not, there is godless ignorance, conceit, delusion of the right God, as if he had pleasure in this and that, which we choose according to our own sense (proprie). But all this is godless worship, by which the true God is not reached, but in His place and under His name the imaginations (phantasmata) and idols of the heart. But these are other gods, namely the devils, who enter this delusion.

Then they also proceed outwardly and establish ceremonies, doctrines and regiments according to this delusion, to which they give different names; and they call God sometimes Baal, sometimes Astharoth, sometimes Dagon 2c., as we have also done by calling Benedictus, Franciscus, Domnncus and above all the pope a god, because we let ourselves think that we please God by all these customs and doctrines. This delusion is the lying idol of the heart, under which Satan sits and is worshipped in the place and name of God.

This is what the apostle touches on Rom. 1, 21: "Knowing that there is one God, they have not praised him as one God, nor given thanks, but have become vain in their imaginations, and their unintelligent heart is lost.

2c. I say that they have known God, that is, they have had knowledge that there is any deity, which is proven by their efforts to worship idols in the place of God. For if they had had no knowledge of God, they would not have been able to attribute the deity (eam) to the idols, nor to claim the name of God. But this was their imprudence, that they did not praise him as a god, that is, they invented him as such a god, who would like to be worshipped by their opinions and efforts, so that they would like to boast about themselves in such a way, (as people) who could accomplish something for GOtte from their own forces, which would be pleasing to him, and deserve his grace. But this is to dishonor God, and not to thank God for what one has received from Him, but to be haughty and presumptuous because of what one has offered to God. This is no different than wanting God to be shaped by us, and that we do not want to be shaped by God; wanting God to adapt His counsel and thoughts to our counsels and thoughts, as He says in Isaiah [Cap. 40, 18. 25.]: "Whom then will you model God after?" and Cap. 55, 9.: "As much as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways."

But the fact that the Moabites served their BaalPeor with food and unchastity does not prove that they worshipped the devils for that reason. For this is the fate (fortuna) of human statutes, that they only raise belly servants (ventris animalia), so that Paul is under the obligation (Phil. 3, 19.) to call the belly their god, and Rom. 16, 18. says that they serve their belly. And all prophets accuse them of eating the people of God. The groves and the high places in the synagogue also testify to this, where they drove their will under the green trees. So also in our kingdom of the pope we see how they openly and unashamedly serve the good life, idleness, eating and boozing and unchastity, but at the same time they murmur their hourly prayers (horas) and crucify the masses.

BaalPeor is the name of a man who has the mouth

1) of which many think it was Priapus, perhaps moved by the fact that the Moabites in his service gave themselves to unchastity. But this proves (movet) nothing, because the unchastity (as I said) is a characteristic which all human statutes and ungodliness have; then also this history of Israel seems to be older and to have happened earlier than Priapus arose in Greece. Therefore, I believe that the true God was honored by the Moabites under this lying name and false worship, as he was called Baalim by the Israelites, as the prophet Hosea testifies. Then I see that Baal means the excellence (primatum) with the Hebrews in compound words. For thus they say balsam (balsamum - XXX XXX), that is, the most excellent oil (for oil they call [W]; likewise Beelzebub [XXX XXX], the most excellent fly, as we say: archangel, archcook, archduke, archbishop. Thus the Moabites called BaalPeor the most noble maw (hiatum), for a reason unknown to me, unless you want to take it as a supposition (divinare) that God is terrible and an arch avenger, ready to devour all the wicked and adversaries of his people, if he is not worshipped in this way, as with us the papists have invented that God is a very swift avenger, if someone has done harm to a clergyman by the devil's inspiration. So they also made a kind of BaalPeor out of St. Anthony, Sebastian, Valentine and Rochius to feed their belly.

#### V. 5. as the LORD my GOD commanded me 2c.

This cause alone should be sufficient that they would gladly do anything, that he teaches God's commandments, not his own, even if no punishment or reward followed. And this is the other part (locus) of the exhortation, which follows in proper order. For the first is about the terror and wrath of God, with which a lawgiver must begin, but then add to it the glory and love of God, so that he may entice the frightened to love.

1) vir Nistus. Cf. St. Louis edition, vol. XIX, 688, K 4S.

#### V. 6. for this is your wisdom 2c.

The third piece is taken from the preference (excellencia) and the dignity they will have over all nations, which follows from this. "Whoever honors me (says he [1 Sam. 2, 30.]), him I will also honor." If they glorified God in such a way that they kept those commandments and laws, it would happen that the Lord would glorify them in turn by spreading throughout the world the rumor of the holiness of the laws and the people who kept them. Through this rumor many would be drawn to the true God. And so also through this honor with which GOtt glorified them among the nations, GOtt Himself would be glorified more. For so also all the works of God, niwith which He glorifies His saints, serve to the ungodly that they may also be converted. This is the love that turns (kamt) and accepts all that is ours for the benefit of our neighbor.

"Wisdom" and "understanding" (intelligentia), I believe, differ in such a way that wisdom belongs to the knowledge of things, understanding to judgment; so that he is wise who knows what belongs to faith and reverence (religionis) toward God, and to justice and love toward one's neighbor, but that he is understanding who in both things (toward God and toward one's neighbor) is perceptive, wise, and prudent, so that he may walk rightly in them and not be deceived by any deceit; in German: "wise and prudent".

But consider this much more, with how few words Moses rejects and condemns all the wisdom and knowledge (scientiam) of men, showing that the wisdom and understanding of the people of God does not consist in the subtle researches (speculationes) of the sophists, nor in the splendid decrees (sanctiones) of princes and wise men, but in the knowledge and observance of the law of God. "This is (he says) your wisdom and understanding." Therefore, even though one may be wise in governing the affairs of this world (as they are wise to do evil), the people of God shall not seek wisdom anywhere, nor know any other than from the law of their God; there they will find abundant and blissful knowledge of how to behave toward God and man.

The only way to behave is shyly, as in fortune and misfortune, as in peace and war. For wisdom taken from elsewhere is nothing but foolishness before God. Therefore, by this word Moses makes all men fools before God in all their wisdom and prudence.

### V. 7. 8. to whom gods thus draw near 2c.

The honor and glory of this people is greater than that of all the nations of the earth, because their God is near them, and also because He has righteous rights and commandments; if they kept them, the nations would marvel at them and receive salvation from them. This is a beautiful and sweet comfort and a reliable promise that God is near. This doctrine (locum) was often mentioned by David in his Psalms and by the other prophets everywhere. But at the same time he includes and indicates the cross of God's people. For the fact that He is near to those who call upon Him proves that those who call upon Him are in tribulation, which forces them to call upon Him, just as this people was always in tribulation, and all who want to live godly suffer persecution [2 Tim. 3, 12], so that the faith that calls upon Him has room and there is an opportunity to come close to God.

The worship of other peoples, however, as they have ungodly statutes against God and unjust rights against their neighbor, so they also have gods that are far from them, which cannot make blessed, yes, which let themselves be provided for and defended by their worshippers.

### V. 9-11. And thou shalt make known the day to thy children and thy children's children 2c.

This day of the or assembly Moses often inculcates, because at the same the people had heard the law of God at the mountain Sinai under thunderstorm and frightening thunder, where not a man spoke, but the highest majesty by the service of the angels, and from this one day the reputation of Mosis began, as in the second book of Mosis, Cap. 19, is said, and the whole order (institutio) of the people.

### V. 12-19. You heard the voice of his words, but you saw no likeness except the voice 2c.

This passage rejects not only the outward images of God, which he wanted to be forbidden to the crude and childish people, but above all and most of all the inward ones, which (as we said above) are the delusions and thoughts that we have invented out of ourselves, without the voice of God. Here, surely, the voice of His words alone is praised, and everything that is spoken or thought about GOD that is not this voice of His words is utterly ungodly and condemned. For it is by his word alone that he has willed his will, his counsels, to be presented to us, not by our imaginations or conceits. Therefore, God does not like or dislike what you think pleases or displeases him, no matter how holy and godly it seems to you, what you think (as the originators and teachers of the spiritual orders [religionum] and the sects have done), but what he himself declares through the voice of his word that it pleases or 1) displeases him. For no one can indicate or declare God's will except God Himself, indeed, everyone errs in an ungodly manner when he subjects himself to it, since no one knows the depths of God except the Holy Spirit who is in God. Therefore, it is impossible for people to think, preach, or worship God properly without a certain word from God. The saying stands firm, "You have heard His voice."

### V. 20. From the iron furnace.

With a strong expression he calls the bondage in Egypt an iron furnace, not only because of the frightfulness of history, but also because of the misery of the consciences, which were oppressed under the wrath of the law and the tyranny of the statutes, of which the people of Israel were the model in their Egyptian furnace.

### V. 24. 25. For the LORD your God is a consuming fire and a zealous God.

This phrase is often used in the epistle to the Hebrews, and it is worthy to be used often to terrify and humble the wicked. But there are two things: "a devouring fire" and: "a

1) In the editions: ot instead of: ant.

zealous God". He is called a fire because he consumes completely and leaves nothing for the wicked, nor is there anything that can withstand his wrath; a zealot because he has such a mind that he will not spare. Who should not fear him, who is known not to spare and has such a way (virtutem) that he is unforgiving and never stops taking revenge? Furthermore, he exercises this wrath in two ways; first spiritually and suddenly, by withdrawing his spirit from the wicked, so that the devil devastates everything; then also bodily and slowly, by also killing the bodies, devastating the lands and destroying everything.

And notice especially that God is described by Moses as a fire and a zealot with regard to the first commandment, in which he is most despised, when he should be most feared and revered, so that you may see which commandment he himself insists on, namely that we should hold him as our God, so that we do not put our trust in works, but base ourselves on his mercy alone, although in no matter does he seem to see through his fingers more than in this ungodliness, since he lets the ungodly have the upper hand and rule with impunity and deceives very many, so that there seems to be neither fire nor zeal, but coldness and sluggishness with God, just as many psalms complain that he sleeps and ask him to rise.

#### **V. 26-29. So I call to witness this day 2c.**

The last part of this exhortation is the threat. For this is how we admonish, by taking our reasons from what is useful, what is necessary, what is honorable, what is godly, finally from the danger 2c., which Moses also does here.

#### **V. 30-40. In the last days 2c.**

This "in the last days" is generally spoken, for which we say: later. For Moses wants to describe such wrath of God that He always leaves room for repentance for those who come to terms afterward. This has also been proved by the events in history, where GOD

Israel so often punished, and yet, when it returned, always accepted it again afterwards. So he is not only talking about the last days before the day of judgment, in which, as one thinks, the Jews are still to be converted, but generally about all the time (as I said) in which they repented after sin and recognized the punishment.

And to encourage this repentance and to condemn despair, he adds the most sweet and faithful promise, on which the prayer of Manasseh, king of Judah, is beautifully based, namely, that God, your Lord, is merciful, who will not abandon you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant he swore to your fathers [Deut. 4:31]. By this he indicates at the same time what true repentance is, namely a burning thirst for mercy in the anguish of the conscience. For only to these is the sweet mercy held out, but not to the hypocrites.

#### **V. 41-43. Then Moses separated three cities 2c.**

This thing Moses mixes into the speech by keeping the order of the history. For he certainly did not finish these speeches of Deuteronomy in one day, but perhaps barely in ten days, or on each individual day barely two or three chapters; and in the meantime he had to deal with things among the people, as they just happened, like this separation of the cities to places of refuge.

#### **V. 44. ff. This is the law 2c.**

This is the end of the speech, as Mosi's way is. Furthermore, the mountain Hermon, which is called here [v. 48.] Sion, is another than the one in Jerusalem. For the latter is written with a Zade, Zion; the latter with a Sin, Sion. Above Cap. 3 we said that "the springs of Pisgah" were to be taken for the proper name of a city (dici), (namely) Assedoth, which Jerome translated: "at the foot" [of the mountain], 1) but in the book "of the Hebrew localities" he makes it the name of a city.

1) In the old translation this reads: "das Hieronymus, wurzeln sraäiossl, verdolmetschet has."

## The fifth chapter.

### V. 1. 2. And Moses called out to all Israel 2c.

Here you have it that Moses, in order to complete Deuteronomy, preaches various sermons and calls the people together several times. Therefore, he always repeats on the following day what he had said on the previous day, as here, when he inculcates the covenant of God and the voice of the Lord 2c. Here begins the most important sermon of the ten commandments.

### V. 3-5. and did not make this covenant with our fathers 2c.

Moses shows here the difference between the New and the Old Testament. The New Testament is the oldest, which was promised from the beginning of the world, yes, "before the times of the world", as Paul says in the letter to Titus [Cap. 1, 2], but only fulfilled under Christ. The Old Testament, which was promised under Moses, was fulfilled under Joshua. But this is the difference between the two, that the new one is based on the promise of the merciful and faithful God alone, without our works, but the old one also on our works. Therefore, the promises of Moses do not go further than keeping the commandments and the statutes. This was the cause that it itself had to finally become obsolete and be discarded and become a model of the new and eternal testament, which began before the world and will remain after the world. 1) But the latter has in the

1) Instead of äuravit in the Jenaer and in the Erlanger we have assumed äurnbit with the Wittenberger.

Time started and stopped after some time.

### V. 6. ff. I am the LORD, your God 2c.

It seems that this commandment is merely an outward statute (ceremonias) about the images for the crude and childish people, but in truth it is a spiritual law, which requires the inward service of the spirit, also concerning the outward images. Incidentally, no one can interpret these commandments of the Decalogue better than Moses does in this Deuteronomy, as we shall see. Therefore, we do not want to talk more about it here.

But Moses shows the power of the law by saying that they could not have endured the voice of God, namely because the law, when it is proclaimed and heard in the spirit, completely kills and brings man to an unbearable knowledge of his sin and to the fear of death, so that man sighs for a mediator and desires a more loving word, that is, the gospel of grace, as here the terrified people ask Moses as a mediator, who will speak softer, so that they will not die from the voice of God. For what would a man suffer and do, so that he would not have to hear the law?

### V. 22. ff. And did nothing about it 2c.

And afterwards [v. 32] he says: "Do not deviate, neither to the right nor to the left", namely he repeats again and inculcates that nothing be added to or taken away from the word of God, about which we have spoken enough above.

## The sixth chapter.

### V. 2. 3. that you fear the Lord your God 2c.

It seems to be peculiar to this Shewbrew language that it says "the fear of GOD" where.

we say worship or reverence of God or Greek θεοσέβεια, as Moses here connects the two pieces, the fear and the keeping of the commandments.



From this point on, we want to divide this interpretation, which Moses wrote about his Decalogue himself (because what is, from this point on, the whole rest of the book other than an extremely rich and very clear explanation of the Ten Commandments, as we will see), into two parts. The first part is supposed to be the explanation of the three commandments of the first table, which continues almost to the twentieth chapter; the second part, however, is the explanation of the remaining commandments of the second table until the end of the book. Of course, many people have written interpretations of the commandments (praeceptorial) and whole compilations (summas), but mere garbage when compared to this interpretation of Moses. For Moses will teach you what it means, not to have other gods, what it is, not to take God's name in vain, what the holiday is 2c. He now says:

V. 4. Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD.

You see that he interprets the first commandment itself in an affirmative way, namely that there is One Lord. For here the name consisting of four letters (tetragrammaton [that is XXXX]) is put, which is peculiar to God alone. But he acts this unity of God in the spirit, that is, he does not have in mind both that God is one, but rather that he should be taken by us for one, since no benefit accrues to us from the fact that there is one God; but if we take him for one and for our God (as he says here), that is life and blessedness and the fulfillment of all commandments.

Thus Jacob says Gen. 28:21: "The LORD shall be my God." How is the Lord to be his God? Was he not before? He says this only because he intended to have only the Lord as his God, with certain ceremonies (ritu) and a kind of worship. Thus God becomes and changes according to the change of our heart against Him, as it is said in Ps. 18, 26, 27: "With the holy you are holy, and with the perverse you are perverse." Thus, the Antichrist exalts himself above every god, that is, he will establish his own worship, which he will exalt above all true and false worship of all gods, because nobody's word

is more feared and worshipped [than his].

So the first declaration of Moses from the first commandment is this, that the Lord our God is to be held for One Lord, that is, that He is not to be worshipped with always other services invented by us, but only with the one He has appointed.

V. 5. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart 2c.

The second explanation of the first commandment; for the first, just given, concerns faith. For no one can have One God unless he alone clings to Him and trusts Him alone; otherwise he will be carried away by various works and invent various gods for himself. The second, which follows from the first, concerns love. For when we put all our trust in him, cling to him, and recognize that everything flows from him and that he takes care of us, then a sweet love for him necessarily follows. That is why he uses the negative (negativa) expression in the commandment: "Thou shalt not have other gods" 2c., as if he wanted to say: It is necessary that you deny yourself and despair of yourself, so that you do not make many gods, that you have one God, because nature cannot do otherwise than idolatry.

Therefore, when he says: The Lord your God is a single Lord, he takes away all [other] trust. When he says: You shall love the Lord, he encourages a joyful and free service to God. For if I love God, then in truth I want everything that God wants, so nothing is dearer to me than to hear and do what God wants, just as carnal love does towards the beloved object. Thus, through unity with God in faith, we receive everything from God in vain; through love, we do everything to God in vain.

But that he adds: "With all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength," is so difficult that, if God did not forgive, no saint could fulfill it. Yes, who is there who would not be deficient in both things, both in that he should have One God and in that he should love Him? because

There is no one who does not sometimes waver in faith and love other things at the same time. This is proven by the fruits. For if I loved God with all my heart, nothing would hurt me more than to see the commandments of God despised, as Paul lamented in his letters to the Corinthians and Galatians, seeing that the honor of God was being trampled underfoot. But where are the people who lament that the name of God is so trampled upon throughout the world?

"With all the heart" means: from the bottom of the mind and with all the mind; "with all the soul": with the whole bodily (animali) life; "with all the faculty," that is, with all the powers and limbs, of which I have said enough elsewhere. Not that we should love no other things, since everything that God has made is very good and lovable, but that in the love of God, and the things that are God's, nothing should be equated or preferred, and the love of all things should be pressed to the point that love toward God becomes complete. From this, notice how wrong those are who enforce their statutes and commandments so strictly, but allow God's commandments to be so neglected.

#### **V. 6-9. And these words, which I command thee this day, thou shalt take to heart 2c.**

Not only in the book, not only in thoughts, but in the innermost mind, so that they are the highest treasure for you, because where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Therefore, nothing shall rule in your heart but faith and love for God. Let your heart meditate on this day and night, Ps. 1, 2. For if they are first in your heart in this way, then the right consequence cannot fail to be that they are also in your mouth.

"And thou shalt sharpen them unto thy children," that is, daily thou shalt repeat and inculcate them, lest they grow dull and cold, and be consumed with rust. Then it shall follow that thou shalt speak of them everywhere and always. Finally, you shall also bind them as a memorial on your hand and before your eyes. Lastly, you shall write them on the posts.

Behold the order of acting upon God's word: first, consider it in your heart; second, be faithful to your children and to

third, to speak publicly and everywhere; fourth, to draw on the hand and to paint before the eyes; fifth and last, to write on the posts and gates of the house, not in books, because Moses himself had already written them in a book. Here I pass over these secret interpretations that drawing the commandments on the hand and placing them before the eyes means that one fulfills them in the work and contemplates them. He simply wants these words to appear to us everywhere and to be in our memory.

You will notice that Moses does not put this admonition with the other commandments, but only with the first one, and with its declaration that they should be in the heart, that they should be sharpened, spoken, drawn and written, so that you may know that the first commandment is the measure and rule for all the others, to which they must yield and be obedient; as, if it is according to faith and love, you shall kill against the fifth commandment, just as Abraham killed Genesis 14:15. 14, 15. killed the kings, and king Ahab sinned that he did not kill the king of Syria, 1 Kings 20, 34. ff. So it is also with theft, so with deceit and deceitfulness against the enemies of God, so with the robbery, goods, wives, daughters, sons, servants of the enemies. So you shall hate your father and mother, that you may love the Lord.

In short, where anything is contrary to faith and love, you must not want to know that there is any other commandment, either from God or from men. But where it would be according to faith and love, you shall know that the commandments are there in all things and everywhere, for the saying stands firm: "These words shall be in your heart", there they shall reign. Furthermore, if they were not also in the heart, surely no one could understand nor obey these various applications according to circumstances (hanc epik- klan), nor could he ever use the laws wholesomely and surely and rightly, as also Paul says 1 Tim. 1, 9. "that no law is given to the righteous," because [1 Tim. 1, 5.] the fulfillment of the law is love out of a good heart and uncontaminated faith, which uses the law rightly by having no laws.,Mv

has all laws; none, because none [laws] bind if they do not serve faith and love; all, because all bind if they serve faith and love.

So it is the opinion of Moses at this point: If you want to understand the first commandment correctly, and in truth have no other gods, then keep yourself in such a way that you believe and love the one God, deny yourself, receive everything in vain, and do everything in vain.

**V. 10-12. Now when the LORD your God will bring you into the land 2c.**

He stops with the interpretation of the first commandment and begins to show in what way the first commandment is sinned against and teaches that one should avoid the occasion to sin against it, and takes first of all wealth and abundance, namely mammon and avarice, of which Baruch [Cap. 3, 17] writes: "The gold in which men put their trust. And Paul says that avarice is idolatry [Col. 3, 5.] and a root of all evil [1 Tim. 6, 10.]. Beware, says Moses [v. 11, 12], when thou art full, lest thou forget the Lord thy God. For the human heart trusts in the good that is available; if there is no good, it is full of distrust, as it is commonly said: Good makes you brave, poverty hurts. But trust in riches and faith and love cannot rule in the heart at the same time. And this is what he calls "forgetting the Lord your God. For this does not mean to remember the Lord when you speak his name, but when you cling to him in your heart with constant faith and love him.

And see for yourself how Moses acts the first commandment first spiritually against the idolatry of the heart, against the trust in goods, in order to awaken trust in God, before he says about the idols, so that you do not think that Moses had nothing else in mind than the idols. So this is the meaning: You shall have One God, that you trust in Him alone. If riches come to you, you should not trust in them; if they do not come, you should not be fainthearted, but always trust in the Lord, just as you trust in the Lord.

The Psalm [Ps. 62:11, Vulg.] says, "If riches come to you, do not set your heart on them," and, "Do not seek robbery, nor become vain."

**V. 13. But fear the Lord your God and serve him alone.**

"Thou shalt fear," that is, thou shalt reverence, and out of reverence for Him thou shalt shun trusting in mammon, that is, when goods are abundant, since men are wont to live in security and despise GOD and serve their lusts, thou shalt fear Me, and rule over the goods, shalt serve Me, and shalt not be carried away by them according to thy lusts. This also is a glorious explanation of the first commandment, namely, that we should fear most when everything is superfluously present, well kept 1) and secure, and there is no cause for fear. For this is the nature (virtus) of faith and the essence (vis) of the first commandment, that we be fearful in well-doing and fear God, again in adversities (as follows) secure and unconcerned and trusting in God, and, whether things go well or not (utroque tempore), clinging only to God.

Here the sophists have invented many a dream of the δουλεία, λατρεία and δπερ- δουλεία. The Hebrew denotes by one and the same word service against GOD and men, so that their distinction is without use. But he wants to say this: "Thou shalt serve Him alone," that is, all that thou doest and livest, whether under the servitude of men or in the government of things, thou shalt do with reference to Me, and it shall be done in no other way (nomine) of thine, but that thou mayest be sure in faith, that therein I alone am served, and if thou knewest not that I am served in the matter, thou shouldst soon desist, so that thou wouldst do nothing to please men against me, even if thou were their prisoner, and shouldst not yield to thy lust or honor, though all things abound to thee. So also Paul teaches that the

1) Instead of tota in the Jena and the Erlangen we have adopted tuta with the Wittenberg.

Servants to be subject to their masters, but as to the Lord [Eph. 6:5], and wives to be subject to their husbands, but in the Lord [Eph. 5:22], and he himself to enjoy Philemon, but in the Lord [Philem. V. 20.], and he wants a virgin to be free [1 Cor. 7, 36.], but in the HERN [V. 39.], and [1 Cor. 11, 12.] that the man may come through the woman, but in the HERN. He dreams nothing of the and

but raises the one and only servitude to GOD higher than all things, and spreads it over all things. Thus Peter says in the Acts of the Apostles [Cap. 13, 36.] that David served the will of GOD. Yea, if the δουλεία be separated from the λατρεία, it is already neither ζουλεία, but idolatry (idololatria), since thou hearest here, "Thou shalt serve him alone." So either your service (dulia) will be a worship (latría), or an idolatry (idololatria) if it is separated. But this is what the sophists invented, looking at the outward appearance (larvam) of the works and the sects, and measuring the worship of God according to the diversity of the works, although by this word God abolishes the diversity of the works and gathers them into the unity (unitas) of faith in the heart, so that you may consider only this, that you may do any works, whatever they may be and wherever they may be, in the fear of God and in His name, and serve Him only through them. Here, too, the papacy and every realm of human statutes fall by which such works are taught, thereby serving godless people who either turn away from God or force them to deny God. In this sense, Christ also answered Satan, who asked him to do works that should not be done to God alone, this word [Matth. 4, 10.]: "Get thee away from me, Satan, for it is written: Thou shalt worship GOD thy LORD, and serve him only."

### **And you shall swear in his name.**

There are two things to note here. First of all, Christ forbids swearing in Matth. 5, 34; here it is commanded to swear. But also elsewhere we have said that the

The custom of the oath is twofold; the one that we swear for ourselves without cause according to our recklessness; this Christ forbids altogether; the other, since we swear for the glory of God and the salvation of our neighbor out of faith and love, in order to confirm the truth. This Moses commands, in such a way that he does not command to swear, but urges it: If it is necessary to swear, you shall not swear other than by the name of GOD.

But how does this rhyme with the preceding? He had said: "You shall serve him alone"; in this service he did not distinguish the religious (religiosa) and ceremonial works of worship to God from the worldly (profanis), but rather combined them all into one, whether they be done to God or to men, so that they should all be done to God from the heart alone. This is also how the name of God is to be judged here. He does not want that one only takes the name "God" into his mouth when he has to swear, since Paul also says [1 Cor. 15, 31. Vulg.]: "By your glory, I die daily" 2c. And Christ says [John 16:23], "Verily, verily, I say unto you," and Paul [Romans 9:1], "My conscience doth bear me witness."

Therefore, you swear by the name of God when you refer what you swear by to God and take it in the name of God; otherwise you would not swear if you knew it would displease Him; in any way by serving God alone when you serve men in the name of God; otherwise you would not serve. By this oath you are kept from serving God alone and from being drawn into ungodly works or oaths. So Christ also declares Matth. 23, 16-22, that he swears by God who swears by the temple and the altar and heaven. And Matth. 5, 34-36. He forbids to swear by Jerusalem, by the head, by heaven, by all things, because in all these things one swears by God. But if one swears by God carelessly and uselessly, that is taking the name of God uselessly.

That he therefore wants one to swear by the name of God and by no other, is not only the reason that for the

Truth (which is GOD) is not to be confirmed by anyone other than GOD Himself, but that man alone remain in GOD's service, and learn to carry everything home to Him, and to do, have, use and suffer everything in His name, so that they would not be turned away from GOD if they used another name, and become accustomed to swearing as if it were none of God's business, and thus finally, through evil use, make a distinction between the works by which God is served and the works by which God is not served, since He wants to be served in all things, and that everything be done in His fear, being present, watching and judging.

Therefore, one should use the oath as well as the sword and sexual intercourse (copula sexus). It is forbidden to take the sword, because Christ says [Matth. 26, 52.]: "Whoever takes the sword shall perish by the sword", because he takes it without command and of his own will. But the command is there to wield the sword, and it is a service of GOD, Rom. 13, 4. when it is decreed by GOD or through men. For then it is wielded in the name of the LORD for the good of the neighbor, as Paul says, "She [the authorities] is GOD's servant, for your good." Thus it is forbidden to use the flesh for sexual intercourse, because it is a disorderly (vaga), evil lust. But where sex is joined to thee by marriage, it is a duty to use the flesh, which must be performed, and now thou mayest use the flesh in the name of the Lord, and do thy trespass against the divine law, that is, against love. In the same way, use the oath that you do not swear for yourself, but to God or to your neighbor in the name of the Lord. In this way, you will always remain in the service of God alone.

V. 16. You shall not tempt the Lord your God.

As he taught in the previous word about the fear of God, that we behave rightly in prosperity, so that we may not be secure, so he teaches in this word that we suffer rightly in adversity, so that we may be

We must be secure and unconcerned, and be sure that God will take care of us, who will not abandon us, but will be close to us and present in all our needs, which is not done by the unbelievers and the godless, who are attached to [visible] things. But God is tempted in two ways. First, when we do not use the necessary things that are at hand, but seek others that are not there, as the devil tempted Christ by asking him to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple, while there were stairs on which he could descend. So would he [God] tempt who would not use the garment in cold weather, but expected a sign from heaven so that he would not freeze, just as the Jews despised the signs that were there and desired another from heaven. Likewise [tempts the one GOD] who snores and will not work, and thinks that GOD must feed him without work, whereas GOD has promised him that He will provide for him through work, as it says Prov. 10:4: "The hand of the diligent makes rich, but the lax hand will starve."

Such is the common celibate state, since God, by creating and adding the woman, has provided counsel for sin and the weakness of the flesh, and foolish people let this go, presuming to keep chastity by a miracle from heaven. It has also been said above how God shows His works under the cover of existing things, and wants us to use them, but not to trust in them. For although it is true that an industrious hand makes one rich, it is also true that the blessing of the Lord alone makes one rich, as Solomon says, namely, through an industrious hand. For if an industrious hand were hindered by force, the blessing of the Lord would still make rich. Thus, GOD gives salvation by the sword alone, and yet the salvation (salus) that comes through a man is vain (as David [Ps. 44, 7.] says): "And my sword cannot help me." But it will help GOD by the sword if it is there, and without the sword if one cannot have it. One must therefore

of things, but not trust in them. But in God alone one must trust, and that as much when that is there, which you may use, as when it is not there.

Secondly, GOD is tempted when there is nothing present of which one has need but the mere and sole word of GOD. Moses is actually talking about this temptation here, since he adds: "As ye tempted him at Massa," where they quarreled, saying [Ex. 17:2, 7], "Is the LORD among us, or not?" For here the ungodly people are not satisfied with the word; if GOD does not do what He has promised at the time, in the place, in the way they prescribe, they depart from Him and do not believe. But if one wants to prescribe the place, the time, or the way to God, this is actually trying him, and wanting to grasp him with one's hands, as it were, to see if he is there. But this is nothing other than wanting to restrict God and subject Him to our will, and to completely take away from Him the divinity, which must be free and unrestricted and unlimited, and rather to prescribe to us place, manner and time.

Therefore both kinds of temptation are contrary to the first commandment, both that which occurs merely out of arbitrariness and presumption, when things are plentiful, and that which occurs when lack presses, and the weakness of faith persuades. And here you see that the first, most spiritual commandment is interpreted by Moses in the most spiritual and perfect way. For he has not yet come to the images, but with the condemnation of the inclination to ungodliness, which is the root of external idolatry and images, he deals in the first place.

**V. 20-24. Now if your son will ask you today or tomorrow.**

You see how much Moses makes it his business to inculcate the first commandment according to his spiritual mind, and we have shown that this is the way in which he most insists on the commandment, namely, that one should know that unless this opinion and mind is set right before all things (*primo loco*), it is nothing, even if they destroy all images and do everything; but if the heart is right in this, everything else will be done in the right way. With the other commandments he does not dwell so long, does not take so much trouble, does not make so many words.

**V. 25. And it will be our righteousness before the Lord our God.**

What is this? Is righteousness before the Lord achieved by works? Far be it from that, but (as I have said) it has to do with the first commandment and its chief work, which is to teach faith, love and the fear of God with all the heart. For through these the law is fulfilled and God is satisfied. Therefore, righteousness is properly set forth and praised here in this place, which is valid before God. For then we have in truth the righteousness that is imputed to us by God (which actually the word means Ps. 33, 5., in that it includes the imputed mercy), when we believe, love, fear God, and that with all our heart. Then the righteous will live by his faith. Therefore, Moses does not put this saying where he speaks of other works of the Law, because they do not justify, but rather are justified by the heart, which is already justified by faith. For he boasts of this alone, that he makes commandments and statutes 2c. that it may go well with him [Israel] 2c. [Cap. 6, 1. 3.].

# The seventh chapter.

**V. 1. f. When the LORD your GOD brings you into the land 2c. you will strike them 2c.**

Moses goes on to indicate other occasions of ungodliness against the first commandment, and enters into the outward work in a very proper order; having first corrected the heart, the source of the works, he can afterwards correct the hand and the other members, teaching that they shall kill and banish the nations of the land, neither make marriages with them nor enter into covenants with them, and destroy the altars, the pillars, the groves, and the images. In this work he also keeps the order that he first commands to destroy the creators of the images, then also the images, because the images will be destroyed in vain if the creators and the teachers of them are allowed to remain as their worshippers.

Here it is to be noted that he does not speak the sentence that one should exterminate these peoples, but if they persist in their obduracy. Otherwise one would have had to offer them peace and carry them if they converted to Israel, as happened to the Gibeonites and the harlot Rahab. Then he commanded this work, not because he wanted this to be necessary for his people at all times, but because he had decided to completely exterminate these peoples because of their sins; to this work he wanted to use his people, while he turned Sodom without another people, and otherwise used to punish one people by another. Therefore, this literal and carnal understanding of the first commandment must not be applied to Christians, to whom it belongs to kill the Gentiles and destroy the images with the sword of the Spirit. For this work in particular is given to this people for a time, as is everything else that is commanded to this people, as well as marriage, covenants, and all outward ceremonies in general.

Here I must digress [a little] and speak of our new prophets, who are struggling

They say that they are urged by the first commandment (although they do not want to be Jews but Christians) to destroy the images by force and with their hands. And here they rage extraordinarily and boast that they are completely full of the spirit, and condemn all as guilty of the first commandment and of insulting the majesty. But I maintain that they are bloodhounds, rebels and murderers, who have nothing else in mind than murder and death. I can easily prove this from this passage, in this way: If they want that in the first commandment there is nothing concerning ceremonies (ceremoniale), but claim that everything must be done in a necessary way, they will be forced by this passage to kill the whole world, which has images, although it does not worship them. For it is commanded here that they should kill the nations as well as destroy the images, and if one is asserted, they will have to concede the rest with necessity; yes, he commands here to kill the heathen first, as the more necessary work, before the images are destroyed.

And this is what I saw coming, if their doctrine would prevail, that the people could not be restrained from killing, because they would rely on this commandment and their doctrine. Therefore I have advised (censui) that they should be driven out of the country as real bloodhounds and rebels who have nothing else to do in their whole life but shed blood. Since it is now certain that among Christians the wicked do not have to be killed with the bodily sword, and this part of the law is annulled as merely ceremonial, since it only applied for a time until Christ, it follows at the same time that the images also do not have to be taken away because of necessity, since they belong to this part of the law. Therefore, no one who sees the iconoclasts (imaginicidas) raging against wood and stone should doubt that a murderous spirit is hidden there, not a life-giving one, and that, when the images are removed, they will not be able to destroy them.

If the opportunity presented itself, they would also kill people, as some of them have begun to teach. But they are forced by a necessary consequence to teach and to do so, because the law of Moses urges them to do so, although others, cunning people, conceal this murderous spirit very finely.

There is also another rage of this spirit, that they do not distribute the execution of this law, even if it should concern us, properly [among the persons to whom it belongs]. For Moses, both in this book and elsewhere, has first appointed the sovereign persons who are to execute the laws. But these swarm spirits command this to the common people with contempt for the persons in authority. For God has not only commanded in one place that sins are to be dealt with in public courts, witnesses and judgments, but they fall upon them with their own (privato) rage. For one does not read any example that the people without a leader or an authority, be it the ordinary one or one given by God, did the images, as one can see in Gideon [Judges 6, 25], Hezekiah [2 Kings 18, 4], Josiah [2 Kings 23, 4] and Jehu 1) [2 Kings 10, 27. ff].

Their third grievance is that they absolutely destroy all images, even though Moses commanded this only of those whom one serves and trusts. This is indicated not only by the text itself, but also by the intention of the first commandment, since it says that one should not make any likeness of God to worship it. But images other than God's, especially those that are not worshipped, are nowhere forbidden by God. Yes, He Himself erected the bronze serpent in the same people and tolerated it until they began to worship it. Yes, also the Reubenites erected an altar at the Jordan [Jos. 22, 10.], of which the other [tribes] judged that it was ungodly, but since they heard that it was only built for a sign and monument, not to sacrifice and worship on it, they left it untouched. Moreover, it is clearly stated in Deut. 26:1 that one should not make images to worship them.

That is why we want these bloodhounds 2) mei-

1) Erlanger: ädak instead of ästin.

2) viros sanbniirnm. For the translation, compare 2 Sam. 16, 7.

and not let ourselves be drawn into Judaism. To us Paul says [1 Cor. 8:4], "We know that an idol is nothing in the world," and that all these outward things are free, though they are images intended for some divine worship. For we are to do away with them by the word, or by the public (communi) consent of the authorities and of those under whose power (ditione) they are. But those we have only for a sign and memorial we may have freely, lest at last we also fall into the spirit of murder and sedition, when we suffer freedom to be made a necessity. For one would at least be willing to bear these raging people if they only destroyed the images and did not also make the conscience that it was a necessary work, and sent us under the wrath of the law and deprived us of freedom. But now that we must exist in the freedom that God has given us, we are to tell them that Moses in all his laws is none of our business, but only of the Jews, except where it coincides with the natural law, of which Paul teaches in Rom. 2:15 that it is written in the hearts of the Gentiles. Everything that is not written there, we should count as ceremonies that are necessary for the people of Moses, but free for us, just as the Sabbath is, as Paul, Col. 2, 16, and Isaiah, Cap. 66, 23, testify.

But one must wonder why these enemies of the images are so pious and kind against the images on gold and silver coins, likewise against those that are placed on silver vessels. Why do they only love these images and do not also burn them or throw them away? Can we not understand here the wickedness of Satan, who rules in their hearts through the greatest avarice and the highest frenzy? Further, why then do they not also rend their hearts, since they cannot be without an image, as often as they hear either Christ crucified preached, or they themselves think of him, or of other saints? Or is an image in the eyes, which is outside us, more harmful than that which is in the heart within us? It is a raging and a nonsense by which they seek only honor, as if it were an excellent work. For us it is



enough to know that an idol is nothing in the world. If it is nothing, it will do no harm, whether it stands or falls. But I also do not love the images very much, and would not want them to be set up in the church, not because I have only that in mind that they are worshipped, which I believe happens very rarely, but because a trust is placed in the work, since they cost so much and have such a beautiful appearance, as if by this work a service is rendered to God, while in the meantime the costs and everything that is spent on it, which should be used for a better use for the need of the brethren, is lost. Otherwise, I cannot condemn having beautifully painted (levi pictura) pictures in a private house. But because others have shown this cause, and the raging prophets see that they cannot gain any glory in it, they invent a necessity of the law against the freedom of the spirit, which is in no way to be tolerated.

V. 2. So you shall banish them.

This word [banish] is frequently used in the books of Moses, Joshua, and Judges, which is Hebrew XXX, Latin excommunicare. Hence comes XXX or XXXX, ban, Greek ἀνάθεμα. Therefore Paul says 1 Cor. 16:22: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema, Maharam Motha." Thus the Gentiles were banished by the sword of the children of Israel and became a curse, being made nothing at all and irretrievably brought to ruin. For GOD willed to destroy them utterly from the earth by the decreed judgment, even with a curse. Moses actually calls this Haram or Herem, so that no hope of life or salvation would be left, just as what is banished is cursed and a curse, Deut. 27.

But although these peoples were worthy of death, no one, not even Israel, would have been allowed to kill them if they had not been compelled by a certain and clear commandment and word of God, so that the saying would stand firm [Matth. 26, 52.]: "Whoever takes the sword shall perish by the sword", and again [Rom. 12, 19.]: "Vengeance is mine, I will punish.

Likewise [Heb. 10:30], "The LORD will judge his people." For he who gave life can justly take it away, against whom also they alone have sinned. Therefore he used here of the Israelites for his service, that he might execute his wrath at their hands, even as from the beginning he was always wont to destroy one nation by another, and to transfer one kingdom by another [to another possessor] where they had sinned, as he speaks in the prophets Daniel [Cap. 2, 44.] and Amos [Cap. 9, 8.], "Behold, I come upon a sinful kingdom, to crush it." But in this the swords of other nations are distinguished from the swords of Israel, that God makes use of the fury of those out of a secret judgment, and crushes the wicked by the wicked, but the sword of these is sanctified by a manifest and certain commandment of God, so that with a holy and pure conscience the godly destroy the wicked, and shed blood in holy worship (religione).

This is why he decrees by a verdict that the Amorites and Cananites are to be killed and does not let the Israelites rage against any people as they please. For he excepted the Moabites, Ammonites and Edomites, who were no less godless nations than the Amorites and Cananites, to show that even so great a sinner may not be killed with a clear conscience, if he is not delivered up and named by the command and will of God. For who is there among men who is not worthy of death in the sight of God, except the one whom God, anticipating with His mercy, first made alive by His word and then commanded him to kill others? so that the Jews have no cause to boast as if they alone among men were born to kill the Gentiles, while they were chosen by God only for the purpose that God should execute His wrath on the Cananites by their sword.

And Moses shows this beautifully here, when he says [v. 6]: "For the Lord has chosen you as a people of possession" 2c., as if he wanted to say: Not you have chosen the LORD-

Nor did you come to kill these nations by your own merit, but because God chose you, called you, and commanded you to do so. Yes, so that you know that there is no difference in the sight of God between you and the Gentiles, take this to heart, that if you do not fulfill the word of God and do not kill these Gentiles, but make covenants and marriages with them, the same wrath also awaits you. He says [v. 4.], "Then shall the wrath of the LORD be kindled against thee, and shall soon destroy thee." This same punishment indicates that they will be guilty of the same ungodliness before God, so that they should know that they have an advantage over those Gentiles by the word of God alone; if they did not have this, no Gentiles could be so ungodly that they would not be equal to them both in guilt and punishment.

### **V. 7-11 The Lord has not accepted you and chosen you to be more than all the nations.**

See how diligently Moses acts the first commandment. Above he had taught the true service of God in faith, in the fear and in the love of the spirit. But here, having come to the outward work, lest they should finish in the flesh what they had begun in the spirit, and be puffed up because of their work, and having outwardly destroyed the ungodly and idols, they themselves would become worse evildoers and set up worse idols in their hearts, namely trusting in the work and glory of the same (as the flesh is wont to do), and just by this, on the occasion of such an apparent work, would sin more grievously against the first commandment than the Gentiles whom they killed: He salutarily precedes them, and preserves them in the right use of the law, by entirely abolishing the glory of the work and the trust in it, and calling them to trust in grace alone, saying, "Not that yours are more than all the nations." 2c. As if to say: That God uses your sword is not because he needs your strength, or because he cannot do it without you, since yours are very few. The glory of the work is not yours, but the glory of the one who uses your small number and

will destroy such a great multitude. Otherwise, if he had wanted to win through the multitude, he would not have chosen you, but other nations, whose number is greater than yours.

So what is left for you to boast about in this work? Nothing is yours, "but that the LORD loved you (he says), and that he keeps his oath" 2c. You see that in every work nothing is held up to human trust but the undeserved love of God, by which He is moved to precede us with His word and with His promise, even before we are born. So much is lacking in his repaying anything after we are born or have done any work. And this is the plain and pure understanding of the first commandment, that we may know that we have nothing by our own merits, but have, obtain, are able, and do all things for his glory by his mercy and love alone. As he first promises this mercy by his word, so he confirms it afterwards also by the work, which he does through us, as with a sign, as he mentions here the exodus from Egypt and the extermination of the Cananites.

So you must realize that it is the work of a great spirit that one can destroy the things that have a great appearance by presenting God's name and God's service, as there are the altars and worship services of the pagans. For who should not be deterred and deceived when God's name is held up to him? indeed, who should not be blown away by that feigned piety? Certainly these pagans, as I have said, worshipped only the true GOD, but with false and self-invented service and opinion not commanded by GOD. But a much greater spirit belongs to it, that one does not boast of having destroyed such a service, and instead of the external idol does not set up an internal idol of a completely futile trust. This is such a great thing, that one should purely recognize, sincerely fear, revere, love and believe in the true and only God, that Moses has to spend so many words on it in order to explain the first commandment. Therefore, he also repeats here the words of the first commandment and says [v. 9:]

"Know therefore that the LORD your GOD is a faithful GOD, who keeps the covenant and mercy," 2c., that he might show that this belonged to the understanding of the first commandment, which he had said of reliance on works.

**V. 12-16. And when ye hear these statutes, and keep them 2c.**

What is this? Hitherto he has taught that the people are loved, not by their merit, but by the election of God who precedes them. Now he promises the works and merits the love, the blessing, yes, what is more, the reliability (*fidem*) of the covenant and the promise he attributes to their works, saying: "If you keep, the LORD will also keep the covenant and mercy", which he interprets here by a long text of the temporal welfare. I answer, It is well known the distinction of the antecedent and subsequent mercies, which we have so often given. The antecedent (*praeveniens*) is that by which we are chosen, called, and justified before all our works. The subsequent one is, since we make mercy certain to ourselves by works, and feel the preceding mercy, of which it is said [Mal. 3, 7.], "Turn ye unto me (this is by the preceding mercy), and I will turn unto you also"; this is the subsequent mercy, which gives peace, assurance, and all good things to those already justified, so that one may be said to be mercy, the other peace; or, the one is the gift and the thing, the other is the assurance of the gift received and the thing possessed. Thus he says: If you keep these commandments (which they could not do without grace), you will know that the Lord is faithful to give you the promised land and, having given it to you, to keep it.

**V. 17-20. But will you say in your heart, This people is more than I am 2c.**

Moses removes another cause for breaking the first commandment, namely the lack of trust, which arises from the inability and weakness of our powers,

when the same is compared with the thing and the work commanded. By this the spies sinned, who deterred the people from entering the land, because they made much of the fact that giants, *enakim*, and fortified cities were in it, as we have seen above.

But Moses teaches again how God's commandments must be fulfilled, namely not by our strength, but by the divine power promised to us, by erasing with one word both the trust and the presumption in our strength, as well as the mistrust and the despair because of our weakness; the presumption by indicating that greater things are commanded than we are able, as he here admits that the Gentiles, whom he commands to be destroyed, are more and stronger than Israel, their destroyer; the despair by the fact that the Lord will do through them whatever he commands them.

Therefore, if the children of Israel had looked at their powers and compared them to the powers of the Gentiles, who were to be destroyed, they would have completely despaired of them and disregarded the commandment of God. Now, however, God promises that He will help them so that they may fulfill everything in faith, and He adds to the promise the example of His previous mercy, that He delivered them from the hands of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, so that He might thus provoke them to faith by word and deed, in which they should destroy the Gentiles by command of God. Yes, he also promises them by a new promise that he will send hornets [among the enemies], so that you may see how much it matters that faith be strengthened. By faith, then, one serves God, by faith the commandments of God are fulfilled, by faith we merit to be assisted by the divine power in all our works, so that Christ rightly said [Marc. 9, 23.]: "All things find possible to him that believeth."

**V. 21. Do not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God is among you, the great and terrible God.**

Dear one, whom should this glorious word not puff up and compel to be proud, not only against those pagans who have been exterminated

but also against all the gates of hell? What wonder is it if one puts a thousand to flight, and as David says [Ps. 18:30]: "With my God I can leap over the walls"? What more proud and hopeful can be spoken: "The great and terrible GOD is in our midst"? Ps. 46, 6: "God is with her in it, therefore she will abide." So it is also said in 1 John 4:4: "He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world." So those Gentiles Enakim, giants, may be armed, what is the matter? Who is in their midst? Nothing but the vain confidence in their arm and in the sword of the flesh, but here the great GOD of spirits. Now this is said faithfully enough. Happy is he who believes it firmly, for it will come to pass as he has believed.

**V. 22. You cannot destroy them in haste, lest the beasts of the field multiply against you.**

How sweetly and fatherly he incites them to faith, so that he also anticipates the future weak thoughts of faith, so that they would not constantly think that when the promises of God began to be fulfilled, and the Gentiles were mostly defeated, but still some remained, they were abandoned, or they were deceived with the promise, But let it all be for their good, so that they may take the land the more firmly and completely, and not be forced to endure even more cruel wild beasts instead of the godless exterminated people, although this very delay is also given to the Gentiles for their conversion, so that those who want to may get along again.

Now let us deal a little with the secret interpretations of this chapter.

Our sword is the word of God, with which the spiritual people fight and first kill the Gentiles themselves, that is, convert them from the error in which they lived. Isa. 11, 4: "And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." The images are the ungodly teachings, which come from ungodly opinions, by which one thinks to worship God by works, without faith. The altars are the efforts

The groves are the works of the flesh by which we labor after these doctrines, and in vain do they torment us and bring us to utter ruin (mactamus). The groves are the enticements of the flesh, by which we please ourselves in these works and boast as if they were pleasing in the sight of God. All this must be made nothing by the word of faith, so that God alone may be among us, as he says here.

That hornets are sent before us among the Gentiles is that the ungodly are driven by the terror of the law and the deadly sting of conscience, so that they cannot hide themselves until they perish and are forced to confess their ungodliness. Furthermore, just as it was not in the hands of the Israelites to send hornets before them, so it is not in ours to frighten any ungodly person, but it is God who puts fear into their hearts and makes them fearful, so that, frightened, they say with Paul [Acts 9:6], "Lord, what wilt thou that I should do?" and with those in Acts, Cap. 2, 37: "Dear brethren, what shall we do?"

That the Gentiles should not be destroyed in haste, but gradually, so that the wild beasts in the land do not multiply, is because when the ungodliness of the heart is overcome, the ungodly is not yet completely cleansed, but the battle of the spirit and the flesh still remains, as Panlus teaches Rom. 7, 14. ff. and Gal. 5, 17. ff. This fight is necessary in this life, so that we are not hopeful and slothful and become worse, as Paul says in 2 Cor. 12:7: "Lest I exalt myself to high revelation, there is given me a stake in the flesh." Thus is left within our borders the Jebusite, the Cananite, and the Philistines, that is, the remnant of sin, who are to trouble us and exercise us in spiritual arms. Otherwise, how cruel and savage a beast is the sure presumption, the vainglory, the haughtiness, the sloth, in that we forget our weakness, and ascribe to our powers that which belongs to grace and mercy alone, which rules over us and does not impute to us our infirmities!

Of the gold of the idols nothing shall be

Neither the remnants of ungodly words nor works should be preserved in the conscience, but the hearts should be filled and preserved with the pure word of God, and with it alone, so that the ungodly nature does not finally infect us as well. For example, the ungodly word "free will" and all the doctrines that are spread about it should be completely abhorred and not allowed, as if it could be tolerated in good usage or with any gloss. So also are the monastic vows

and rules for a banished gold (aurum anathematis), and one should only act on them in order to punish and curse them, not in order that our consciences may be advised by them, with whatever little bell one may think it can be done. The house of conscience must be completely clean from them, because there is nothing more tender and softer than conscience and faith, as it is said: discipline and honor, faith and eye suffer no jest [all three are soon corrupted].

## The eighth chapter.

### V. 1. All the commandments that I have given you 2c.

This is a new and different sermon, as I said that Moses completed this book in many days and with many sermons. But in this chapter he deals with the occasion for breaking the first commandment, which is given by well-being and abundance, which turns the heart away much more than repulsiveness and lack, as he [Moses] says in his song [Deut. 32, 15]: "He became fat and thick and strong, and became horny." And Prov. 1, 32. "The luck of the wicked kills them," as is also said in the German proverb, "There must be strong legs to carry good days. For a man bears evil more easily than good, as the poet says: *Luxuria saevior hostis incubuit* etc.. [Abundance has broken in as an exceedingly cruel enemy].

### V. 2. and remember all the way 2c.

First, he says that the people were beaten and tempted by God in the desert for forty years, so that they would know what was in their hearts, namely, whether they loved God with a sincere mind or for the sake of their bellies. For even we ourselves never know our heart (which is always evident to God) more surely whether it serves God for the sake of the belly or not, than when we are challenged by lack and misfortune. A believing heart loves, believes and serves as well,

when it suffers lack and evil days, than when it is in the midst of riches and good days. But an unbelieving heart believes as long as the good is there, but retreats when calamity comes, as it says in the 78th Psalm [v. 37. 36.], "Their heart was not steadfast in him, and they lied to him with their tongue."

### V. 3-16 He humbled you, and made you hungry, and fed you with man, that he might make known to you that man does not live by bread alone 2c.

What kind of conclusion is this, that by giving manna it is made known that man lives by the word of God? Is the manna the word of God? Not at all, but rather he explains what he had said about the lack, namely in this way: Before he gave you manna, he first made you suffer hunger. He did this so that he might show you that even if the manna never came, he could still sustain you through his word, by which he had promised that he would be a GOD to you, who would not abandon you, just as he had sustained you. For faith in the word of God, even in the midst of hunger, nourishes not only the soul but also the body, that is, as he says here, the whole man, since it is impossible that he who with faith clings to the word should perish, even if he should not eat or drink anything of the body, although God has not given you any food or drink.

In truth, he does not leave us, yes, at last, when his time has come, he also feeds us bodily, like Elijah through the ravens and the widow in Sarepta, and here the fathers through the manna.

This announcement that man does not live on bread alone does not refer to the manna, but to both, namely to the tribulation of hunger and to the quantity of manna, so that the meaning is: God wanted to show you this His goodness through your experience, so that you would learn in hunger to trust in the word of the Promiser, through which you would also be sustained in hunger and would not perish, but then finally also receive bodily satiety through this faith. For he does all this for the sake of taking the belly as an idol, and you learned that a man's life does not depend on the belly being supplied with its bread, but rather on both the soul and the belly being supplied with the word, 1) which you would never learn if the belly were always full, and you never learned through the word to trust in God even at the time when the belly is in want.

In this way, Christ cites Matth. 4, 4. this passage, where the devil only reproaches him for the care of the belly; but he says: "Man does not live by bread alone", not denying that man lives by bread, but not alone. For if the bread is not there, then he lives by the word. If he has this by faith, then bread must necessarily come at last, even if it has to be brought forth from the stones or, as here, sent down from heaven. Since he now says: "He humbled you, and let you hunger, and tempted you," he draws from your belly and the care of your belly, so that he teaches to trust in the word in the midst of hunger, and to live [by the word]. Since he says, "He fed you with man," he indicates that those who live by the word in hunger will not lack bread. So you see that by these words nothing is taught but faith, by which we hold fast and believe that we have one God according to the meaning of the first commandment.

But he commands them to remember this fact, how they were fed in the wilderness both by the word and by the bread, indicating and prophesying, as it were, that they would later be tempted by the same temptation of hunger, so that they would then be raised to faith by the comfort of this example, and would know that they would be fed, however much the hunger rages, if they only believe the word of promise in the first commandment, in which he promises that he will be their God, as it is written in the 37th Psalm, v. 19. Psalm, v. 19: "And they shall have enough in the day of trouble." For it is impossible for the righteous to be forsaken, or for his seed to go after bread. He will indeed hunger, but he will not die of hunger, for hunger exercises his faith, which hangs on the word; but faith also obtains bread for the body.

So the glorious word of Moses stands firm that God deals with His own in such a way that He tempts through hunger and exercises through His word, then feeds the believer, even if it is in the middle of heaven, if it cannot happen otherwise, so that they may learn by experience that one need not be concerned about the belly, that life also does not stand in the things that we possess or in bread, but in the word, through which we become rich in God, as is written in the Gospel [Luc. 1 2, 21.]. For since we live in the heart through the word, we force God, as it were, to nourish the belly as well.

As he promises food to the believers, so also clothing, then also good health of the body, as he adds here soon after the manna [v. 4]: "Your clothes are not outdated on you, and your feet are not swollen these forty years," so that he teaches by these words that those who live and believe by the word will not lack anything, but that God takes care of us in all things, and through all things, as Peter says [1. Ep. 5, 7.], "Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you," and Ps. 34, 11.: "They that seek the LORD have no lack of any good."

If one understands these and similar promises of God, which are quite glorious and certain, correctly, then this means the promise of the first

1) Added by us.

In this commandment he says: "I am the Lord, your God. Thine, thine, I will show and prove myself to thee as God, neither will I forsake thee, if thou wilt but believe it. For all such promises depend on the first commandment and flow from it. On the other hand, if you do not believe them, it really means that you do not understand the first commandment, but have other gods.

But Moses applies this teaching of faith to the future use in the midst of abundance of goods, as I said in the beginning of the chapter, namely, that they should then remember how they were once fed with manna in the midst of scarcity through the Word, and reflect on this example and teaching, and learn that they should not trust in God any more because they have abundance and are full, since their belly is well supplied. Such trust is not in God, but rather in the goods and gifts they have received. Hence, they forget both the right trust and the word of God, and never learn to trust God in lack. And (as I have said), it is a great thing and the work of a rich (multi) spirit, when everything is well, not to forget God, and to behave as Paul says [1 Cor. 7, 30. 31.As if you had no need of the world, as if you had no need of it, so that you know how to have plenty and to be in want, how to be low and to be high [Phil. 4:12], and with the prophet [Psalm 62:11] not to set your heart on riches when they come, and not to become vain, but to set your heart on God alone.

For this is what Moses has to do in this chapter, in that he contrasts and introduces in the midst of the abundance the example of the manna, which was given in the midst of the lack, so that he might bring them back from the belly to the word. Therefore he repeats also at the end, after he had pictured the future riches, and speaks [v. 15-17.]: "He made water come out of the hard rock for you, and fed you with man in the wilderness, of which your fathers knew nothing, that he might humble you and try you, that he might do you good hereafter. You might otherwise

say in your heart" 2c. Is it not a stronger example that He gave drink out of the hard rock, and manna in the wilderness, than that Christ teaches Matt. 6:28. of the lilies of the field and the birds of the air, that GOD provides for them? For what less could you hope for than that water and drink should come out of a rock? What less in a desert than bread and food? Why did He not give the water from a greening tree or a cloud of heaven? Why not the food from branches, or roots, or herbs? Why did he do this?

Of course, in order to praise the great care of God, which he carries for us, who is a God to us even when everything is in despair, since he also wants to and can change a rock into your drink, the desert into your food, nakedness into beautiful clothing, poverty into wealth, death into life, shame into honor, evil into good, enemies into friends. And what should he not be able to do? He can give and change everything from everything, everything in everything, everything from nothing, everything into nothing. Only let it concern you to believe, and when there is lack, not to be fainthearted and anxious, again, when there is abundance, not to be puffed up and surely forget God, but to always cling to your God with the same heart, no matter whether everything is there or everything is lacking, knowing that he who gives abundance will also give when lack oppresses. See, then, how appropriately and fittingly Moses uses this miracle of God to explain the meaning of the first commandment.

**V. 17. 18. Otherwise you would say in your heart, My strength, and the strength of my hands 2c.**

He adds this to describe what forgetfulness of God is and how it comes about. For this is how the godless heart of man stands when wealth accrues to him: I have brought this about through my work, and does not pay attention to the fact that they are all blessings of God, sometimes through our work, sometimes without our work, but which never come from (ex) our work, but from us.

are always given freely out of his mercy. For, as we have taught above, he uses our work as a kind of larva, under which he blesses us and gives us what is his, so that there is room for faith, so that we do not think that what we have is brought about by our strength or work, or, as he says here, so that we do not think that it is through our powers and the strength of our hands that we possess this ability, but remember the Lord our God, that it is he who gives the powers to acquire this ability, not through our merits, but because he had promised it beforehand.

This is therefore the particularly excellent (insignis) passage from which many excellent sayings have flowed, as the word in the Proverbs of Solomon [Cap. 10, 22.]: "The blessing of the Lord makes rich", likewise in the Psalm [Ps. 136, 25.]: "Who gives food to all flesh", and the whole Psalm of Solomon [Ps. 127.]. The same is true for the whole Psalm of Solomon [Ps. 127.]: "Where the Lord does not build the house", where it is completely denied that anything is brought about or preserved by our powers, as also Moses says here that wealth is not acquired by our powers or the strength of our hands, but by God, who blesses and gives the powers that we may "establish a fortune" [Deut. 8, 17], that is, wealth and possessions (substantiam), for this is what the Hebrew word XXX means. Faith, which does not exalt itself in prosperity nor become fainthearted in adversity, is thus the short epitome, 1) the interpretation and true understanding and fulfillment of the first commandment.

### **V. 19. 20. But if you forget the Lord your God and follow other gods 2c.**

Just as the promise of grace is presented to the believers, so the threat of wrath is presented to the unbelievers, so that he may draw and urge to faith from both sides. Unbelief makes of GOD and the Father a judge and enemy, as He says here, "I testify to you that you will perish." Faith makes the enemy and judge into God and the Father.

a father, as he said shortly before [Cap. 1, 31.]: "As a man carries his son, so the Lord has carried you." And again, you are to notice especially here that absolutely no distinction is made between the people of Israel and the Gentiles, who are to be cut off, except by faith, as he says here, that they are to perish just as much as those Gentiles whom the Lord will cut off before their face. So they have nothing to boast of against the Gentiles, neither of the law, nor of the righteousness of works, nor of the blood of the fathers, nor of the miracles of God, nor of the divine speeches, nor of the priesthood, nor of the kingdom, nor of anything else. The verdict is clear: If they forget God and serve other gods, they will perish as if all this were nothing and they were also pagans. For whoever does not believe will be condemned. It has been said sufficiently that "to honor other gods" means to be unbelieving and to act against the true God.

The secret interpretations or allegories of this chapter are easy to understand. Manna, which in Hebrew is called something prepared or a gift, because it is prepared and given without our hands, means the gospel of God, as Christ also interprets John 6:32: "Moses did not give you bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the right bread from heaven." For this heavenly word was not given to the world by our powers or merits. Lack and tribulation in the wilderness for forty years means the misery of a conscience struggling with sin, where there is hunger and thirst, then also fiery serpents and scorpions, namely the biting and sting of sin, which cruelly torments us. The manna comes and feeds us, the brook comes that is cut out of the rock, that is the spirit that has come to us through Christ crucified, and refreshes us, so that we will never, ever thirst, John 4:14. Furthermore, as inconsistent as it was that water should flow out of a stone that is cut, it is against all remembrance (inopinatum) that the spirit of life comes out of Christ who died, so that Moses too

1) We have assumed a comma with the Wittenberger after summn rsi.



was trapped here. For who could hope for the spirit that gives life from a dying and buried flesh?

Abundance and happiness in the promised land are the riches of the gifts of the spirit, the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which are given to us in Christ, where we dwell safely and abound in all heavenly things.

Here it is necessary that we are not puffed up when we are satisfied, but in gratitude praise the Lord, who has given us all these things not only without our merit, but also when we were under the curse and lost under the misery of sin. Let this be enough for this occasion.

## The ninth chapter.

In this chapter, Moses cuts off another opportunity to transgress the first commandment, which is called spiritual pride, which boasts of righteousness and merit. This is the trust in one's own works, which is the most harmful corruption and the greatest adversary of faith or trust in the mercy of God. Therefore Moses destroys the same with many words in this whole chapter. For this is a robbery of God's honor, since it cannot exist at the same time that we boast of God because of mercy, and seek glory in ourselves 1) because of our righteousness and our works. But he refutes this righteousness with three strong reasons.

First, that those Gentiles deserved to be cast out because of their ungodliness. This he says [v. 5.], "For thou comest not in to take their land, because of thy righteousness and uprightness of heart; but the LORD thy GOD doth drive out these heathen because of their ungodliness." By this word we also are to be instructed, when we see that others are smitten, either by us or by others. For it does not follow: You or others will strike that one, therefore you and others are righteous before them. Otherwise the tower in Siloah, which slew many in Jerusalem, Luc. 13, 4, would also have to be declared righteous. But it is God who strikes the wicked;

Whether he does it by a tower, by fire, by water, by wild animals, by your hand or by the hand of another man, there is nothing to it but that the righteous God strikes the wicked.

By the way, you should also fear this example, because the wicked will be struck down for your terror, as Christ explains it in Luc. 13, 5. when he says: "All of you will also perish in this way," and Paul says Rom. 11, 21. 22. when he forbids with the same reason that the Gentiles should not rise up because of the fall of the Jews: "See to it that he does not spare you"; "otherwise you will also be cut off. And Rom. 2:3: "But thinkest thou, O man, who judgest them that do these things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" It is therefore an excellent saying of St. Gregory, who says: "If we see anyone sinning, we should first of all weep for ourselves in their misfortune, because in the same way we have either already fallen or can fall, which someone has summarized in this verse:

Aut sumus, aut fuimus, aut possumus esse, quod hic est

[either we are, or were, or can be, what this one is].

And in the descriptions of the lives of the fathers, when he heard that a brother had fallen, he said: Yesterday that one, today me. Therefore, when another is struck, one must remember this:

Tunc tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet [This concerns you when the next wall is burning].

1) We have adopted the reading of the Wittenberg: btorisri in Dsv às rnissriooräia, st Aloriari in nobis ipsis. In the Jena and in the Erlangen the words st givriari are erroneously placed before às inissrisvräis.

Yes, with a heart full of mercy and compassion, the wicked shall be destroyed or beaten by us, signifying that we are the instrument of God, who may also be thrown into the fire ourselves like a rod, after the evildoers have been punished by us.

Second, [Moses refutes his own righteousness] 1) by the prestige of the divine promise. [V. 5:] "The LORD hath driven them out to perform his oath and his word, which he promised unto thy fathers." Nothing stronger could be said against confidence in one's own righteousness. For where were the children of Israel when GOD promised their father Abraham the land of Canaan, since he was still barren and had no hope of offspring? Thus, when they receive and possess the land through the promise of GOD, they have it not through their own merits or their own righteousness, but out of pure grace and goodness of GOD poured out on the unworthy, who themselves were not yet born. For why does he give the promise? Is it because those who are to come after 430 years should deserve it in such a way? Let that be far away, but he who promised it out of pure goodness, he also fulfilled his word out of pure mercy. This reason is also used by Paul in his letters to the Galatians [Cap. 2, 16. ff. 3, 2. ff.] and to the Romans [Cap. 4, 1. ff.], where he most powerfully proves that righteousness does not come from merit, but from the mercy of God, which he once promised.

Third, [he refutes their own righteousness] from their own experience, since he says [v. 6.], "Because you are a stiff-necked people" 2c. By this stiff-neckedness they did not deserve the land so much that it was close to it, because God was angry that He destroyed them in the wilderness rather than the Gentiles, as the Psalm [Ps. 106, 26.] says: "And He lifted up His hand against them, to strike them down in the wilderness," and would have turned His promise elsewhere, namely to the descendants of Mosiah, 4 Mos. 14, 12. Yes, He struck all of them until

down to the last man in the wilderness, except Joshua and Caleb, so that neither Moses nor Aaron entered the land. So much is lacking in the fact that they were supposed to enter the land through their merit that the opposite should have happened to them, as it really did if they were to be dealt with according to their merit. This reason is also used by Paul in Rom. 4, 14. f., where he says: "For where those who are heirs of the law are, faith is nothing and the promise is lost, since the law only causes wrath", so that you can see that Moses and Paul use the same reasoning (*dialectica*) of the spirit against the righteousness of works, for the grace and mercy of God.

Therefore, all this is also written for our instruction, so that we may learn that the misfortune that befalls the wicked does indeed come upon them deservedly, but that if it does not befall us, but we enjoy good days, we do not have to thank our righteousness for this, but the goodness of God, through which it has been provided and promised to us from eternity before, since we also deserve the opposite by far. For the verdict is clear that we are not given anything good because of our righteousness, but so that God may fulfill His word that He has willed from eternity that we should not be puffed up and make an idol out of our righteousness, but should know that we have One God from whom we receive everything for free out of pure goodness that has been poured out on us unworthy ones, as the patriarch Jacob also confesses when he says, Gen. 32, 10: "I am too little of all the mercies which thou hast done to thy servant," that is, not only of one mercy, which may be great, but of any mercy, however small and small it may be.

Furthermore, Moses applies a salutary antidote against this harmful plague (for this monster of one's own righteousness is so powerful that one cannot do enough against it). For he sets before their eyes all the past misdeeds of the people, and commands them to remember them, and the sin that they worshipped the calf at Mount Sinai he brings before them with powerful words.

1) Added by us.

on. For what can cure this disease of pride more swiftly and better (*praesentius*) than to remember past ungodliness and shameful deeds? For what else has the people but such things, because of which they must be ashamed to lift up their eyes to heaven? As Paul says to his Romans [Cap. 6, 21.], "Of which ye are now ashamed." For this is why God also caused David, Moses, Peter and Paul and other great men to fall, so that they would be humbled and ashamed before God, basing themselves on His goodness alone. Therefore Peter, 2 Petr. 1, 9, severely punishes those who let the forgiveness of their former sins be forgotten and become sure and cold, and then stiff-necked and hopeful.

At last he concludes [v. 24.], "Ye have always been disobedient to the LORD as long as I have known you." O what fine praise is this, what merit, what righteousness of the holy people, namely, that they have been disobedient to the voice of GOD! Now go and boast, boast, boast that the land is given to you because of your righteousness, since you deserve to hear nothing but that you are a stiff-necked people and always disobedient to the Lord: indeed, to these merits belongs that royal wealth, and not rather a thousandfold death and cross! What more frightening can be said than that one is disobedient to the Lord? And yet this disobedience

the praised (*laudata*) and blessed land. What is there left for Israel to hope for, but rather to put its mouth in the dust and say: I am worse than all the heathen, and great and undeserved is thy mercy, that I should receive this land. Furthermore, if this holy Israel and the chosen (*peculiaris*) people are like this before God, what are we Gentiles and sinners?

See, with how powerful words Moses accuses the people even in the prayer, in which he prays for them, because he says [v. 27. 28.]: "Do not look at the hardness, and the godlessness and sin of this people, lest the inhabitants of the land say" 2c. Here nothing is told of the people but such things because of which they deserved death. There was only the one thing that served to save them, that the name of the LORD was in danger if they were cut off. Therefore, so that the name of God would not be blasphemed, grace (*venia*) is given to them, which otherwise would not have been given to them, but they would have had to be exterminated altogether, if the name of God, after which they were called [Jer. 15, 16.], could have remained unharmed. Therefore also many others, especially David in the Psalter, took this quite sure and reliable pretext, that they said [Ps. 25, 11.]: "For thy name's sake, O LORD, be merciful to my iniquity," 2c., and Joshua [Cap. 7, 9.]: "What wilt thou then do by thy great name," after which we are called?

## The tenth chapter.

What Moses says here about the second tablets belongs to the previous chapter, to make the sin that they had worshiped the calf great. For the chapters are not properly divided; as often in other places, so also here. But what is said of the journeys and the camps of Israel, of the death of Aaron and the appointment of his son Eleazar in his place, of the ordinance that the Levites should bear the ark and stand in the service and praise the name of the Lord, he will

either because this happened when this was going on, or because Moses arranged at these camps with the Levites what was commanded on the mountain Sinai, or, what I rather believe, because after the death of Aaron, since a new priest, Eleazar, had been appointed, also the service of the Levites is improved and arranged anew and once more, as it is used to happen in human things, which fall and change daily. After this, Moses returned to the priesthood.

back to the sin they committed with the calf, and after obtaining mercy (for the people), he receives the command to lead the people into the Promised Land.

The secret interpretation of the calf and the tablets also belongs to the previous chapter. About the tablets Paul instructs us sufficiently in 2 Cor. 3, 3, namely that the stone tablets are the hard hearts of the people of the law, while the people of grace have the fleshy and soft tablets of the heart. Now the laws are written on tables of stone, because the work of the law is written in all hearts, since their conscience testifies to it, Rom. 2:15. But the hardness of the heart causes it not to be grasped with the mind, not to be loved, not to be kept, not to be fulfilled in works. As the tablets of stone preserve only the written letters, but do nothing, so the hard hearts, without the Spirit, have the law only for a witness against themselves. Especially the Jewish people is such a host (hospes) of the law and of the whole Moses, for testimony against themselves.

The calf, which is made of gold, is the doctrine of works, which is made of words of the scripture and the falsified law, and twisted by the service and the art of the priests, who are supposed to preside over the people. This (doctrine of works) is worshipped, if one seeks honor in it and the confidence of the conscience (which is only due to the true God) is placed on it, as the saints of works (justitarios) must necessarily do. Moses, however, takes it, burns it with fire, breaks and crushes it, and throws it into the brook that flows from the mountain, that is, the true service of the law teaches the knowledge of sin, and that works together with their teachings are nothing, but that the grace of God is necessary to justify. Therefore, this whole doctrine is crushed and thrown away and devoured by the stream of the Gospel, which flows from the mountain, Christ, that fills the earth. Moses gives the people to drink from it, showing that the gospel is necessary, and presses toward it through the knowledge of sin. Then Moses comes back to it.

that he exhorts to the first commandment and praises the same, saying [v. 12.], "Now, Israel, what does the LORD your GOD require of you?" as if to say: This is the summa of the first commandment, of which I have said all these things, and for whose sake all that was said before was done, that thou fear the LORD thy GOD, and walk [in his ways], and love him, and serve him, that thou keep the commandments which I command thee this day. I said above that with the Hebrews "the fear of GOD" means the same as with us the worship of GOD. And see here the order: fear, walk, love, serve with all your heart 2c. Moses puts before what follows [v. 13.]: "That you keep the commandments and the statutes" 2c., 1) That thou mayest know that nothing can be kept of the outward commandments, that it is pleasing to God, unless it proceed from a heart that fears, loves, obeys, and serves, so that the power of the first commandment, which is faith, may rule and work in all commandments and works; without which all things are but appearances and guises.

**V. 14. 15. Behold, the heavens and all the heavens are the heavens of the LORD your God 2c.**

Again, after the manner of a good lawgiver, he inculcates and repeats how great and how good God is, who commands. Behold, he says, there are different heavens and different gods, but your God is One over all (as Paul 1 Cor. 8, 5. f. also almost speaks), and yet out of all nations, under all heavens, he loved and chose your fathers and their seed. It is known that in Scripture "the heavens" are not distinguished according to circles (sphaeras), as mathematicians are wont to do, but according to parts of the earth, just as the earth is divided [into various parts], as it is said elsewhere [Deut. 28:23]: "Your heaven, which is over your head, will be brazen," namely, that it [Scripture] indicates another heaven for this people, another heaven for another people. But this GOD is a GOD of all heavens, that is, he rules

1) In the Jena one the words are missing: prasinittit liuis, Hnoct soHuitnr: l5t ssrvss prassspta st statuta sts. - In the Erlanger a new sentence is started with "krasmittit" (erroneously).

over all heavens in the horizon of all people, and not only of the Jews, but of all nations. Thus it is said in Ps. 115, 16: "The heavens are the Lord's in all places, but the earth He has given to the children of men.

**V. 16. 17. Circumcise your heart's foreskin 2c.**

This is a clear saying about the twofold circumcision, where at the same time the trust and presumption in the fleshly circumcision is condemned. Otherwise, if it were sufficient, what need would there be to require circumcision of the heart? Jeremiah also says that the Gentiles are uncircumcised in the flesh, but Israel is uncircumcised in the heart. With this word Moses throws to the ground all the glory of this people, with which he had puffed them up in the previous word, as it seemed, when he said that they were chosen before all nations, under all heavens, so that they would not be hopeful against the other nations. Yea, it soon follows, that the LORD is the LORD above all lords, and great, who regardeth not persons, nor receiveth gifts [v. 17.] What [does he regard] then? Nothing but the obedience of the heart, or the circumcision of the spirit, whose praise is from God, Rom. 2, 29. Now since he does not regard the person, but the circumcision of the flesh, and the begetting according to the flesh (sanguinis) from the fathers, and all things, except the circumcision of the heart, are personal things 1) and make regard to the person (personas), it follows that they cannot please God by this, but only by the circumcision of the heart. If the Gentiles have this, as the second chapter of the Epistle to the Romans [vv. 26, 27] states, they fulfill the law and judge the Jews who are circumcised according to the flesh.

So Moses destroys the opportunity to sin against the first commandment, which arises from the keeping of the circumcision and all works of the law. A very strange lawgiver, who at the same time commands the works and yet condemns them when they are done. But he does this so that

They should know that the law is not fulfilled by the works of the law, but by the circumcision of the heart, and only these works are truly good works, which do not come from the compulsion of the law, but from a heart that is previously circumcised. For this is demanded by him who does not look at the persons; otherwise the works make nothing but appearance (personas). And this teaching of Moses is similar to the one Paul treats in his letter to the Romans.

**V. 18. And lent the strangers, that he might give them meat and raiment.**

These very sweet promises of God are well to be remembered: "He who respects no person", likewise: "He takes no gift", likewise: "He provides justice for widows and orphans", likewise: "He loves the stranger, that he gives them food and clothing". For with these words God clearly comforts all the wretched, abandoned and afflicted in the whole world, and draws their hearts to Himself so that they entrust themselves to Him and rely on His goodness, as is fitting against the true, one and only God. For if he respects no person, I have already, that I can boast and be proud with a puffed up heart against all kings, princes, rich, strong of the world, sure that I, who am despised and abandoned by them as a poor, ignoble, weak one, am nevertheless respected, received and protected by him, who is the GOD of gods and the HEART of all lords (as Moses is also emblazoned with words here and is hopeful), mighty and terrible above all my despisers. What should I lack, then, if any lord despises me above a few servants, while the LORD above all lords, and the GOOD of all gods, dignifies me with his care?

Even if I am a fool, a sinner, a desperate and lost man, even if I am condemned, condemned and condemned as a sinner, a heretic, a cursed man, a blasphemer, a servant of the devil, what does it matter? Those are holy, righteous, honored, praised, reckoned among the children of God, and numbered among the stars: what does it matter? Here is the God of all gods, who has made these

1) Instead of persovatie in the Erlanger is to read personall".

He does not look at the appearance (personas), nor does he care for their gifts (dona); he cares for me sinners and fools just as much as those presume that he cares for them. Dear one, holding these promises in faith, what event (res) could possibly occur that could grieve me? What sin could oppress me, what sin could bring me to despair? Yes, what height, what depth, what present, what creature could make us puffed up or humble? Only let your heart cling to these words, and you will lack nothing, even if everything should leave you; but nothing will be there, even if everything would be favorable to you (arriserint). Only believe that he who speaks these words does not lie, as he cannot lie, and you will have a safe and cheerful heart in all things and through all things.

See, this is called explaining the first commandment, here is the interpretation of Moses himself. Thus he teaches to understand what it means that there is one God, what it means to have one God, what it means to keep the first commandment. Dear, what great sources even these words alone have been for the prophets, who have taken from them everything they cry out about God's care for the weak, the lowly, the poor, sinners, widows, orphans, the condemned, the damned, the afflicted and the miserable; in turn, [everything] they thunder about God's wrath and vengeance against the rich, tyrants, powerful and judges, against the violent, the hard and the proud. For all this flows out of the great Ocean of the first commandment and flows back into it again, so that no word has ever been heard that was more fruitful and richer in comfort, nor will ever be heard, again also no harsher and more severe than this word of the first commandment: "I am the LORD your GOD."

And now, to go on to the rest: The widows and the orphans suffer much, who cares for them? No one, no one. But they shall look here with a sure heart, because it is said for their joy: The God of all gods, the Lord over all lords, the great God, mighty and terrible, he brings justice to the widows and orphans. Therefore also Ps. 68, 6: "He who is a father of the fatherless and a judge of the fatherless.

who" wants this title of honor to be praised so that it may be seen that out of pure mercy he admonishes the tyrants so that they do not commit something by which he is forced to do enough for this title, but faithfully scares them so that they fear to harm the widows and orphans, but rather, according to his example, do them good and love them. And this is even more glorious, that whether the widows and orphans believe or not, he will nevertheless do them justice and judge the tyrants, even though the unbelief of the widows and orphans does not deserve this in this life, or to experience it as long as the unbelief lasts. For this promise continues and is fulfilled against the violent and the hard, although no one here should believe; but it would be fulfilled much more powerfully and quickly if the widows and orphans also believed.

He so loves the strangers that he feeds and clothes them. I pray thee, who would now rely upon his house or his paternal inheritance? though this also is not to be despised. But if it should happen that one must be a stranger, let no one despair or believe less than if he could enjoy his father's house, but let him sing with the Psalmist [Ps. 27:10], "My father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD hath taken me up." The Book of Wisdom [Cap. 10, 10. 1 says of the patriarch Jacob: "Wisdom guided the righteous, who had to flee from his brother's wrath, straightway, and showed him the kingdom of God, and made him know what is holy, and helped him in his work, so that he increased well and gained much good in his work. "2c. Who doubts that it therefore happens that more people become rich, high and famous in foreign lands than those who stay at home with their parents and are raised there? For God is a Father of all people, who loves the stranger, that He may give him food and clothing.

V. 21. He is your glory and your God.

This is a Hebrew way of speaking. "Glory" (laus) in this passage seems to me to be actually what Paul calls in Greek or *χαῶxp,aa*, gloriationem, in German:

"Glory," so that the meaning is, Because of no thing, neither because of thy person, nor because of thy works, shalt thou blow thyself out or boast, but boast thyself of God, in him blow thyself up, in him be hopeful, knowing that it is he who regardeth not the person 2c., who has done such great and terrible things for you, which your eyes have seen, as if to say, By experience you have learned that when you were a stranger he gave you food and clothing, that he does not regard the person, that he gives justice to the fatherless and the widow 2c. So you have, by which you can be puffed up and hopeful against all tyrants, yes, against all evil, namely your God, who provides you with all good. So you see that this is the fulfillment of the first commandment, when God is the glory, the prize, the emblazonment, the hope of our heart, both at the time of prosperity and adversity. For this is to have GOD in truth.

The secret interpretation of the broken tablets and the unfinished ones is this, that the office of the law is in twofold use: First, when only works are done without the heart being present, that is, in truth, raising up and worshipping a calf, that is, making a carnal doctrine of works out of the law, and boasting in it, which is the same thing.

as transgressing the law. This is what Moses shows when he breaks the tablets after seeing the calf, that is, he announces that the law of God has been transgressed through the teaching and delusion of works. Therefore, the law does not come to the people in this way, because it is not understood by the carnal people. Secondly, when it comes to the people but is not endured because of the splendor of the face of Moses, and the worshippers of the calf are killed, that is, the spiritual law causes wrath [Rom. 4:15] by showing sin, Rom. 7:7, and one cannot endure the strength (cornu) of its splendor because it requires something quite different from the work.

Therefore the journey of the children of Israel, and the death of Aaron, and the reformation of the Levites are described here at the same time, namely, that the second custom of the law follows after the first, and that the priests and masters (magistri) of the calf must be taken away, that is, the teaching of works, so that the people may come to a different mind, and the Levites, that is, the ministers of the word, be reformed, so that they may be in the service of the Lord, not of works, and praise the name of the Lord. 8], that is, preach the word of grace, so that the Lord alone may be their portion in pure faith. Then the first commandment is fulfilled.

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## The eleventh chapter.

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This chapter is a kind of conclusion (epilogus) of all the previous exhortations about the first commandment. For he repeats and inculcates the benefits they received in Egypt and in the desert, and he promises that they shall receive the land and also benefits in the future, if they keep the commandments of God and serve no other gods. For this first commandment he has acted and practiced until now, therefore he is also so concerned about it that he commands to take it to heart, to bind it as a sign on the hands and before the eyes, and that the children should be taught, as he also did above [Cap. 6, 6. ff.], because in this commandment the children are to be taught.

In the first commandment, the whole concept and the fulfillment of all the following ones is contained. Thus, we see that Moses did not omit anything that would serve the understanding of the first commandment, as he treated everything abundantly that can promote faith and everything that hinders it. In the following he will treat the customs and the ceremonies of the works of this commandment.

But he also interpolates some promises, namely, that if they cling to the Lord, he will drive out the nations that are stronger than they are, likewise, all the lands on which they set foot will be theirs, likewise, that he says [v. 25], "No one will resist you.

and: "Your fear and terror the Lord your God will cause to come over the whole land into which you will enter"; then besides the promises also the curse. Yes, both at the same time, blessing and curse, he commands to be proclaimed on the mountains Grisim and Ebal, of which we will say later what all belongs to the last final speech. He also adds what the promised land is like, as a kind of promise, namely, that it is not like the land of Egypt, but the Lord takes special care of it, for His eyes look upon it from the beginning of the year until the end, so that He may hang them by faith in God, and they should know that rain will fall on this land if they believe, by the grace of God; but if they do not believe, there will be a lack of rain.

It is known that Egypt is not moistened by rain, but by the flooding of the Nile, which takes place annually in summer. This miracle of God has been disregarded because it happened so frequently, as it does with all other things. For by this Egypt has a wonderful difference against other countries. But this promised land has mountains and valleys, so it is not fertilized by the flood of a river, but by moistening rains from heaven, not that other lands are not also moistened and supplied in the same way, and the eyes of the Lord do not also take care of them from the beginning of the year to the end, as in this land, since He gives food to all flesh [Ps. 136, 25.], and, as it is said in the previous chapter [v. 18.], "giveth meat and raiment unto strangers," and "fillethe the hearts of the children of men with meat and gladness," Apost. 14, 17. but that no people have a promise of God concerning this. God gives everything to everyone, but to this special people he also gives the word of promise that they should not live on bread alone, as other peoples do, but also on the word, and that they should not only care for their belly on earth, but much more also for their spirit, so that they would not think that the land was given to them to fatten themselves in it like pigs, and would not rather believe that they were fed by the word of God and received everything through the word of God, that is, that they served God. So not for the sake of the land itself.

but for the sake of the people who are in it, God cares for them and looks to them to rule them by faith in it, as it says elsewhere: He did not choose the people for the sake of the place, but the place for the sake of the people [Ex 20:24]. For he did not choose Abraham and his seed for the land which he had promised him, but chose the land for Abraham's sake, to give it to him.

But the land means the kingdom of Christ, which was previously possessed by ungodly devils and teachers and work drivers, but is freed from sins and errors by the word of the Gospel. In this land, we live by faith in such a way that we feel with a confident and trusting conscience that God will take care of us and keep the eyes of His grace open over us. After that it is fertilized with rain of heavenly teaching. For it is not by the work or word of man, as in Egypt, that the moistening waters are brought, but it is moistened by the speech of God alone from heaven 2c.

It is also said elsewhere about the early rain and the late rain that the early rain is the first rain, the late rain the following one, because thus there are happy seeds and all things the abundance, if after the rain comes clear weather and sun warmth, but after that, if the heat becomes strong, rain follows again. For constant rain spoils everything just as much as constant heat and warmth. So also the teaching must not only be practiced among the people, but also the work of faith must be practiced according to the teaching. But where the power is slackened by work and suffering, the heart must be raised up again, strengthened and comforted by the teaching. This is how man grows in the knowledge of God. Otherwise, if one only teaches and does nothing, it is just as if it rained constantly, so that everything would be choked and dried up. Again, if one does and suffers, and does not teach, it is just as if the heat were constantly burning, so that the power of the spirit would slacken and be extinguished. So both are necessary, early rain and late rain, namely teaching and admonishing, Rom. 12:7, 8: "If anyone teaches, let him wait for teaching; if anyone admonishes, let him wait for admonishing."



## The twelfth chapter.

### V. 1. ff. These are the commandments and statutes that you are to keep 2c.

Now that the spiritual explanation of the first commandment has been completed and the heart instructed, Moses moves on to the works and outward worship in works and ceremonies, and first makes a provision about the place of worship, where he repeats almost five or six times that they are not to sacrifice and worship God in any place they please, but only in the one the Lord has chosen. Therefore, he also commands that the places, altars and pillars of the Gentiles be destroyed and their memory be eradicated. Now the place that the Lord chose was wherever the ark of the covenant and the tabernacle were, when it is spoken of as the general and permanent place for the continual sacrifice of all the people. Otherwise, he often chose another place for a day or an hour, as can be seen in Samuel, Elijah, Gideon, Manoah and others, but even this did not happen without special revelation by an angel or a prophet.

He commands all this for the sake of it, so that the people may not be guided in the worship of God by their own inclination, however holy and good it may be, but may be governed by the word; for if man cannot live without the word, according to the belly, how much less will he be able to live without the word in the works of God and in the spirit? For God wants our conscience to be confident and sure that it pleases God. This is not possible when it is guided by its own discretion, but only when it is based on God's Word. Therefore, if they worshipped God in a place that they themselves had chosen, they could not be certain that they pleased God, even though they pleased themselves in it. But they were certain that they pleased God when they sacrificed in the place that had been designated by the word of God.

There is a certain darkness and difficulty in this chapter due to the fact that Mo.

He repeats the same thing so often, then also by arguing against himself, since he slackens twice [vv. 15, 21] that they may sacrifice (sacrificent) and eat flesh in their cities according to all the pleasure of their souls, once when the place of the Lord is near, the other time when this place should be far away, and yet at the same time he also forbids that they should not eat or sacrifice (sacrificent) in any place, which he insists on (as I have said) in this whole chapter. The other difficulty is: How can he admit that they eat of the tithes and offerings [v. 18], which was due to the priests and Levites?

To the first we will answer thus: that Moses in this chapter only insists that they should not sacrifice anywhere else than in the place that God has chosen. Therefore he has this in mind, and does not pay attention to how he speaks differently, both of the sacrifices and of the food, only that he designates a place. Therefore he will say thus: I permit you indeed to slaughter (sacrifices) and eat all kinds of meat at home, and in your place, both the clean and the unclean [may eat it, v. 15. 22.]. But all that thou shalt sacrifice (offere) unto God, of which I will not that thou shouldest sacrifice or eat other than in the place of God. Even if that place is far away, I will still allow you to slaughter and eat all kinds of meat; but what you want to sacrifice to God, you shall bring there, or if you cannot bring it there, you shall make it money, and buy other things in the place of God, as he will say Cap. 14, 24-26, so that the meaning is: the meat, which one does not have to sacrifice, can be eaten freely in any place, but the sacrifices and what is due to God can only be slaughtered and eaten in the place of God.

From this it is obvious that Moses uses the word "sacrifice" (sacrificandi) for the word "slaughter" (mactandi), since nothing is sacrificed unless it is slaughtered, as also Lucas says in Acts Cap. 10, 13:

"Arise, Petre, slaughter (*sacrifica*) and eat", that is: die and eat. That it is so is enforced by the circumstances of the text, for it most strictly decrees that they shall sacrifice (*sacrificant*) only in the place chosen by God, and yet it permits them to slaughter (*sacrificari*) and eat flesh in any place. For when he says this about the meat that is not to be sacrificed to God, he says without danger or offense that it will either be slaughtered or sacrificed, since everyone understands that this is not about sacrifice. But if he spoke of the meat that was to be offered to God (*offerendis*), he would not allow it to be offered in any place (*sacrificandas*) without offense. But, at the same time, under this word he secretly indicates the common and spiritual priesthood, through which we all spiritually (*mystice*) sacrifice ourselves (*sacrificamus*), Rom. 12, 1.

To the second difficulty we say the same, that Moses, since he has directed his attention to the determination of the place, does not speak differently of the meal, but summarizes the whole people with the priests and Levites, so that the meaning is: The tithes and the sacrifices you shall offer in the place of God and eat with gladness, but each his part, namely the tithes the priests and Levites, of the sacrifices also the common people. For Moses (as I have said) looks at all the people gathered before God, where some receive and eat the tithes, others the sacrifices, still others only portions of the sacrifices, and all are merry in one and the same place. Therefore it does not follow that the common people ate the tithes, but that among the whole people there were people who ate them, namely the priests and the Levites, while meanwhile the common people ate their part of the sacrifices.

Noteworthy sayings in this chapter are these two [v. 8]: "You shall not do any of the things that we do here today, each one as he sees fit," and [v. 32]: "All that I command you, you shall keep, and do them. Ye shall not add unto it, nor do of it." The first saying condemns

free will altogether, for he holds that which we undertake (*nostra studia*) against the word of God, pronouncing in a general sentence the will that nothing shall be chosen or done by us without God's word preceding and shining; so also no place shall be chosen 2c. From this it follows that everything we do without the word is pure darkness and error. For if this were not so, there would have been no need to warn us that we should not do what seems right to us; neither would we need the word.

The other saying takes away the presumption that we should not do better something that God has ordered, and at the same time also gives us freedom by absolving us from all works, efforts, laws and statutes of men, and binding our consciences to the word of God alone, of which much is said elsewhere.

Notice, however, that in this passage Moses describes the people as godless, since he says that they do what seems right to them, not what seems right to God. Here belongs the word Apost. 7, 42, where Stephen quotes from Amos [Cap. 5, 25. f.] that they were idolaters, and Paul, Apost. 13, 18, says that God tolerated their ways, and the 94th Psalm [v. 10] that God had forty years of trouble with this people. How then can it stand that the people in the fourth book of Moses Cap. 24, 6. is called a blessed people, and Balaam praises it so gloriously? This can exist in such a way that in both passages the matter is spoken of according to the synecdoche, 1) that the greater part was godless and the smaller part godly. But because of the word of God, which was among them in the godly, the whole people is commended, as Paul in the Epistle to the Romans Cap. 3, 1. Paul praises the circumcision, that is, the whole people, because they trusted in what God had spoken, even though many did not believe.

The secret interpretation (*allegoria*) of the One Place that God has chosen is the one sense of faith in which all the saints agree and commune.

Here, then, it is commanded with the greatest severity that we should remain in the unity (unitate) of faith, and not be divided into sects and our opinions, which are the hills, the valleys, the groves, and in general all the places that please us; everything that we sacrifice in these displeases [GOtte^]. But to those who abide in the same sense of faith, there is no harm if they are otherwise sinners (peccent), but all that they sacrifice, that pleases [GOtte].

But elsewhere than in the place of God one may eat all kinds of flesh 2c. That is, all kinds of external things that do not pertain to faith are free; the conscience can use them, and not use them, as there are such carnal things as clothes, places, food, time, persons, gestures. But what is of faith, as giving our bodies for sacrifice, and the fruits of the Spirit are not free, but must be offered in faith, and one should be joyful before God because of all the goods one has received from God, especially the word of grace.

That one should pour the blood on the earth like water, and not eat with your flesh [v. 16. 23. f.], whether in the sacrifice or in other eating, means that in matters of faith as well as of Christian freedom one should neither teach nor follow anything that has the old man, flesh and blood about it (sapit). For it is just as ungodly to imprison believing consciences with carnal teachings of works, or to make them righteous by works, as it is to make them free in such a way that they do nothing at all and give place to the flesh through freedom. Now he that eateth not the blood, but poureth it upon the earth, as water, who, being justified by faith, despiseth works that justify, and yet condemneth idleness and the liberty of the flesh. If we do this, it will be well with us, as Moses says here [v. 25.], and we will do what pleases the Lord. For "this is the good, pleasing and perfect will of God," Rom. 12:2.

## The thirteenth chapter.

### V. 1. ff. If a prophet or dreamer among you shall arise, and give thee a sign or a wonder 2c.

To confirm what he said at the end of the previous chapter: "You shall do nothing to it," 2c., Moses sets this whole chapter by wanting us to adhere to the word of God with such great reverence that we will not be moved by persons or signs, even if they are as learned and holy as the prophets, or good and kind as brothers, children and friends, or great and many as cities and mighty men. One must base oneself entirely on the Word alone and put everything out of sight and out of mind, because if one loses the Word, one loses God. But it is better to lose friends, brothers, saints, and powerful people than to lose God.

And here you see that every one is given the right to speak also about the teachings of the

Christ also commands, Matth. 7, 15: "Beware of false prophets", although no one is allowed to execute the external right and kill such a prophet, but the authorities, as we are taught in the following chapter. For everyone should keep his conscience, therefore the right to judge the spirits and the prophets is necessary for every man, but no one has the right to take the sword from himself. Otherwise, what need would there be for public authority?

Here the question arises: How does he forbid to believe a prophet who performs such signs and foretells what is to come, while in chapter 18, v. 22, he says that one can know that it is God's word when that comes which the prophet has spoken? I answer: In this

In the second chapter he speaks of the already existing (praeterito) word of God, which is already accepted and confirmed with the necessary (suis) signs, as he says: "You shall neither add to it nor do away with it", and again [Cap. 12, 1. 1: "Keep the commandments of GOD," and [Cap. 28, 1.], "Obey His voice." Against such a word no prophets are to be admitted, though they rain signs and wonders, not even an angel from heaven, as Paul says in the Epistle to the Galatians [Cap. 1, 8.]. But here it is written about a prophet who will do signs to introduce other gods. Now this is contrary to the received word, that one should worship only One God; therefore one should not hear him. But in the eighteenth chapter he speaks of a new word, which has not yet been received, and which also does not contradict the received word; therefore he says there [v. 20]: "If a prophet should speak in my name, which I have not commanded him" 2c. Such a prophet is not to be admitted unless he does signs, just as Christ also confirmed His gospel with signs when it was necessary to preach beyond Moses. For God does not reveal any new word without confirming it with signs. He does allow a new word to be taught, so that He may tempt us, but He is faithful to stand by us, so that signs do not happen, or what they preached before does not come to pass, as is shown in Elijah, when he had to deal with the Baalphobes, as Paul also says [1 Cor. 11:19]: "For there must be breeds among you, so that those who are righteous may become manifest among you." So he also allows signs to be done against the accepted word, again to try us (as Moses says here, v. 3.) whether we love him with all our heart. So far the devil has deceived us with lying signs and wonders, and brought us into strong errors [2 Thess. 2, 11.], as Paul predicted, in that we have admired pilgrimages, apparitions of spirits and some healings at certain tombs, contrary to the gospel we have received, so that even holy people have come to traps here, like Augustine, Bernard, Jerome and many others, who have orders and rules on

They would certainly have been condemned (as Wiklef says) if they had not repented and been preserved by the fullness of faith in their unrecognized error.

We have often said, and we say again, that other gods are not merely an outward idol, but rather a delusion or an erroneous conscience, which one invents for oneself of the true God; for as the conscience is, so is God. For if you believe that one serves God with these or those sacrifices, in this or that place, and that without the word of God, then you have already lost the true God, and that delusion of such sacrifice is your God, which [delusion] you hold under the name of the true God. If you believe that by the cap and the plate, by poverty, obedience, fasting, food and drink, God is worshipped (since you have no word of God here), then the cap and the plate is already your God, or that delusion of the cap and the plate. Therefore, as you inwardly have the delusion of the cap in the place of God, so you also proceed outwardly and set up the cap as an outward idol in the image of the inward delusion, you wear it, you honor it, you serve it and hold it in great value.

Behold, this is making other gods and following them, that is, serving gods you do not know, for you do not feel or understand that you are worshipping a delusion and an idol in place of the true God, nor do you pay attention to how uncertain you are in this service, and how nothing at all you think of or think about the true God, because you are thinking about him without his word. But he cannot be held or thought of in any other way than by his word. Thus you see that every way of inventing or worshipping foreign gods is no other than the godless delusion by which we choose and believe without the word of GOtte that we please GOtte by this or that work, by this or that place, by this or that ceremony (ritu), while he is not such a [god], and yet under his name another [god] is fictitiously invented in the heart. Therefore follow also outwardly different names, as

different idols [arise], so that one is called Baal, another Astharoth, another Dagon, another Moloch, Peor, Camos, and so with many more names, like our monks, one of the white, another of the black garment, and each with his name and according to his work, which outer

is called, which is clearly distinguished from others. All these are prophets who are deceived by their dreams and speak: Let us go and serve other gods, that is, let us choose new customs (rites) without the Word, under the name of the true God.

## The fourteenth chapter.

### V. 1. You are children of the Lord your God, you shall not cut yourselves.

After the place of worship is set, here he specifies the persons or the customs that pertain to the person, namely, what they should be like in their bodies. But he forbids three things: cutting, giving gifts because of a dead person, and eating unclean things. By "cutting up" here is not understood the teaching (*impressio*) of marks, of which he will speak later, but a certain use in funerals. With this cutting, perhaps the Egyptians and other pagans cut and tore their faces; then they also shaved off the eyebrows as a sign of grief and mourning. For he is not speaking here of the shaving of the head, but of the face between the eyes, as the Hebrew text says. With this usage he wants nothing else than that his people should have such customs, which would be quite unlike those of other peoples, as he says: "You are children of the LORD your God." The secret interpretation of this is this, that since Christ has been raised from the dead, and now through faith death and sin have been overcome, we should bear no sign of sadness or death on us, as do others who, through the consciousness of sin, are without hope of life. Therefore, no signs nor words of life are to be seen on them, because death reigns in them through the power of sin, but we, who are children of God, live with it.

Moses then teaches what animals are to be clean and unclean for them, and it is true

It seems that these animals are literally (*ad lite-ram*) all unclean, that is, harmful and unwholesome for food and for the human body.

But a stronger reason is this, that this people would not only be distinguished from other peoples by the quantity and variety of the laws, from which hatred and persecution would arise for them because of the law of God, but also that they would have to create, so that they would not invent customs and works and laws by their own choice (*per sese*), being idle and having nothing to do; Then also that this people might be kept in oppression, that through the multitude of sins their pride might be broken, and they might sigh the more fervently for Christ, the promised Savior; at the same time also that by this outward example they might be moved to purity of spirit, and be formed to love and meekness, seeing that only unclean, ravenous, and cruel beasts were forbidden them. Let this be said of the literal mind.

Now follows the allegory, of which we have said that it is most certainly drawn to the office of the Word, since it is invalid (*frigida*), and rather not a hidden mind; but it is the historical mind that is drawn to customs and works. So also here the uncleanness of the animals means the doctrine of works taught by the teachers of the law and statutes, whose hearts and consciences are never purified, indeed, "to the unclean nothing is pure, but unclean is both their mind and conscience" [Tit. 1, 15.]. For the more they purify themselves by works.

they stain themselves by (false) trust and hopefulness, by unbelief and such an ungodly nature. Therefore Peter also compares the ungodly, who have fallen back from faith into works, to a sow that rolls in the muck again after the flood. But they are ravening and cruel, because their doctrine not only defiles more and more, but also lacerates and devours, because they do not make a calm and cheerful conscience, but a lacerated, torn, desolate, and miserably devoured conscience; moreover, they also deceive very many, and tear them away from the righteous doctrine of faith. Therefore Christ calls them "ravening wolves" [Matth. 7, 15.], and Paul "abominable wolves", who do not spare the flock [Apost. 20, 29.]. Therefore, the ungodly teachers of works are unclean and cruel, defiling hearts more, devouring and tearing them away from Christ.

Here I leave it to idle people to investigate through all these animals what the manners of the godless teachers are. Known is the folly of the ostrich, which thinks it is completely covered when it has covered its neck with some little twig. Thus an ungodly teacher seizes upon some saying of Scripture and thinks that his delusion is beautiful, not seeing that he asserts his cause from all sides, naked and without weapons. The little owl is good for the fowler, because the appearance of piety is wonderfully attractive. The night owl does not see when it is light, at night it sees, because the wicked does not obey the truth, but turns to his fables. The cuckoo swallows the eggs of the warbler and lays his own" in the nest. Afterwards, when his young have grown up, they devour their mother, the warbler, in the nest, for the godless teacher steals the children of the church and pushes in his offspring in exchange, which finally corrupts the church from which it had been nourished. Thus the hoopoe defiles his nest, for the ungodly teachers defile (as I have said) themselves and the church, as Peter (2 Ep. 2, 13. Vulg.) says: "They are filth and stain." The gossiping swallow preys on men, but it is of no use, and if it is ver

last, it takes severe revenge on the cattle. A godless teacher makes many words and is flattering, but has no use, and if he is hurt, he is unforgiving (and does not rest) until he has avenged himself. So may someone who desires do with the eagle and other animals, and he will see that everything fits the godless teachings very well.

To eat such things is to believe and follow them, as to eat the flesh of Christ is to believe in Him, John 6:54, 56. Not to eat is to avoid these abominations. But to divide the claws is (as Paul teaches Timothy) to rightly divide the word of God [2 Tim. 2, 15.]. That is, to teach that you may rightly apply the gospel and the law, to establish the conscience with the gospel, to make it alive and free, and not to oppress and burden it with the law or works and sins; again, not to make the flesh free through the gospel, but to oppress and kill it with the law and works, as is fitting for the old man and the body of sin to be destroyed. But to chew the cud is to "receive the word with the heart, and consider it with the utmost diligence," so that one does not (as the proverb says) let it fall in at one ear and out at the other, but keeps it persistently in the heart, and swallows it down, and makes it his flesh and blood (viscera).

Therefore, he who sets either the gospel alone or the law alone above the twofold (utrumque) man, that is, the inward and the outward, does not cleave (that is, he does not rightly exercise the office of teaching), because by the gospel alone he teaches all freedom, that is, freedom both of the spirit and of the flesh, so that at the same time the conscience rejoices and is freed from works, and also the body is idle in the service of love; Again, by the law alone teaches all captivity, that is, both of the spirit and of the flesh, so that at the same time the conscience is troubled with scrupulis and restlessness, and the body with toil and labor. Both are unclean and defiled, indicating that the teacher is not truly justified by faith. Let the heart therefore be set free by the word of grace, and let the body be a servant.

by the law of love, the claw will be rightly split.

Again, there are animals that cleave the claw and do not chew the cud, like the sow or the pig. These are the ones who teach both rightly, but while they preach to others, they themselves become reprobate [1 Cor. 9:27], because they do not discipline their bodies, nor bring them into bondage, because they are dead with the widow who lives in lusts [1 Tim. 5:6], and choke the word under thorns and lusts, so that it does not bear fruit [Matt. 13:22]. They draw the word, but soon they drop it, nor do they wholeheartedly notice it or think about it. These are swine in the lake of sin. Others, however, chew the cud again, but they do not cleave the claws. These are the ones who either accept the gospel alone or the law alone with all their heart, cling to it constantly and hold on to it, but either torment the conscience alone or make the body free alone, and these are thus unclean like the camel, the hare and the rabbit.

The same is to be said of the water animals, which are without raft feathers and scales. For they have the raft feathers instead of the wings with which they steer their course. By them is signified the doctrine of faith, which, through the Word of God, governs and guides the hearts in this world. The scales, however, are as it were the weapons and the ornament of their body, without which the other swimming animals are as it were naked. They mean that faith is not idle, but active through the spirit of love. Therefore, if some have scales, but are without raft feathers, they signify the toilers, without faith and word; as the serpents. But if they have raft feathers without having scales, they mean those who have the word, without fruit and work; as, the eels and the morays. Others have neither feathers nor scales; they have neither faith nor works; as, worms, blood urchins 2c. All of these must not be eaten, nor must they be communicated with. Thus, among the birds, those that creep and have feathers are unclean, and signify the hypocrites who have the doctrine of the word only in appearance, as

whether they could fly; yet they crawl altogether, and are earthly minded.

The carrion is not to be eaten; elsewhere he says not to touch it either, but to sell or give it to the stranger. That is, let the dead bury their dead [Matt. 8:22]. Neither shall we have fellowship with them that are without the word of life. And if they once had it, but, having lost the word, have died, as the heretics, we are to give them to strangers, that is, they are to be to us as Gentiles. We shall let them join them and put them away from us. "For thou art a holy nation unto the Lord thy God," that is, thou art sanctified by his word; therefore thou shalt not make thyself partaker of strange sins.

#### **V. 21: Do not boil the kid, because it is still nursing its mother.**

Just as he decrees civil purity for unclean animals, he also decrees civil mercy for the little goat, so that through this outward gentleness and leniency they will become accustomed to have mercy on people and to spare them, so that they will also abandon their right. Then, since he is talking about worship, he does not want an immature goat to be sacrificed, but a yearling (as he commands elsewhere [Ex 12:5]), so that they do not sacrifice unfit and useless things. This is the meaning of the word of the apostle Rom. 14, 1.: "Take up the weak in faith", so that we do not spoil those who need milk with solid food, and do not cook or kill them through martyrdom or other strong temptations, before they have attained firmness in life and certainty in doctrine. For God does not let us be tempted beyond our ability. Therefore, we must also believe and teach in this way. For in the kingdom of Christ there is only one law: "Bear one another's burdens", Gal. 6, 2.

#### **V. 22. ff. You shall tithe every year 2c.**

God imposed three tithes on this people. First, that which they gave to the Levites every year from all the fruits of the land. Second, that which they tithed every third year, above

the aforementioned, from all the same fruits of the land, which was to be used, as it were, for a common box and for public alms, both for the Levites and for the strangers, also for the orphans and widows, because he did not want the poor to be in the land, as he says in the following chapter. He speaks of these two tithes in this chapter. The third tithe was imposed on the Levites, so that they would also tithe from their tithes to the priests; this is mentioned in the third book of Moses. To these priests God also gave all the firstborn, so that the firstborn of the people was redeemed with money. Thus, the ordinary income of the priests was the firstborn or firstlings and the tithes they received from the Levites, to which were added the sacrifices and gifts of all the people. The income of the Levites was the tithes they received from the people and a portion of the sacrifices when they served the priests. And would God that all the other treasures, which nowadays consume the land and the people, which must also be necessarily unreasonable, were taken away, and [in their place] the tithes were put in; if one was not enough, three, four or five could be added. In this way a people could live under their masters. This would be the most honorable and just way to raise income (*redituum*), which would depend solely on the goodness of God. For if God were to give abundant blessings in a year, the people would have abundant income, and the authorities would have abundant tithes. But if God gave little blessing, the authorities would bear the same burden as the subjects and receive less. But now that the annual taxes are fixed and certain, and the years of blessing rare, the subjects are forced to pay the full taxes, even though they do not have a year of blessing in ten years in a row or longer, yes, what is even more miserable, they are forced to pay the full taxes, even though they have received in that year either hardly as much or not as much from the land as they have to pay, namely with money they have borrowed elsewhere, from which they either pay the taxes or from which they live in that year.

Is this not more than barbarism? yes, a kind of animal and cruel rapacity? Could it be said, then, that these taxes are just? that these laws are just? What wonder is it if the people are sucked dry and driven out of all places? What is the rule in Germany today but a mere tyranny? Of foreign empires I speak nothing, I know nothing of them; because of ours I am grieved. Which of the princes or persons in authority do you think can be blessed today, if he suffers or does this knowingly or willingly, if he could help the cause (as befits a prince)? You see how much here the reason (*ratio*) of blessedness urges that the princes consult with each other, work together and set to work so that all other estimates may by all means be taken away and turned into tithes (as much as may be necessary for them), and they thus preserve the people and govern the world with other laws. I confess that the common people are sunk in lavishness and frivolity when they have abundance, but this evil (*rebus*) must be remedied otherwise than by unjust estimations, and not cure sin with sin. Then the blame for the fact that the populace is so depraved lies with the princes, who rule without law, without care, without rigor, and are concerned only with laying up treasures and having pleasure. 1)

But let us return to Moses. Behold, how beautiful an order is in it. First he deals with the annual tithes and the daily first fruits, by which the priests and the Levites are provided for, then only with the tithes in every third year, by which any poor should be helped, so that we realize that in the first place the servants of the word are to be provided for, by which not the belly, but the heart and the spirit are to be provided for.

1) This whole paragraph ifi been omitted in the Latin Wittenberg edition and inserted instead by the editors(>Vitt. Dom. III(1549f, col. 57k): "But these things are disputed in vain nowadays, for if the tithe were assigned to necessary use, avarice would easily invent the ninth, eighth, seventh, fifth or third part of the fruits. Therefore the children of Israel complain that they were oppressed under Solomon and ask Rehoboam for relief, 1 Kings 12:4."



After that also the belly of the poor must be supplied. For faith and the word are more than charity and good works; therefore it is necessary to provide for faith and the word rather than charity and good works. But it is not provided otherwise than that those who are to teach may be nourished. Indeed, if faith and the word were to perish, nothing would remain of love and good works. But law is law; it is spoken, but not done. For just as the people of Moses left this law standing and did not feed their priests and Levites, so they were forced either to leave the word and service of God, to feed themselves with their hands' work, or to set up new doctrines and idolatry; here the people fed their deceivers abundantly, which neglected the right shepherds, because they too turned their ears away from the truth and turned to fables: So it happens also now; the servants of the word no one feeds, so that they are forced by lack of bread to leave the preaching ministry, to cultivate the land and to learn a trade, while they have not only fed the godless deceivers up to now, but have also filled the world with bishoprics and monasteries, which are equal to the riches of kings and princes. This has happened out of God's righteous judgment, that those who have not given a servant of God and messenger of salvation even one loaf of bread, waste whole kingdoms and principalities on the servants of the devil and the messengers of death.

You see with what care Paul urges 1 Cor. 9, 7. ff. 1 Tim. 5, 17. f. Gal. 6, 6. f. and elsewhere insists on feeding the ministers of the word, so that it is disgraceful that in this very small matter in such a great and glorious people one has to hear so many words from such a great apostle, where on the other hand love should be so burning that it would be necessary to keep the people from giving, as Ex. 36, 5. f., since according to the example of the Galatians [Gal. 4, 15.] (if it were possible) we should also pluck out our eyes and give to such servants. Therefore also here Moses adds, after he had spoken of the tithes and the firstborn [v. 23.]: "That thou mayest learn

nest fear the LORD your GOD all your life," namely, that feeding the servants of the Word is the first and supreme usus of honoring GOD and fearing Him. For he who does not feed [the servants of the Word], how should he care for GOD's Word? But whoever does not care for GOD's word, how should he care for GOD? He who does not care about GOD, how should he fear Him? So, if one neglects and despises the servant of the Word, it is the same as despising GOD and His Word. "He who hears you hears me, and he who despises you despises me," is what Moses so carefully inculcates here and elsewhere, lest they abandon the Levites, who had no other inheritance.

That which he says of the too-wide way and the distance of the place of God, of the sale of the firstborn and the tithes, and that other things should be bought for this money, is explained above in a previous chapter [Cap. 12] that it was not permitted in other cities to slaughter and eat what had to be sacrificed, or if it was eaten, other things had to be bought in its place for money and replaced.

The secret interpretation of the firstfruits can be understood from the spiritual understanding (mysterio) of the killing of the firstborn in Egypt. I think that this firstborn means the first fruit of the law, that is, the righteousness from the works. For the law first compels to works, and if it is taken in a carnal sense, it produces seeming hypocrites, who make themselves believe that they are the first of all, and that everything is due to them. This righteousness Christ has killed by his passage, that is, by his death, by which he taught that by the works of the law no flesh can be righteous in the sight of God, Rom. 3:20. But the firstborn of Israel, which is sanctified to the Lord, is the righteousness of faith, which is owed entirely to him who condemned the righteousness of works. Therefore, to offer the firstborn and the firstfruits is to confess that the righteousness of faith received was brought about by His grace, not by our powers. For the first fruit of the Gospel is faith in the

Spirit, who also makes us firstborn and makes us heirs according to a twofold right, both of the kingdom and of the priesthood; but the tithes are, as it were, the last fruit, the goods of love and of the priesthood.

of the Spirit, which we also offer and pay, confessing that they are given to us by His grace through faith, that we did not receive them by our merits.

# The fifteenth chapter.

## V. 1-3. For seven years you shall keep a year of remission 2c.

Because in the previous chapter he had begun to deal with the tithes in every third year for the provision of the poor, on the occasion of the annual tithes due to the Levites for the service of God, he now remains with what he had begun, and now completely finishes this locum of the poor, digressing [from the main matter], to such an extent (adeo) that he also mixes this civil law of remission into the treatment of the first commandment. But the suinma of this chapter is that they should not be guilty of this, that the poor are abandoned in the land. But he says that there would always be poor, so that they would have people to give to, either from the tithes in the third year, or with borrowings, or in some other way. We have spoken of the tithes, now let us speak of the borrowings.

He says that what had been borrowed could be reclaimed before the seventh year, but in the seventh year itself everything that should then still be found as borrowed should be free and given to the brother, and that according to divine right. But that this seventh year was a fixed and certainly ordered one, like the jubilee year was, in which what had been bought was returned and set free, follows with necessity (necesse est) from the fact that it did not begin from the day on which the borrowing took place, but was a general one over the whole land and people, like the feasts, the Passover, the Pentecosts and others were. It is truly a very beautiful and very cheap law; after all, GOD wanted the rulers of the world to follow the

If the same were to follow today, they would have fewer questions and troubles, since they would know that the lawsuits, disputes, debts, acts, contracts, rights, seals, and letters would all have to be cancelled and extinguished at once in the seventh year, whether it is near or far away, and that they could not be postponed and maintained in eternal and endless investigations (quaestiones). At the same time, they would be forced to be careful not to have such a large sum outstanding that they could have no hope of having it restored before the seventh year, and so even spendthrifts and rogues (perditis) could not rely on foreign goods that they had accumulated through debts and contracts.

But what do you want to say to Christ, who forbids Matth. 5,<sup>1</sup>) 40. ff. and Luc. 6, 34. f. that one reclaims what he has borrowed, and commands that one lends without hoping to receive the same again? I answer: Christ is speaking to Christians, who are above all laws and do more than the laws prescribe. Moses, however, provided the people, who are subject to the authorities and the sword, as long as they are citizens (civilem populum), with laws, so that the wicked would be kept in check and public peace would exist. Here the law is to be administered in such a way that the one who has borrowed should give back, although a Christian, if such a law does not come to his aid, even if what he has borrowed is not given back to him, should bear this with equanimity. So also, although the law enjoins that one should not

1) In the editions: Matth. 6.

and takes revenge on those who are violent, a Christian bears it when he is wronged and does not take revenge, nor does he seek revenge, although he does not prevent the severity of the avenging sword, because he knows that the sword is used for vengeance against evildoers, as Peter 1 Petr. 2, 14. says.

Then, what is this, that he allows a stranger to reclaim what he has borrowed, even in the seventh year, that is, always, but not from a brother? Is not then justice and love to be observed against a stranger? To this it is to be answered that this also is done for a just cause of the world government (*publicae politiae*), that the citizens are honored before the foreigners and strangers with a privilege, so that everything is not through each other and equal; so it also happened with the Romans, when they gave some cities the right of a colony, others the right of a Roman city. For these differences (*formas*), though they seem to have an appearance of inequity, the world must necessarily have in its regime, as is the status of servants and maids, and likewise of artisans (*operariorum*) and laborers. For not all can be in the same way kings, princes, councilors, kingdoms, free people, since the world cannot exist without various and different persons. As much as before God there is no respect of persons, but all are equal, the respect of persons and inequality is necessary for the world, so that the wicked are kept in check and public peace exists, which cannot exist under the equality and indiscriminateness of persons.

But the people of the Jews had a further and higher right, not only to reclaim what they had borrowed, but, as he says here [v. 6.], also to usurp the Gentiles and to take interest from them, namely by divine power, which itself orders and permits this. For he is GOD and the LORD over all things, who not only takes away money and things, but also kingdoms and dominions (*imperia*, when he wills, in whatever way he wills, and gives to whom he wills. Therefore, if God, in order to take vengeance on the pagans, wants to punish them by means of interest and usury, and

If he commands the Jews to do this, the Jews will do well to obediently give themselves to God as instruments and execute his wrath on the Gentiles through usury and interest, just as he commanded them to drive out the Amorites and Cananites. Thus, if a husband should seem worthy to God to be deprived of his wife or children, and I am commanded to do so by his word, I would not be an adulterer or a robber of men if I deprived him of his wife and children, but an obedient rod of God over the ungodly man.

Here the question is solved, how it was allowed to the Jews to usury. The answer is that they were not free to do so because of their merits or according to common law, but because of God's wrath against the Gentiles, which He wants to execute through the Jews as the instruments of His wrath. Nevertheless, they would not have been allowed to make use of this freedom if they had not been commanded to do so by a certain and manifest word of God, and if they had not been chosen to be such instruments. For they were no better than any of the Gentiles, as I have said above, only that God chose and accepted them out of mercy alone, so that, if you look at the matter correctly, it is not the Jews themselves who are usurious, but it is God who persecutes the Gentiles through the usury of the Jews. This has been sufficiently proven, since he again handed over the Jews, who disobeyed him and sinned, to the Gentiles, not only that they should be burdened with usury, but that they should be plagued with all kinds of ignominy, even considerably more cruelly than he ever handed over the Gentiles to the Jews; as he also said in the 28th chapter. Chapter 12 of this book, and adds in this chapter, V. 6, that they will lend to many nations, but only if they obey the voice of the Lord, V. 5, as if to say that if they did not obey, they would not only not lend, but would be like the Gentiles, or even more miserable, which is what happened to them.

However, nowadays, since the Jews have ceased to be the people of God, the Law has been abolished, and they have become the people of God with their godlessness.

The words of the law are not words of the law, but rather words of promise, since it says: "If you obey the voice of the Lord, you will lend to many Gentiles" (foenerabis). But to fulfill the words of promise does not stand with men, as the words of the law, but with GOD alone, who promises this, so that this must be the meaning: If you obey the voice of the LORD, then by the action of GOD the Gentiles will fall into such misery that even if you do not remember it nor seek it, they will have to pay usury, and will be subject to you in all things, and you will rule over them with all their goods, so that you can take (rapias), claim (exigas), usury as you please. It is the Lord who will thus subdue the Gentiles to you and humble them through you.

**V. 4. There shall be no beggar among you.**

A very beautiful worldly order, which however was never kept, therefore also this law of Mosis, as far as it concerns the whole people, remains only in words. If begging is forbidden among this people, with what right is it established among the Christians, as if it were holy, also by laws? Poverty is praised, but in such a way that one should come to its aid. Then the poverty of the spirit is praised, but it is commanded that one should help the outward poverty, not differently than other repulsions of the neighbor. And it is to be wondered why these praisers of external poverty do not also take upon themselves wounds, diseases, prison, nakedness, banishment, hunger, thirst, sword, dangers, death, sins, the devil and all other evils and make themselves obligated to them (profiteantur), by instituting new vows for this purpose, as they did for poverty, so that one may suffer disease, another imprisonment, another hunger, another sins, or the devil, since Christ commands that for these things one should

He says [Matth. 25, 43]: "I have been sick, and you have not visited me" 2c.

But our praisers of poverty, instead of diseases and wounds, have a well-groomed (obesam) skin and fattened flesh, more than gluttons and harlots, instead of banishment they have houses more splendid than the palaces of kings, instead of hunger they devour the storehouses of all people, for thirst they have full cellars, instead of death they have a quite pleasant and safe life. Then they sing to us about the glory of poverty that must be borne. But God has commanded that they should be put away, so that we may be, as an example is written in the Acts of the Apostles also for the Christian people [Acts 4:34]: "Neither was there any among them that lacked."

Therefore, there should be no poverty and mendicancy among the people of God, but care and attention that there is no poverty and mendicancy, so that you may know that the mendicant orders and all those who profess to be poor and boast of it are disciples and servants of the devil, who rage against the Lord and his anointed (Christ), just as in the people of God there should not be sickness, hunger, thirst, exile, death, sin and the devil, but care and attention, if such a thing should occur among them, that it be removed as soon as possible, and care taken that it not be among them. I say that poverty is not to be advocated, not to be chosen, not to be taught, for it is everywhere enough by itself, as he says here [v. 11], "There shall always be poor among you," as well as all other evils. But for this one should constantly take care that one always confronts these things, 1) because they always occur. You see, then, what is involved in the institution of vowing poverty and in the whole realm of the pope.

**V. 7-11. If any of your brothers is poor 2c.**

That is the way of the world, that as soon as a law is given, it is also found out,

1) In the Erlanger: oacupatur instead of: occuratur.

how to circumvent the law. Therefore, Moses also anticipates here the treachery that would arise with the law of the seventh year of remission, in that avarice and human hard-heartedness think like this when the year of remission is near: What should I do? Should I borrow? But after a few months the year of remission will be here. Then I will have given it away in vain, because there is no hope of getting it back, nor the right to demand it again. Moses speaks against this [stinginess] with strange and sharp words, calling it a hard heart, a vile word, a shameful deed, an ungodly eye, and finally also a sin that cries out to God, so that you can see that Moses also agrees with Christ in the doctrine of lending, that even under the threat that one should be guilty of such great offenses, he commands that one should lend, even though there is no hope of getting it back, or right to demand it back, so that the epitome of this teaching is that one should work for the poor in love.

**V. 12-14. If your brother, a Hebrew or Hebrew woman, sells himself to you, he shall serve you six years 2c.**

He renews (rovocat) the law 2 Mos. 21,<sup>1</sup> ) 2. f.. [and draws it] to this law of the release of the borrowed, because it also speaks of the poor, who, forced by poverty, have sold themselves and, as it were, have been lent something, by making themselves debtors with their own bodies. But he adds in this place that he should not let him go empty from him when he gives him free, and indicates two reasons for this, first, that they should remember that they also were servants in Egypt, secondly, that he [the servant] had been a two-fold day laborer with him. I believe this is said because he who sells himself to another does himself two harms: first, that he serves another and works out everything for his master; second, that in the meantime he misses his own, and what he gains for his master he could have gained for himself. Therefore, it would be quite unreasonable for him to be sent away completely empty. Therefore he says [v. 18:]

1) In the issues: Lx. 22.

"Don't let it seem hard that you let him go free."

Moses always adds glorious promises: that God has blessed, that He blesses, and that He will bless those who do this, so that they will not doubt that it will be amply repaid to them when they have either given or lent something away, as Christ also says [Luc. 6, 38.]: "Pray, and it will be given to you." Hence the saying of Solomon [Prov. 19:17], "He who has mercy on the poor lends to the Lord," and again [Prov. 14:31], "He who has mercy on the poor honors God," and many such sayings, as well as many threats in opposition to them, against those who do not have mercy, as the Scriptures are full of them. But this is not lost on the deaf godlessness and unbelief that thinks that God is either joking or lying with such words, and he is worthy to be deprived of the goods of this life and the life to come, just as [1 Sam. 25, 10. ff.] that fool Nabal in Carmel denied David [his help], but soon, deprived of life, kept nothing himself.

**V. 16-18. But he will say: I will not depart from you 2c.**

That the ear was pierced with an awl at the post in the door of the house was an outward sign of constant servitude, as one must have signs in human things to distinguish the persons. Thus the emperor uses the robe, the hatchet, the diadem; the woman the veil; the virgin the crown; the child a little button (bulla). But it was a suitable and fitting sign that the ear was pierced with the awl. The awl signifies that the commandment of his lord is sharp and iron, namely, that it penetrates, and the word of the lord is effective in the servant. The ear signifies obedience, which submits to the commandment. The fact that this is done in the door means that he is given the right and the power (usus) to go in and out and to do everything, and that he is taken in among the servants of the house. Furthermore, earrings made of gold, silver and precious stones

are made an ornament of the free. But the awl of the slaves is iron, because the obedience of the free is willing and free, all golden and delicious, but that of the servants forced, for wages, and iron and low.

**V. 19. ff. All the firstborn that is born among your cattle and sheep 2c.**

Now he catches up and comes again completely to the tax, which is to be given to the priests, after the digression about the supply of the poor is finished, in order to add what should have been added above, namely, that the firstborn, which would be offered to God, must be so constituted that it is absolutely without defect and infirmity. Therefore he says here that the firstling of the oxen should also not be plowed, and the firstlings of the sheep should not be shorn, so that the firstborn may be completely unharmed, and not be used for any use or benefit, but only be offered to GOtte, and eaten in the place chosen by GOtte, as one should also abstain from the holy and what is due to GOtte. "Thou shalt eat" [v. 20.] (saith he), that is, thou shalt offer it to be eaten, and shalt be gathered together among them that eat it, as I said above [Cap. 12]. Thus, if it should have any other defect, it was not to be sacrificed, but every man might eat it at home in his city.

**Secret interpretation.**

The year of remission of the debt is the whole time of grace, because the whole kingdom of Christ is nothing else than the remission of debts continuously, so that they are remitted. But that they are not forgiven to the stranger means that outside the church of Christ there is no forgiveness of sins. For neither can those be forgiven who do not wish to be forgiven, who justify themselves and despise the church. Therefore it must be demanded of them until they repent, that is, nothing must be remitted to them, but they must always be demanded so that they will be of a different mind and do differently until they repent; but to the brother who repents, everything must be remitted.

den. For where there is faith, there are no sins that cannot be forgiven and given; but where unbelief remains, there are no sins that do not have to be condemned and demanded. That one borrow from no one, and all borrow from him [v. 6.], that is, that one live so righteously as to be indebted to no one, but all are indebted to him, because he injures no one, but he is injured by all. That there should be no poor [v. 4.], and if there be, they should be helped; that is, that the weak in faith and life should be borne, taught, and admonished, and prayed for without falsehood in perfect singleness of heart; and such men shall always be among you [v. 11.]. But that the Hebrew servant, the brother, should not be left without a provision, that is, that he should not only be forgiven the debt, but also helped by adding a benefit of love. Although this servant, according to the actual spiritual interpretation, is the people of the law, who serve in a hard bondage, yet when the year of remission comes through the gospel, he is not only set free from the law, but also honored with the word of the gospel, by which he can live; for he has served in a twofold bondage, that he has done the works of the law, and yet has gained nothing, except that his master, the law, has increased; For the more we do works under the law, the more it demands, and the more powerful it becomes, and the less it is fulfilled, because namely the hatred against the law constantly increases; and in the meantime (tamen) he also neglects his own, that is, he does not gain a confidence of conscience, but loses it, whereas he could rather have gained it outside the law through the gospel. But that his ear is pierced with the awl, and he remains a servant forever, means that he, already free in spirit, nevertheless subjugates his flesh to the law all the stronger and forces it to obedience by the iron and hard law, as Paul says [1 Cor. 9, 27.]: "I stupefy my body and tame it" 2c. Thus he remains at the same time a servant and a freeman.

That the firstling from the ox is not for tillage

The righteousness of faith is not to be abused for our own benefit or glory, but to be offered up to God, that he may have the glory and honor. For it does not come from our works, nor is it under our power that we should rule over it, but it belongs to God alone, who creates and gives it. Thus Paul does not want to rule over the faith of the Corinthians [2 Cor. 1, 24]. This spiritual interpretation especially concerns the ministers of the Word, that they do not subject the people of faith to their laws and their works, but offer them to God alone, that they may be subject to him and be governed by faith, as Paul boasts in Rom. 15, 16, that he has given the gospel to the people of God.

to sacrificare (sanctificare) that the Gentiles may become a sacrifice pleasing to God, that is, through the gospel he sacrifices the Gentiles to God, so that they may not be subject to him, Paul, but to God. And what do the ministers of the word do, when they subject us to their works, but shear us and seek their advantage and honor, namely the wool and the fruit of our labor?

That there should be no fault in it is that the conscience should be healthy in faith, so that it does not want to be justified by works and by faith at the same time and please God. For this reason the Lord also severely reproaches this vice in the prophet Malachi [Cap. 1, 7. ff.], because it is not a joke with faith and its doctrine. Tit. 2, 8. [Vulg.]: "His word is wholesome and blameless."

# The sixteenth chapter.

## V. 1. Keep the month of Abib, to keep the Passover to the Lord.

After the place and the persons are described and provided for, he makes here an order in relation to the times and feasts, particularly over the three main feasts, which concerned first of all this people, whose instruction Moses took upon himself in this book. These feasts are the Passover, Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Feast of Trumpets and the Feast of Atonement in the same seventh month in which the Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated, Leviticus 23:24, namely, the Feast of Trumpets on the first day and the Feast of Atonement on the seventh day. But each of these two feasts was celebrated only One Day. But the Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated in the middle of the month, on the fifteenth day, for eight days, on which all that was male had to appear before the Lord in the place the Lord had chosen, as on the Feast of Passover and Pentecost, as he says in this chapter. But the text itself is easy, only some words need to be explained. "In the months

Abib", which our Latin text [the Vulgate 2 Mos. 23, 15.] calls the month of new things, but elsewhere [as here v. 1.] the month of new fruits, perhaps because then everything comes forth anew and the whole world is green. But the month of April is also named by the Latins from the opening (Aprilis ab aperiendo), because then the earth opens and everything becomes new, although the Hebrews do not call April Abib, but Ijar 1). Abib, however, comes from Abab, which means a small rod or a tender branch, Deut. 2, 14, as those are when the trees shoot out in spring, by which, as Christ indicates Matth. 24, 32, one can recognize that summer is near. At that time, namely in April, they went out of Egypt; therefore this month is called the beginning of the year and the first month, Ex 12:2. Others, however, make July out of the month Abib. But this is refuted by the exodus of the

1) In the Erlangen and Jena editions: läsr; in the Wittenberg: Llsr. Both are incorrect and should be read Jjar. Compare Seyffarth's corrections of Roman, Greek, Persian, Egyptian, Hebrew history and chronology 2c.

Children of Israel out of Egypt, which happened at the beginning of the year in the month of Abib, as it says here and Ex 34:18.

**V. 3. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread of affliction: for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt with fear.**

"Bread of affliction" he calls it from the past affliction which they suffered at the time when they first ate this bread, which he explains by soon adding: "For with fear thou wentest forth," 2c., that is, with fear and trembling, as those who are in distress are wont to hasten and be afraid, so that they flee as quickly as possible. For this is the meaning of this word XXX, that it does not mean merely to hasten or to be fearful, but (as I have said) to seek to flee out of fear, as is said of David 1 Sam. 23, 26. when he was completely surrounded by Saul on the mountain, that he despaired, that is, that he was anxious to hasten with a fearful mind. Thus it is said in Exodus 12:11: "And shall eat it as they hasten away," which is what he says here, "the bread of misery," which they ate in fear and anxious haste. And Ps. 104, 7. [Vulg.]: "At the voice of thy thunder they feared," that is, they might have fled and hastened away. Psalm 116:11: "I spoke in my trembling," that is, in fearful haste.

**V. 8. On the seventh day is the assembly of the LORD your God.**

Our Latin text (noster) has used the word "gathering" (collectam), but more correctly it means [XXXX] a gathering (coetum), an assembly (concionem), a meeting (synodum), a festive assembly (conventum), as the people are wont to come together in the court (atrium) to hear God's word, or to order something in public affairs, or to hold an election, as the popular assemblies (comitia,) of the Gentiles are. So the people of God, after serving God with sacrifices throughout the Passover and eating in the place that God had chosen, came together on the seventh day in one place, the courtyard, and there the law of God and the commandments were read, which were

they were concerned about. Therefore, he calls it an assembly of God the Lord, that they should come together to hear the law of God.

"The feast of weeks" he calls Pentecost from the weeks counted from the day of the Passover, of which there are seven, as he says [v. 9.], "Seven weeks shalt thou count." This feast he indicates in the second book of Moses by this paraphrase [Cap. 23, 16.], "The feast of the first harvest of the fruits which thou sowest in the field," but here with such a paraphrase: "From the day when one begins with the sickle in the seed, thou shalt begin to count." This I understand in such a way: One begins to count the weeks from the time of the Passover, where the grass has already grown up so far that one can already mow off its luxuriantly rising stalks (comam). Or if this seems harsh, the commandment of counting must be related to the time of Pentecost, in this way: Thou shalt begin to count from the day, that is, when it shall be about the time of Pentecost, 1) when the luxuriantly growing grass is first to be cut, or the first [field] fruits are reaped, thou shalt count backward, until by reckoning (computando) thou shalt have seven weeks full until the Passover. And this pleases me better, because he commands to count the weeks which he intimates are already fulfilled, but at the same time because it is the custom of the Hebrews to read, write and act (agere) backwards.

Then it will agree nicely with Ex. 23, 16: "When you reap the first fruits", because around Pentecost, especially in those warm regions, the first fruits tend to be there (inveniri) and are reaped, as I said, so that it is the same time when the first fruits are reaped, and when the sickle cuts into the seed (mittitur). Hence he also understands by the "freewill offering," which in this place is called missa in Hebrew, the firstfruits which they were to bring to the priests, of which you will find in the third book of Moses, Cap. 2 at the end [v. 12. ff.]. After this has been explained, everything in this chapter is easy.

1) It seems to us that instead of tueris in the editions should be read tuerit. After that we have translated.



Such festivals and outward customs are instituted for worship, because of the rude people, so that they, occupied with the same, do not invent festivals by their own doing. For nature is inclined to do this, indeed, it has no rest until it sets up ceremonies and ordains divine services, therefore it is necessary to forestall it and keep it at God's word, so that we may be sure that we are dealing with divine things and pleasing God. This is also the reason that the people should meet at least two or three times a year and hear and learn the law of God and be kept in unity of faith and life.

But there are three things he wanted to be remembered at these three feasts: at the feast of Passover, the Exodus from Egypt was to be remembered; this was the first feast of all and the highest in the beginning of the year, because of the first and highest miracle that had been performed for them, namely the deliverance from Egypt. But at the feast of Pentecost it was to be remembered that the law was received at Mount Sinai, since the law was given in the third month after the Exodus, about the fiftieth day after the Passover. At the feast of tabernacles one should keep the memory of all bodily benefits, which had been shown to them during the whole forty years in the desert. Thus you see that the feasts are ordered, not for the sake of idleness, idleness and pleasure, but for the sake of our salvation and the glory of God, so that the word of God may be heard and His benefits remembered, so that we may be instructed, nourished and sustained in faith and love for God.

All these feasts, although there were many others, we celebrate through the interpretation (allegoria) of the spirit in one feast. For we keep Passover daily by eating and offering Christ, the Lamb of God, that is, as Paul interprets it in 1 Cor. 11:1) 26, proclaiming and believing that he was sacrificed for us. Thus we have Pentecost every day, receiving the new law, the Spirit, in our hearts through the ministry of the Word. Celebrate daily

we celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles, teaching and holding that we are strangers in this world, dwelling in the huts of our bodies, which last only a short time, knowing that our πολίτευμα, i.e., our citizens

We are in heaven, where we are in the meantime in faith and live, and here we die daily until our tabernacle is laid down 2c. So we rejoice before the Lord at these feasts in the sweet dough of sincerity and truth, that is, in the nourishment of the pure gospel and in the life of the Spirit, without statutes and human infirmities, offering our firstfruits of praise and thanksgiving.

For also this, that he commandeth that every male should not appear empty before him, was ordained at that time that the priests might be fed, but in our time it has been forced by the ungodly priests, to feed their bellies, upon the offerings (offertoriis) of the common people, whereas in truth it signifies that one offer praise and thanksgiving, but now no longer before the Lord on the mercy seat and the ark of the covenant, or in any certain place, but in spirit and in truth. This is that one does not sacrifice the Passover in any place (as Moses again inculcates here), but in the place that God would have chosen. For if one feeds the sacrificers (sacrificulos) with offerings or contributions (pensionibus), this is as much as if one feeds harlots and harlot hosts, yes, wolves and wild beasts, so that they devour us with their pernicious teachings. But to the servants of the Word their honor is due, as we said above [Cap. 14 toward the end]. Therefore, even now, no one who is male appears empty before the Lord, as the believer gives thanks and offers praise in the spirit. The woman, that is, the flesh, and the still remaining infirmities of sin offer nothing, because there is no beautiful praise in the mouth of the sinner.

He calls unleavened bread "bread of misery" because they went out in fear, and he forbids leaven. What leaven is, Christ himself teaches sufficiently Matth. 16, 6. where he commands that they should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. Therefore, unleavened bread is the healthy and righteous word.

1) In the editions: "1 Cor. 10."

of faith. It is called a loaf of "misery" from the fear of the hasty departure, because through the gospel the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all men, especially the works saints, Rom. 1, 18. and 2, 16. since the spirit punishes the world for sin, for righteousness, and for judgment. Here the conscience is frightened by the realm of sin and wrath, and rushes out, speaking with those in Acts Cap. 2, 37: "Dear brethren, what shall we do?" and with Paul [Acts 9, 6]: "Lord, what wilt thou that I should do?" For the knowledge of sin urges and impels the elect of God to go forth where the firstborn of Egypt, that is, the righteousness of works with the

trust in it and its hopeful fame has been struck.

Nothing of the flesh of the lamb shall remain until tomorrow, but if anything remains, it shall be burned with fire (Ex. 12:10). This is said against the Jews, who, after the true Lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed, still await Him in the future, and put off and delay believing in Him who has come, and let go of the works of the law. But the godly consume the whole (lamb) by the fire of the Holy Spirit, that is, by the Word and faith, simply believing that all is fulfilled by the true and eternal Lamb, after the new morning of the Lord's resurrection has dawned.

## The seventeenth chapter.

**[You shall appoint judges and officers for yourself in all your gates.**

After the first commandment of faith in God has been interpreted, with which both the internal and the external worship has been taught, Moses now comes to the second commandment, namely the commandment of love. But he lets precede this a treatise about persons in authority, about the right of the sword and the judicial procedure in external things, and that in a correct and beautiful order. For (as we have said above [Cap. 1, 9-12.]) if there be not men to administer and execute the laws, to wield and use the sword, all legislation, however sacred, is in vain, since the sword is the power and efficacy and very (ipsa) life of the law, which keeps the wicked in check and protects the good. Here, then, we are taught in a brief epitome that where a law is given, the sword must also be instituted at the same time, so that the law teaches what one must do and refrain from doing, but the sword executes it and punishes those who do something [forbidden] or refrain from doing [something that is commanded],

by forcibly compelling the wicked to do and not to do. For without the sword, the law is useless and only a cause to increase evil deeds. Again, the sword without the law is a tyranny and an animalistic rage. But both, namely the law and the sword, connected with each other, is a beautiful and firm order (politia).

From this chapter you will learn at the same time that public crimes are not to be punished by the great crowd or any private person, but by the public sword of the authorities. For here you see that God Himself has appointed judges and officials to administer His own law, and He adds some cases which (as they say) belong before the bar (in terminis), by which He describes the judicial procedure to be observed in punishing wrongdoers, so that no one is wronged, namely, that the matter be carefully investigated, certainly recognized, and referred by witnesses, and thus punished according to the law. This I say against these new prophets of ours, the iconoclasts, who, since they fell from heaven the other day

are contemptuous of all authority, and stir up the mob against those who wield the sword from divine power, and usurp the sword, and rage without judgment, without witnesses, and without all form of right.

This is why he commands in this chapter that the matters are to be brought before the judges and proven with witnesses; likewise, how a king should be constituted. Thus he commands in Exodus 22:1, 9 that the matters should be brought before the gods (that is, before the judges), and that they should be decided and settled there either by a settlement or by a judgment. So elsewhere [Deut. 21, 20. f.] he teaches parents that they should accuse their rebellious sons themselves before the judges, and that they should then be stoned to death, and it is commanded [Deut. 22, 13. ff.] that if a harlot has not been found a virgin by her bridegroom, she should likewise be brought before the court, so that you can see everywhere that by divine power the sword and the public court are used to punish the crimes. By this is answered those angry prophets, since they insist on this word of God, in which he addresses the people in the second person, saying: You shall stone, you shall kill, so or so you shall do, you shall put away the wicked from you 2c. For those boast that by this word the right of the sword is given to the mob without distinction, while he speaks this to the people, who were provided and ordered with lawful authority and advisory (praesidentibus) priests.

Therefore he does not speak of the highest authorities, as there are the principes, priests and heads of the people, who were already given to the people by divine power of Moses, as Aaron, Joshua, the twelve princes [Num. 34, 18] and the seventy elders [Num. 11, 16], but of the judges and officials, which he does not appoint himself, but orders the people, which was already ordered, to appoint. For the judges are actually there for the legal affairs, although in the course of events this office sometimes again to the chiefs and priests.

ster came, as the book of Judges and [the books of] Samuelis say of the judges. The officials, however, are actually the executors of the law and the sword, as with us the executioners, the bailiffs and the professors; formerly the most respected and best people were chosen for this, but now only some quite despised and lowly person administers this office.

For if it is honorable for a judge to condemn and condemn the guilty by word, how can it be dishonorable to kill him (percutere) and execute the judge's word by deed? If it is dishonorable to kill an ungodly man with the sword, it would be even more dishonorable to condemn him by the court as such and to hand him over to the sword, since the executioner (praefectus) would not judge if the judge did not command it. For we read that Solomon [1 Kings 2:25 ff] gave this office to the very respected man Benaiah, 2) the son of Jehoiada, when he commanded to kill Shimei and Adonijah and Joab; and Saul charged his Doeg [1 Sam 22:18] to kill the priests, and David his men [2 Sam 1:15] to kill him who had killed Saul. But also among the Romans this office was given to great and honored men, no less than the office of a judge.

For these two persons, the judge and the bailiff, the administration of the sword requires and has them vonnöthen-. And in the Hebrew, by a beautiful allusion (allusione) XXXXX and XXXX are made similar. I translated it, because I had nothing else, not even exactly, by "judges and officials". By XXXXX or officials Moses wants to understand those who are the servants of the judge, the executors [of the death penalty], the executors [of the judgments] and public administrators, therefore also our Latin text sometimes translates them by praecones [court servants], and 2 Mos. 1, 11. makes "Frohnvögte" (exactores) and Werkmeister (praefectos operum) out of it. Christ calls the same bad-

2) Thus the Wittenberg and the Jena editions. Instead of: Lanuias, Mio 3oMlao the Erlanger offers: 3oju<tu nuia.

away a "servant", Matth. 5, 25: "Lest the judge deliver thee to the servant" 2c.

But he prescribes the rule for these judges and officials that they should judge justly, that is, according to the law of God, not according to their own sense. After that he forbids crooked ways (*affectus*), that they do not leave the law and let themselves be guided and moved by the reputation of the person and gifts. For these two pieces tend to pervert and bend all judgments, hence he also inserts a motto (*gnomen*) here, saying, "Gifts blind the wise and pervert the things of the righteous." The "reputation of the person" comprehends in itself the fear of the great, the powerful, and the rich, the love of relatives, the favor of friends, the contempt of the lowly, the pity against the unfortunate, one's own danger of life, good name, and all things. The "gifts" however comprehend in themselves the profit, the advantage, the hope and the whole insatiable and immeasurable maw of avarice. Therefore, Jethro advises Moses in Exodus 18:21 to choose men who are without avarice, that is, those rare birds that are very similar to a black swan.

So you see what kind of mind he must have who is to exercise the office of a judge and the sword, namely he must overcome all emotions, fear, love, favor, mercy, avarice, hope, good reputation, life and death, and must love the simplest truth and the right judgment, because (so says Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah [2 Chron. 19, 6.]) judgment is of the Lord. For a judge inevitably incurs the hatred of many people, he must be endangered by enmity (*odio*) and challenged by mercy and greed, and if he does not look to God alone, he cannot overcome these impulses and stand against them. But how will he be able to look to God alone if his heart is not securely fastened by faith?

See the example of the best jurists, who speak of equity very beautifully when they teach or write publicly, but think quite differently when they teach or write to individual per

They have to give advice to others (*privatim*) and get into contradiction with themselves, namely, that here the reputation of the person or pity for the misfortune (to put it in the best way) turns them away from the right path, so that they make an effort to heal, as it were, and to help the helpless, which they did not do at the time when they taught publicly. And so, from passionate excitement (*affectu*), they do not see that they are deviating from the equity they taught publicly. There is something so difficult, rare and high about a simple and correct eye in a judge.

The same can be seen in the greatest theologians, as there are Augustine, Bernard, and in those who are older than these, Cyprian, Tertullian, and the like, who, when they treat the Scriptures publicly, interpret them purely and correctly; but when questions are put to them, they seldom stay on the right track, that they should not take something from the Scriptures and attach it to the thing or the person, and twist the words of God by force. Look at them here, where they write against Arius, Jerome against Jovinianus, Augustine against the Manichaeans, Bernard against free will, and you will see that I speak the truth. None of the saints have so completely stripped themselves of the flesh or laid aside their emotions that there is no hope left, unless both the judge and the teacher act in the fear of God and always suspect themselves of not acting rightly according to the law of God and his words. For security must not be allowed in these matters, where God's cause is being acted upon, which is exceedingly serious.

### [Cap. 16, 21. 22.] You shall not plant a grove of trees 2c.

Why then does Moses include this about the outward service of God, since he had already begun to speak about the works against the neighbor? I answer: This he seems to do in the way of a repetition, that he also subjects to the punishment of the sword in this legal people, where something should be sinned against the outward service of God. This is proven by the fact that he says nothing about faith or fear.

but of the work of erecting a pillar, planting a grove or a tree by the altar of the Lord, and offering a sacrifice that has a defect [Cap. 17, l.sf. By these two pieces he shows, as by example, all sin in the outward service of God. Then he also adds an example, that a man and a woman are to be stoned, who have been convicted of having committed idolatry. By this example, he certainly applies the sword, which is already in place, to the sin that has been committed against the outward service of God, and commits it to the judge and the servant for punishment. For he reserves to himself to punish what is sinned in the heart through unbelief, as he says Cap, 18, 19. of the future prophet.

See, then, that here the public trial (*forum iudicii*) is instituted by God and an example of it is given. The first is when an evil happens before the eyes of the Lord [Cap. 17, 2. ff.]. But the evil in the eyes of the Lord, he explains, happens when someone transgresses the covenant of God by going and serving other gods, which God has not commanded. For he speaks (as I have said) of sin in the outward service of God, in order to show by example how in all crimes the sword should be wielded and justice executed. But he says with a significant word "wickedness in the eyes of the Lord", because there is nothing more beautiful, better and holier in the eyes of men than idolatry and godlessness, which is adorned by hypocrisy and the appearance of godliness. It is therefore an evil work in the sight of God, which is done without faith and word on our own initiative, no matter how well and excellently adorned (*speciosum*) it may appear. For this is his opinion (*vult*), since he says that they transgress his covenant and do what he has not commanded, so that you can know for certain that if anyone does something in the service of God that he has not commanded, it is evil in the sight of God, as he clearly says here, because it is necessarily done in confidence, as if they were doing something that is pleasing to God,

and that they would be justified by it; otherwise they would not do what is completely against faith, against his covenant and his word.

Second. It is not enough that an evil work has been done, but it must also be announced and made known by rumor or tale, as he says here [v. 4.], "And it shall be announced unto thee." Thirdly. Even this is not enough, but it must be carefully investigated whether it is as it is reported, so that one does not freely believe any boaster. But this investigation cannot be other than by witnesses who have seen and know, so that one witness is not enough, but "on the mouth of two or three witnesses (he says v. 6) shall all things stand". And he adds, "Upon the mouth of one witness shall no man die." Fourthly. Finally, those who are convicted are to be led out and stoned. Thus you see that in the public court and in the infliction of public punishment, the crimes are to be as public as the punishment is.

From this example you can learn how many offenses are to be borne and concealed, which either you alone, or others with you know, or which the rumor has spread everywhere. At the same time, you will see how carefully God has shut the mouths of braggarts and slanderers, and the ears of those who listen to them, so that the strictness of divine law does not only protect the truly innocent, but also the guilty, as long as they are still hidden. But I call them hidden because they have not been reported to the authorities and the judge as those who should be convicted with proper witnesses. And here it is evident how diabolical a den the world is, where the good name of one's neighbor is so easily violated, and offenses that are either lied about, or are picked up by rumor and suspicion alone, are carried on publicly, so that the law of God has commanded in another place that those who accuse others of offenses that they cannot prove shall be punished no less severely. Therefore, if you alone see someone sinning, keep silent; if you hear of it, keep to yourself until the matter can be proven to the judge with certain witnesses.

Moses preferred to take the example of judgment from an offense in the service of God rather than from murder or adultery or any other crime, because this example is certain and reliable and may not be forgiven or covered up by any mercy. For to sin against the service of God is to sin against faith and the Word. Here one should have no regard for love or mercy, for by doing so one offends and loses God along with the Word, which is the guide, the light, the teaching, and the rule of the whole life and of all works; if this is lost, no work can be [rightly] done, no life [rightly] ordered. But sin against love, if only the word and doctrine remain untouched, is only a lost work, which can be restored and made good according to the rule of the word. So immeasurable is the distance between the sin against faith and the word, and the sin against love and the word. For love bears all things, endures all things [1 Cor. 13:7], but faith bears nothing, and the word endures nothing, but the word must be perfectly pure, the doctrine must always be perfectly sound, so that it may be the goal for life and for the right direction of works. Love, however, can be weak and impure, and must be increased and perfected daily. Therefore Moses, the most gentle man on earth, nevertheless killed without mercy three thousand men who had worshiped the calf, Ex. 32,<sup>1</sup>) 28, because they had sinned against the word, the light and guide of life.

**V. 8-13. If a matter in court will be too hard for you 2c.**

This text, too, the papists have dragged on their idol with whimsical effort in order to confirm the papacy, therefore it is necessary that we consider it a little more carefully. In the first place, Moses is not speaking here of words or doctrine, or (as they say) of the questions of faith which they want to be brought to the pope's attention, but of the judgment of public and worldly opinion.

The words clearly indicate that this crime is of a doubtful nature "between blood and blood" (i.e., death), "between trade and commerce" (i.e., theft, robbery, quarrels, and malicious words), "between harm and harm" (i.e., beating, wounds, or other violent injury to the body), where Jerome, following his dreams, translates it as "between leprosy and leprosy," thus giving our papists reason to believe that it is "my" crime, wounds, or other violent injury to the body), where Jerome, following his dreams, translated "between leprosy and leprosy," by which he gave occasion to our papists to think that Moses was also speaking of the sacred mysteries of the faith, not merely of worldly things. Now that the pope is to be a servant of the spirit and not of the letter, and is to leave these worldly matters aside, this law does not concern him at all, nor does any other law of Moses; or if it did concern anyone, it would rather concern the emperor or a king or a prince, so that, according to the example of this law, the subordinates should get the judgment from the court of the overlord in doubtful matters.

Then this law speaks of the place that God chose, namely where the tabernacle was, the outward sign of the present God. But in the New Testament there is no such place. For [John 4:21] "neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem," but [v. 23] "in spirit and in truth" is GOD worshipped; neither will they say [Matt. 24:23], "Behold, here is Christ, or there," for this was proper to the ancient and legal people. Therefore, the papists should first prove that Rome is the place chosen by God. When will they do that? Where is the Word? Where is the sign? There is one place that is common to all Christians, that is the spirit and the truth. This is how Christ himself explains it; in spirit and truth (he says) God is worshipped and adored. And it is in the place that the questions about faith must be resolved. In this place the pope is no more than the maid in a mill, and his decision is no more valid in this place than that of a farmer who is in the field. For faith belongs to all, and the spiritual man judges all. Now if in any place there should be more perfect Christians, of course the imperfect ones must give way to them, not for the sake of the place, but because of the perfection of the spirit, as in

1) In the issues: Lxoäi 34.

In the book of Acts [Cap. 15, 2.] those of Antioch asked for a judgment from the apostles and elders, not because of the place, as if God had chosen it, since many elders there did not have the right opinion either, Acts 15, 5. 15, 5, and the apostles did not remain there as in a permanent place, but for the sake of the more perfect spirit of the apostles.

And, provided that all this should prove nothing, and that this law of Moses should be understood by the questions concerning faith and by Rome (which is impossible), he nevertheless disgraces all their precepts with one word, since he says here [v. 11]: "According to the law which they teach you," namely, because he wanted that even these priests of works and of the law should not rely on their own spirit and make a judgment according to it, but that they should teach everything according to the law which he had prescribed. How much more, therefore, must the priests of faith and of the Gospel decide and teach everything not from their own spirit, but according to the certain word of God! But neither the pope nor the concilia have ever done this, nor do they do it now, but they decide everything out of the fullness of their presumptuous spirit. But they usually decide nothing but exceedingly foolish things, as of ceremonies, benefices, dignities and similar foolish works.

Moses therefore laid down this law for the judges and servants of whom he speaks in this chapter, that the small towns should turn to the capital in doubtful matters, and the more inexperienced to the more perfect, since it was certain that God would also direct matters there, and that there would always be such priests there who knew the law of God, which God had not granted to any other place. For it was a civil nation, therefore He also provided it with a civil place and a bodily priesthood, in which the Spirit should certainly abide, just as He certainly provided us with Christ in the faith of His flesh 1) at His right hand, that is, as the One who is everywhere present and fulfills all things [Eph. 1, 23]. Therefore it comes that the Lord answered from the mercy seat through

1) Wittenberger: proviäst instead of: proviäit.

the light, that is, by the office sign (rationale [Ex. 28, 15.]) or of the priest, as Saul complains 1 Sam. 28,<sup>2</sup>) 6. that GOD did not give him an answer, neither by the prophets nor by the light.

#### V. 14. ff. I will set a king over me.

As he had begun with the sovereign persons, he ends this treatise also with regard to the kings and the kingdom by saying: For this shall come to pass, that the children of Israel shall have kings. This was formerly promised to Abraham and Isaac, when the Lord said Gen. 17, 6: "Kings shall come from you" 2c. Moses therefore anticipates that they will not choose or appoint a king according to their own will and without the word of God, but that they may be sure that they have a king by the grace and will of God, he wants them to be led by the power of God and by his word, which is something very special above all the nations of the earth. For although he changes and establishes all kingdoms, and gives them to whom he wills, yet for this people in particular he adds a word in which he indicates his favor to them, so that they may know that they have the kingdom of GOD. Therefore they are punished in the [first] book of Samuelli for having sinned grievously, that they desired a king in such a way that they would put their trust in him as in a man and a human kingdom, and did not desire a king in God and according to his word, as he says there [Cap. 8, 7.]: "They have rejected me, that I should not be king over them."

After that, so that the king himself might be a godly one, Moses instructs him that he should rule in trust in God alone, knowing that he alone is appointed by his word and must be sustained by it. Therefore, he commands that he should not keep many horses, that is, that he should not trust in his force (viribus); that he should not lead the people back to Egypt, that is, that he should not rely on the favor and strength of men; that he should not gather much gold and silver,

2) In the issues: 1 lisA. psnutt.

That is, that he should not trust in riches; that he should not take many wives; that is, that his faith should not be choked with thorns, as Christ calls the cares and pleasures of this life, Luc. 8:14. For this is not his will, that he should not be well provided with horses and troops, since it is read [1 Kings. 4, 26.] that David and Solomon did the opposite; so he also does not forbid alliances and assistance from men, since Solomon had the king of Tyre and Egypt [1 Kings 5, 12.], David the kings of the Moabites and the Ammonites and the king Thoi [2 Sam. 8, 9. ff.] as confederates. It is also written [1 Kings 10:23] that Solomon had such a large amount of gold and silver, which was left to him partly by David and partly by himself, that no other king had. So also many kings had very many wives.

But therein lies the power of the commandment, that (as he says in the text) his heart is not turned away, that is, that he does not gather and procure all this for himself in order to put his trust in it. For he wants to have, as a believing people, so also a believing king, who trusts only in God and his word, therefore he takes away everything in which the people put their trust. If they did not rely on it, but used it only in faith in GOD, satisfied with His word alone, then there would be no harm, as the best, the richest and most powerful of all kings boasts, saying [Ps. 44:7]: "I do not rely on my bow, and my sword cannot help me," and again [Ps. 60:14]: "With GOD we will do deeds. He will subdue my enemies," and again [Ps. 108:11, 13], "Who will lead me to a strong city? Give us help in trouble, for the help of men is of no avail," and many such things. He does not say that he has no bow, no sword and no men, but he says that he does not trust in them. Therefore, here Moses commands that the king read the other law (Deuteronomy) so that he may learn to fear God at all times, namely, he commands him the word of faith, which, as we have seen, he presents in this book exceedingly abundantly, so that his

Let him not exalt his heart above his brethren by the abundance that comes to him, and let him not be presumptuous of his strength or riches, but let him fear the Lord, who has no pleasure in anyone's legs or in the strength of his steed [Ps. 147:10]. Again, he should not be despondent when everything is in despair and the enemies have the upper hand, that is, as he says here, he should neither turn to the left nor to the right [v. 20], but walk rightly and firmly in fortune and misfortune, in strength and weakness, in honor and disgrace, clinging faithfully and strongly to God's word alone.

The secret interpretation of the judge and the servant is the office of the law, which by its judgment condemns the ungodly. Death, the servant of the law, kills, as Paul says [1 Cor. 15:56]: "The power of sin is the law, but the sting of death is sin." The judge is righteous (integrity) and must be unbending, for the law is holy, the commandment is good, righteous and holy, and yet it is an office of death, instituted that it might kill, that it might inflict wrath, for no law is given to the righteous, just as the civil sword is not to be feared for good works, but for evil, Rom. 13:3. That gifts are taken and persons are regarded is that the office of the law is misused to establish the righteousness of works and the glory of the flesh, but not for the knowledge of sin. For this righteousness of works blinds even the wise and righteous, and deceives by its appearance and confidence, so that by this proverb [v. 19] we are taught how dangerous the law is, when it is taught to do works.

Soon after he spoke about the judges, he forbade to set up a grove and trees and pillars at the altar of the Lord, that is, not to set up righteousness and the glory of works, which God hates. Neither shall one opsern anything that has a defect, that is, his law shall not be fulfilled with works. For this means to defile the law and the intention of the law, which is to make all men guilty and to bring them to the knowledge of their sin, Rom. 7, 7. Yes, those shall be put to death without grace (rigidissime) who believe in God.



That is, through the right understanding and knowledge of the Law, the service (cultus) and the performance (studium) of works are to be condemned, by which one believes to serve God, while in truth an idol of our heart, a false delusion of God, is worshipped, who, as the Law teaches, is honored by the faith of the heart alone. That they should be convicted by witnesses means that they should be overcome by the testimony of Scripture, as Paul teaches in the letter to Titus [Cap. 1, 9.] that a bishop should be mighty in sound doctrine, that he might convict the gainsayers. Furthermore, those who do not want to abide by the judgment of the more perfect in spirit, who judge according to the law of God, as he says here, are to be killed and taken out of the remedy, that is, a heretical person is to be shunned and put under ban, and held as a pagan.

The appointment of a king actually means Christ, who comes after the judge, the law. He did not become king in his people by our election, but by God's appointment; he was also not taken from a foreign people, because he did not take the

angels, but the seed of Abraham, even as we are made flesh, and became our brother, as though he were one of us [Heb. 2:16, 17]. And he did not exalt himself above his brethren, for though he was in the form of God, yet he humbled himself, and took upon him the form of a servant [Phil. 2:6 ff]. Therefore, although he has an abundance of many horses and great riches and the multitude of the people, that is, of all the fullness of spiritual wealth and spiritual powers, for in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge [Col. 2:3]; then also of the gold and silver of wisdom and eloquence in the Scriptures; and has many wives, that is, is great and glorious through many different churches, yet he does not trust in them, does not boast of them, but only of his God. For he is the righteous ruler among men in the fear of GOD, as David says in his last words f2 Sam. 23, 3.]. He treats this other law (Deuteronomion hoc) not only according to the letter, but also constantly according to the spirit, and has a kingdom that lives in the fear of God, which the judges and the law of death have not been able to do.

## The eighteenth chapter.

### V. 1-14: "The priests, the Levites of the whole tribe of Levi, shall not partake. 2c.

This chapter also belongs to the preceding one and forms, as it were, the conclusion of the speech about the provision of the ministers of the word, of whom he spoke in the 16th chapter, namely, in order to bring to a complete end what he had undertaken of both kinds of authority, both with regard to the holy one, which has to do with the word, and to the civil one, which wields the sword. He does this in such a way that at the end of this chapter he concludes everything in the future prophet who is to be raised up, who will establish a new kingdom and a new ministry, and abolish everything he has said up to now. For on this [prophet] Moses has completely and utterly

His purpose is directed to this one, who is the end of all things. Therefore, in this chapter he makes some additions to what he has said above, as it is Mosi's way that he repeats in order to add something and thus to complete the whole.

The first is that the priests do not share the land with the tribes of Israel, but are to be fed by the offerings of the Lord. He indicates what they are to receive from the sacrifices, namely the shoulder, both cheeks and the belly of every sacrificed sheep and ox, as well as the firstlings of grain, wine, oil and wool. There is no mention here of the tithes that the Levites were to receive, nor of the firstborn, because

he has spoken above of these, and here he repeats only to add what they should have of the sacrifices. About the shoulder and the breast read in the third book of Moses the first three chapters 1) and in the second book of Moses Cap. 29 [V. 27.]. "Wanst" (ventriculum) he calls here either the stomach or the abdomen, namely the lowest part of the belly. I am not quite sure whether the priests should take these parts from every sacrifice, be it a sin offering or a burnt offering or a whole sacrifice. I would like to claim it of all sacrifices, except of the burnt offering, where, as it seems, the whole was burned, although this also does not completely convince me (*satis permovet*). But I leave this to the people who have more leisure [than I].

Secondly, what he adds about the foreign Levite, that he should be taken into the order of service in your place of the tabernacle, this also belongs to the provision of the Levites, of whom he also said above [Cap. 14, 29.], and repeats here at the end to add this, according to his way, as I have said. But one must believe that this commandment was hard for those who served in the tabernacle, that they were forced to make their portions smaller and to divide them into so many, especially if they were stingy and unbelieving. But God commanded this so that faith and love would be exercised, that they would learn to gladly share theirs, in the certain confidence that God would feed them. But there is also no doubt that this law was kept as all others, so that because of the insignificance of the portion, few or even no Levites attempted to go to the place of the tabernacle: but if some had wanted to do so out of love for the word and to learn the law, they might have had their provision here.

Thirdly, and this is the last addition to all that has been said above of the outward worship of GOD, viz.

We should beware of the abominations of the Gentiles, which he lists here in order, and enumerates nine, all of which are contrary to the right and pure worship instituted by his word. These we distinguish now, although we cannot guarantee for the Hebrew in all pieces, nevertheless as well as possible with credible conjectures in this way: The first whom Moses calls diviners, we say; and this word is not seldom taken in a good sense, as also the name prophet in a bad sense. Diviners are now those who predict the future, or interpret the Scriptures and the words of God, but according to their sense. The second XXXXXX, regarding which almost all agree, also the Jews, that they are diurnal diviners. The third XXXXXX we call: those who pay attention to the cries of birds (*augures*); and although they have the name of paying attention to the birds, this word also means 4 Mos. 23,<sup>2</sup>) 23. paying attention to other things, as: "There is no sorcerer in Jacob", and 1 Mos. 44, 5.: "Is it not so that my Lord used to prophesy?" The fourth XXXXXX, these, we think, are actually sorcerers and witches, Ex. 22:18: "The sorceresses thou shalt not suffer to live." The fifth XXXXXX are conjurers, to which that Psalm [Ps. 58, 6.] bears witness, which says: "Which heareth not the voice of the conjurer, who is well able to conjure." The sixth XXXX; this is the spirit of divination (*Python*), that spirit of which it is said in the Acts of the Apostles [Cap. 16, 16.] that he is one who reveals secret and hidden things. These are called by us in German wise men and wise women. The seventh XXXXX<sup>3</sup>); these are the soothsayers who interpret signs or base their assumptions on them. The eighth, who ask the dead, are those who consult the spirits that walk by night, which are sometimes thought to be the souls of the departed. The ninth, whom Moses puts first, who make their sons or daughters pass through the fire, that is, who give their seed to the idol Moloch, as he elsewhere

2) In the issues: Nnm. 24.

3) In the editions: *jsūsoui*, but Luther has also put the plural here, as in the other cases; the context also points to this.

1) *xsr trin xrimu oaxitulu*. The word *prima* probably came in by mistake, for there is nothing in the first three chapters. However, the shoulder and the chest are mentioned in three successive chapters, namely Cap. 7, 30-34, Cap. 8, 29 and Cap. 9, 20. f.

[3 Mos. 18, 21.] says. All this, because they are human inventions without the word of God, shall be condemned in the people of God, whose life and works must be guided by the certain word of God.

**V. 15. The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you and your brothers, and you shall obey him.**

This is the main passage of this whole book and a very explicit prophecy of Christ, the new teacher, therefore also the apostles strongly refer to this passage; and Moses puts this saying here very appropriately at the end, where he had preached about the priesthood, about the kingdom, about the rulers and all worship, in order to show that later there would be another priesthood, another kingdom, another worship, another word, by which the whole Moses would be taken away. And here Moses clearly describes that it will come to an end with him, and cedes his mastery to the future prophet. Therefore, we want to look at his words quite carefully.

First of all, it is necessary that this prophet brings a new word, which Moses did not teach, because God promises here that he will put his words into his mouth. But if there was not another word here, it should not have been promised that it should be brought by this prophet, but it would have been sufficient to say: "He shall be your mouth", as said by Aaron in the second book of Moses Cap. 4,<sup>1</sup> ) 16. to indicate that this prophet "will teach the words of Moses and his written law". For when he says, "You shall hear him who will be raised up like me," he teaches that his word and the word of this prophet are quite different, and he confirms this by saying that the people on Mount Sinai desired such a prophet to speak to them, since they had already heard the whole law through Moses.

But there can be no other word beyond the word of Moses but the gospel, since everything that belongs to the teaching of the law.

through Moses is most perfect and abundant, so that absolutely nothing can be added. For what could be added to the holy ten commandments (to say nothing of everything else)? What can be taught more sublime than to believe in God with all one's heart, to trust Him, to love Him, to fear Him, not to tempt God 2c.? Furthermore, what can be taught that is more righteous and holy than that which Moses decrees about the outward service of God, about authority, about love for one's neighbor? Here, then, the Jews have no reason to gossip that this prophet will be one who interprets Moses. Moses explains himself in this book in such a way that another one is not necessary, nor can another one add a letter or a tittle to make it clearer or more perfect. Now, since beyond the perfect teaching of the law there can be no other word but the word of grace, it follows that this prophet will not be a teacher of the law, but a minister of grace. Thus, this text clearly forces the Jews to expect something different from this prophet than they have in Moses.

Secondly. If this new prophet did not bring up another word, Moses would not have had to compare him to himself, saying, "The LORD will raise him up like me." For all the other prophets who taught Moses, and did not bring up another word (suscitaverunt), were not like Moses, or Moses' equals, but inferior to Moses, namely, servants of the word of Moses, who taught what Moses had prescribed, so that in all this they heard not any other prophet or themselves, but Moses himself and his words. For Moses speaks in them, and he puts his words into their mouths, and they are his mouth to the people. But he does not subject himself to these prophets and put his words into their mouths, but he declares that the Lord himself, through himself, will put his words into their mouths. He says that he will be like him in the office and in the obedience that should be rendered to his words (audientia), by which he will certainly exempt him from obedience to himself [i.e. to Mo-

1) In the issues: Lxoă. 3.

[it] excludes and prefers him to all the prophets who teach Moses.

But that he exempts him from obedience to Moses and prefers him to all the prophets who teach Moses, this means indeed that the office of the law is to cease and a new one is to be established, since no man is free from the service of the law, but all are subject to the law. Therefore it is necessary that this prophet be equal to Moses (according to the power to teach and to command, for this is what he wants to express when he says: "Like me"), that he be higher than Moses and teach greater things. For if he were not greater, Moses would not hand over obedience and prestige to him. But if he did not teach greater things, he would not be greater. For here he is not speaking of the equality of personal dignity between Moses and that prophet, but of the equality of authority or office. For here he is not speaking of the life, customs, or works of Moses or that prophet, but of teaching, as the text sufficiently indicates, since a prophet [has his name] from teaching and comes for the sake of teaching, and here it is commanded that he be obeyed (*audientia erga eum*).

Therefore, when the teaching of both is discussed, it will be easy to see from the comparison of the teaching of both what he must necessarily preach. For Moses is a servant of the law, of sin, of death, because he teaches and urges to do, and by the rays of the law makes all guilty of death, delinquent because of sin; he demands, but he does not give what he demands. But since this prophet finds Moses teaching this, and he himself is appointed teacher beside him, his word must teach something else; but he cannot teach anything else than sin, wrath and death, if he does not teach righteousness, grace and life. Therefore, he must necessarily be a teacher of life, grace and righteousness, just as Moses is a teacher of sin, wrath and death. But both are to be heard in the same way as they are awakened by God, because through the law all must be humbled, and through the gospel all are exalted. They are equal in divine

They are equal in reputation, but unequal according to the fruit of their ministry and completely opposed to each other, since the latter cancels (evacuates) the sin and wrath, which Moses arouses through his ministry, in his ministry through righteousness and grace. So this prophet does not demand anything, but gives what Moses demands.

We have therefore from this passage the two offices of the Word, which are necessary to the blessedness of the human race, the office of the law and the office of the gospel, the one to death, the other to life, and how they are alike indeed when one looks at the power, but exceedingly dissimilar when one looks at the fruit. For the office of Moses is a temporal one, which shall finally have an end by the coming of the office of Christ, as he here says, "To whom ye shall obey." But the office of Christ will come to an end through no other, since it brings eternal righteousness and puts away sin, as Dan. 9, 24. says. Therefore, the Levitical priesthood is completely abolished here and an end is put to it, because it was instituted to teach Moses. When the priesthood is ended, the law also ceases, as the author of the letter to the Hebrews says: "Where the priesthood is changed, the law must also be changed." Thus, no one else can be the prophet here but Christ Himself.

From all this it follows how completely improper, even corrupt teachers are in the New Testament, who torment the consciences with laws and works, since this prophecy of Christ completely destroys and abolishes this office. Furthermore, they are even more harmful who burden the whole world with their statutes and human laws. For if the office of this new prophet does not suffer the office 1) of the law of Moses, which is after all divine, how will he in his kingdom suffer the laws of men? so that you can see that by this One Text the whole disorderly being (chaos) of the papist tyranny with its monks is overthrown.

But here you will say: But one finds everywhere in the Gospel and in the epistles of the

1) The text seems to us to be deficient here. Either a second iniumtsriura is to be inserted (this we have done), or instead of lsZis lsZsm is to be read.

Apostle commandments, so either this prophet will not be our Christ, or his teaching will not differ in anything from the law of Moses. The answer to this is brief: The commandments of the New Testament are given for the justified and the new men in the spirit. For nothing is taught or commanded there that does not concern only the faithful, who do everything voluntarily, not out of necessity or against their will. But the law is given for the old man, who is dead in sins, to press upon him and show him his sin. For this is what it really means to teach the law. For this reason man is not only unwilling but also unable to do what the law requires, as he says here in the text that the people refused on the day of the assembly and could not hear the voice of the law; therefore they demanded another teacher who spoke the word to them, which they could bear.

Therefore, the understanding of this matter lies in the knowledge and the right distinction of the law and the gospel, so that you know that the teaching of the law is only the one that commands what the ungodly and lost people should do, as it says in 1 Tim. 1, 9: "No law is given to the righteous, but to the ungodly" 2c. But where there are godly people, the law has already been abolished, which only dealt with humiliating the ungodly through the knowledge of their sin and their inability<sup>1</sup>). But the teaching of the gospel is the one that teaches where you can receive that from which you can fulfill the law, and in this respect it does not command anything, nor does it urge the spirit, which runs by itself, having become willing through faith. The gospel, however, adds some laws, but only because of the remnants of the old man in the flesh, so that this may be killed, which has not yet become righteous; from these laws, however, the spirit for its part is free, which alone has a sufficiency in faith. We have spoken abundantly of this elsewhere.

Now let us look at the words. "A prophet from your people and from your

The Lord shall raise up unto thee brethren like unto me, and thou shalt hear him. Here he prophesies that Christ will be a true man and from the blood of the Jews, because salvation comes from the Jews, Joh. 4, 22. But so far no one has appeared from this people who has taught a different word than Moses and has established a new ministry, but only this our Christ. As many prophets as there were before him, they all kept and taught Moses. But this Christ delivered not only the Jews, but also all the Gentiles in the whole world from Moses, and gave the new word of the gospel. Since he came from the Jews, as both Gentiles and Jews testify, this fact proves that he is the one Moses is talking about here and that this prophecy is fulfilled in him.

### **V. 16. As you were asked by the Lord your God to host in Horeb 2c.**

In the second book of Moses Cap. 20 we do not read anything about this request, so why does Moses speak like this? Moses concludes from the words of the people that this request was in them, because they say: "I do not want to hear the voice of the Lord my God anymore, and I do not want to see this great fire anymore, so that I will not die" [2 Mos. 20, 19. 5 Mos. 5, 25.] From these words, I say, not how they read, but according to what they mean, he takes this, because he looks at their innermost heart opinion and at the main point of their desire. For they were so moved by the terror of the voice, that with the greatest desire of their hearts they longed for a softer and more sweet word. For the death threatened them by the voice of the law compelled them to sigh for life and the word of blessedness, and in such fear they desire more than they should have dared to ask for another word. But GOD, who searches the depths of the heart, does not hear and answer according to the words sounded by rote, but according to the desire glowing within, just as Christ in the Gospel [Luc. 19, 2. ff.] looked at Zacchaeus, not according to what he spoke by rote, but according to the desire of his heart. For even Zacchaeus would not have dared to ask by heart that

1) We have followed the reading of the Wittenberg: [Mt instead of: "Kit in der Erlanger.

Christ was to enter his house, -and yet he inwardly desired nothing more. Therefore he received him with joy, because his desire was fulfilled, which he had hardly felt before.

Moses therefore shows in this passage with what ardor and heat of heart one must desire the word of grace, since it is the gift of God, of which especially the word of Paul is understood, since he says in the letter to the Ephesians Cap. 3, 20, that God gives us and does above all that we ask or understand. For he hates the indolent and cold prayers (petitores), who hope to obtain it by many words, but he wants to have inexpressible groaning, which certainly those cannot have who spend their days in good living, and dwell in the land of those who lead a gentle life, but those, who are brought to despair by the sensation of death and the bite of sin, so that they, too, with the people of Israel, refuse to hear the voice of God any longer and to feast on the exceedingly great fire, that is, the power of the law and the sting of sin, that is, death and God's wrath, which, as it were, is already consuming them like a fire, so that they desire to hear the word of life.

And notice how beautifully Moses cedes his office to the future prophet. For he says that the people asked that another prophet be awakened, while they asked in Exodus 20:19 that Moses himself should speak to them, but said nothing about another being awakened besides Moses. By this speech Moses shows that the people were afraid and did not know what to ask or how to ask. For it was foolish to ask them to listen to Moses, since Moses was not allowed to teach or let them hear (sonare) anything other than what they themselves heard on your mountain, that is, the law. For so frightened and fearful people are wont to ask what they know not, as Paul Rom. 8, 26. says: "We know not what we ought to pray, or how we ought to pray, but the Holy Ghost representeth the saints" 2c. Therefore Moses also interprets their request here according to their desire, as if to say: You asked foolishly that I might speak to you, since you were afraid.

to hear that voice on the mountain, because this is constantly the voice of my ministry, but God, who looks at your heart, has seen that you do not ask for me, but for another who speaks more sweetly than I, and since he hears this prayer of yours, he will give you such a prophet as you want.

But what kind of one do you want? Certainly one who heals those who are crushed by my voice, that is, by the law of sin and wrath, who heals those who are brokenhearted, who loosens and comforts the frightened and contrite. With what medicine? Certainly by the word of life and salvation, so that the voice of those who proclaim peace, who preach good on the mountains [Isa. 52:7] may be heard, that he is the one of whom Malachi [Cap. 3:1.] foretold, "And soon shall come to his holy temple the angel of the covenant which ye desire," and after him Isaias [Cap. 61, 1. 2.], "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore hath he anointed me, and hath sent me to preach to the miserable, to heal the brokenhearted, to preach a gracious year of the Lord." For such a one (he says) thou didst ask in Horeb, when thou didst ask me foolishly; such a one shall the LORD give thee in my stead. See thou that thou hear him instead of me. This one I will give way to, because you cannot bear me and have asked that I be silenced and cut off.

#### **V. 18. I will put my words into his mouth.**

This also clearly proves that this prophet will teach something else, since he has not yet given such words in Mose's mouth, nor has he commanded him to do so, but he promises that he will give and command them in the future. Therefore, this word must be different from the word of the law, which he had already given and commanded in Mose's mouth in an exceedingly abundant and most perfect way, so very powerful that it drove those who were already frightened to death and despair by its power. For in vain would he have promised that it should still be given and commanded, if he had already given and commanded it into the mouth of Moses. Since the future prophet would teach something else

it is necessary that his word is not a word of the law, which kills and frightens, but which makes alive and comforts. Thus we see that the prophets were instructed by this passage, where they prophesy of another covenant, another word, a future priesthood, as Jeremiah [Cap. 31, 31. f.]: "Behold, the time cometh, when I will make a covenant, not as the covenant was" 2c., and Ps. 110, 4.: "Thou art a priest for ever", and Isa. 2, 3.: "The word of the LORD shall go forth from Zion" 2c.

**V.19. And whoever will not hear my words 2c., of him I will require it.**

By this word he abolishes the whole civil authority, which was taught in Moses until now, because he had appointed the sword and the judges to preserve and administer the law of Moses. But here, where he institutes a new word, he ordains no sword, no judge, but threatens that it will be he himself who avenges, as he also says in the prophet Micah, Cap. 5,<sup>1</sup> ) 14: "I will execute vengeance with fury and wrath on all the heathen who will not obey." For since this is the sermon to life and salvation, no one shall be forced to it by human force, since God requires a willing heart that believes. But since this can neither be accomplished nor forced by human power, one must leave those to God's judgment alone who do not want to believe, because He Himself has already condemned them, since He says [John 3:18], "He who does not believe is already judged," and here: "From him I will require it."

From this you see how mad the bishops and princes are today, who force the heretics or the godless to believe by force, and kill and burn those who do not want to be forced. They certainly arrogate to themselves the judgment that God claims for Himself, and force where no one can be forced, and demand what neither they nor any man can provide. But by doing this, they show how they do not understand Christ and his word at all, nor do they see what Moses said here.

teach. For since they make of the Christian nature a kind of outward appearance, that they think that those believe who outwardly confess the name of Christ out of fear of punishment or disgrace, and do not pay attention to the fact that this thing belongs to the spirit alone and is completely free of men, they are soon forced to subject it to the sword and to judgment, since every outward law and outward worship (religio) necessarily requires worldly (profanis) judges, as we have also seen in the law of Moses. Thus it happened that they made a law out of the word, works out of faith, and an outward appearance out of truth; therefore they were forced to use the sword at last.

With the same madness, but under a different semblance, our new prophets, who, possessed by vain honor, wanted to teach better and higher things than the word of life, which Christ restored to us anew in our time, are brought by the spirit of the devil to ridicule that they should be taught by us about faith and love. But they have invented a new kind of spirit instead of the word, new, vain words with which they beguile the common people. And so that we may avoid their poison, since they are doing their business (currunt) in our time, let us briefly touch on their foolishness, to remind the godly not to be seduced by their splendid words. To make these things easier to understand, let us first present our doctrine (nostra). For this is how we teach and hold, and with truth:

First and foremost, the prophet must be heard, of whom Moses says here, that is, our salvation does not begin with any work that is ours, but with the hearing of the word of life, since the law also precedes for its own sake, so that it may humble and show sin, and teach us that we are not able to do anything with our strength, Rom. 4, 15: "The law only causes wrath," to such an extent that the people not only do not do the law, but furthermore do not even want to hear it, since it kills them, and therefore ask for another word, which is

1) In the issues: Oap. 6.

before we do anything, as you have seen here.

But when one hears the word, the Holy Spirit is given, who purifies the heart through faith [Acts 15:9]. Rom. 10, 17: "Faith comes from preaching", not in all who hear, but in those whom God wills. For the wind blows where it wills, John 3:8, not where we will. But when we have received the Holy Spirit through faith, we are immediately justified by that very faith, without any work that we do, but by God's gift alone, and feel peace and a good conscience toward God, Rom. 5:1, and cheerfully and surely cry, Abba, dear Father. Now there is no longer fear or a servile fleeing from the wrath of God, but a childlike access to God through the grace in which we stand and boast, Rom. 5, 2.

But when the heart is justified and satisfied inwardly by faith in the spirit in this way, then one soon goes outwardly in various ways. First, confession of salvation is made with the mouth, and the word is preached by heart by which we have been saved inwardly, so that others may also be saved through us, just as we are saved through those who were before us, so that the kingdom of Christ may be increased. Here persecution, cross and tribulation arise for the sake of the word in the world, which hates light and life because it loves darkness. This is how faith is proven and perfected into the perfect hope that makes us certain of our blessedness. Secondly, our old man is attacked, in whom are the remnants of sin, which by their law in the members fight against the spirit, so that we do not do what the spirit wants. Here the killing of the flesh is done. Thirdly, good works come forth as fruits as witnesses of faith and of the Spirit towards the neighbor in love, kindness, peace, goodness 2c., Gal. 5, 22. This is the brief epitome and the right order of the Christian life, which depends on and begins with the word and extends to the works of love towards the neighbor. This order let these new prophets

and proceed in this way: First, they take the killing. This they divide into many stages or pounds (*pondera*),<sup>1</sup> ) which they call by different names, such as, one consists in the desolation, another in the astonishment, another in the discipline, another in the boredom, another in the emptying of the creature, and, they admit no one to righteousness until he has progressed through these stages to perfect death; then they are filled with the Holy Spirit, so that they are able to do everything, know everything, want everything. For it is not from the preaching of the Word, which they boastfully despise, but from the killing that the Spirit comes to them. For they are offended to see that the righteous and godly still have to deal with the remnants of sin. Therefore they call them hypocrites and those who pretend to believe and steal from the syllables of the Scriptures, not drawing from the Spirit. But they are without any remnant of sin, therefore they have true faith from the Spirit.

So you see here quite obviously the devil, who blinds them, that they start from the death, which must follow the word and the faith and the spirit, and stop with the spirit, which must precede everything, and bring about a whole new appearance (*larvam*) of works under the name "death". Meanwhile they despise the word itself, so that they set up nothing but an outward appearance and teach in a new way that righteousness is brought about by our powers, namely such a righteousness that is completely without remnants of sin, which is impossible in this life, Rom. 7. But in doing so, these people who boast of the Spirit and of complete (*purissimae*) mortification and of the purest righteousness are not only full of all vices, but also possessed to an irreconcilable frenzy. For not easily will you ever see greater pride, greater arrogance, presumption, envy, hatred, anger, impatience, avarice, faintheartedness (when things do not go well), boldness, and the like.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Tischreden, Cap. S7, s I. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XXII, 1010.



(if it succeeds), then also unreliability. 1) Yes, of course, so they kill themselves, so they degrade themselves (deterunt crassities suas)! Truly, by these pounds they are rather weighed down by the devil than honored by God. 2)

Then, because they raise this confused and undigested appearance of outward killing and righteousness, they are forced to use the sword as well in order to practice and maintain it, as is the custom with all outward laws. And as their killing and their justice are confused and wrong, so there is nothing but confusion (confusum chaos) in their use of the sword. For not to the lawful authority, but to the common rabble against the lawful authority, they hand it over to slay all the wicked (that is, those who do not hold with their wisdom), so that their sect is not to be condemned both because of its foolishness and imprudence and because of its manifest rage and frenzy, for it is the devil who in this way avenges himself on the word that rises again and flourishes again.

Let us therefore leave aside these prophets, who have been refuted enough and above enough by their obvious frenzy, and remain in the pure doctrine and knowledge of Christ, knowing that the sum of our religion is faith in the Spirit, which is given through the Word; then that sin still remains in the flesh, which must be swept out, and that a death is not required which is perfectly accomplished, but which is to be perfectly accomplished. Therefore one must also bear in love, but not condemn those who are still weak in faith and life, Rom. 15, 1. This is the highest praise and the first law among Christians who are already righteous, as Paul says [Gal. 6, 2.]: "Bear one another's burdens, and you will fulfill the law of Christ." Therefore we must be careful with the utmost diligence that we do not ascribe righteousness to any work, but leave it to faith alone in the heart, according to the words Rom. 10, 10:

"If one believes from the heart, one is justified"; again, that we do not nourish a drowsy faith that neglects mortification, that is, we are to practice mortification in such a way that we do not think that, when it is done, righteousness or the Spirit will be obtained thereby, as these prophets race, nor even that, when it is omitted, less the Spirit and righteousness will be brought through the Word.

This purity of the knowledge of Christ is, of course, very tender and small (rara) even among holy and spiritual people, for the appearance of works and the wickedness of the unsaved flesh is so detrimental that even the best people are more and more likely to be driven to kill their flesh and do works, than to press on to the word and obtain faith and the Spirit, as if faith and the Spirit came through works and death, whereas, on the contrary, death and works come both from the Spirit and from faith, but the Spirit and faith come only from the word of life. For this also is a gross wickedness of the flesh, which must be killed with all diligence, that it makes works and death so great and esteems them highly that it does not see the power of the word, which is mighty through the power of God to save the faithful [Rom. 1:16], and often deceives great men. Let this be enough of the false prophets, that a godly man beware of them and keep the unadulterated (sanum) and pure word of GOD. It follows:

## V. 20. When a prophet is presumptuous 2c.

"There must be trouble" [Matth. 18, 7], and with the true and unadulterated word of God false teachers always mix in, as Peter and Paul testify after Christ: "There will be false teachers among you, just as there were false prophets among the people", 2 Petr. 2,<sup>3</sup> ) 1, and: "After my departure there will be abominable wolves among you", Apost. 20, 29. For the devil does not sleep, but when people sleep, he sows tares among the good seed. Moses also reminds us of the danger,

1) It is to be read here with the Wittenberg edition inüüslitstsm instead of inkslicittuttrn in the Jena and Erlanger. The latter does not fit into the context.

2) onsrantur - üonomirtur, a play on words.

3) In the editions: 1?st. 2.

that we are sure it will happen that besides the word of truth godless people, inflamed by the vain honor of being teachers [Jac. 3, 1.], want to be regarded for teaching new and better things, as also our prophets do, of whom we have just spoken. Therefore he says here: "Whoever is presumptuous to speak in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak," namely, that only iniquity and presumption drives them to speak without God's command.

But he indicates two kinds of prophets who stand up against the right doctrine, the one coming in the name of the Lord, the other in the name of foreign gods. Those who come in the name of the Lord are the ones who preach the word of God and use the holy scriptures, because God speaks in them and God's name is in them, since he gave them himself. These were to be most prevalent (*erant futuri*) in the time of Christ among the Jews, where they used the holy Scriptures as the word of God against the Gospel, for the righteousness of the Law, and after them among the heretics. Those who come in the name of other gods are those who come without Scripture and the Word of God, but pretend to have their own spirit, like the Manichaeans and after them the pope and all those who corrupt the people with human statutes, among whom also our prophets are to be counted, who keep falling down from heaven and want us to believe their spirit, even if it speaks without Scripture.

#### V. 21. But whether you would say in your heart 2c.

I have said above in the thirteenth chapter how these two things agree with each other, that there he said: even if the sign comes, which a false prophet has predicted, one should not believe him, but here he says: if it does not come, then it is a sign that he is false, namely, there are two kinds of teachings; the one that is already accepted and confirmed by divine power or miracles. Against this kind one should not allow any miracles, not even an angel from heaven. For by these miracles we are tempted, as he said above [Cap. 13, 3. 1 above, as is shown by that prophet

1 Kings 13:1 ff, who was confirmed against the altar at Bethel even by two miracles, and yet, when he was tempted by another prophet, he fell and died, slain by a lion. Thus Paul proclaimed beforehand [2 Thess. 2, 9. ff.] as Christ did [Matth. 24, 24.] that signs and lying miracles would come against the truth, so that the unbelievers would be deceived. Thus the devil, in order to destroy the faith, performed many signs during the pilgrimages (*visitationibus*) to the saints, with apparitions of spirits and the like.

The other [kind of teaching] is that which is yet to be accepted. Here one does not have to believe unless signs occur, because God has never spoken a new word without confirming it with signs, as He confirmed the Law of Moses with the greatest signs, the Gospel also with exceedingly great and almost constant ones, since it was accepted first. Therefore, when a new doctrine comes, one must postpone his approval until signs are performed. If we do this, then God is faithful, who does not allow them to do signs. But if we do not, he justly permits signs to be done, so that we may be deceived and perish.

This is what I did to my raging prophets; since they boasted that their spirit was as great as we know that the apostle's spirit was not, namely, that they talked with God himself, like Moses, face to face every day, I told them to perform miracles, otherwise they would not be worthy of faith. They have certainly promised to do so, but I do not see or hear anything yet. Yes, in spite of this I have said and still say: My God will see to it that your God does not perform signs and wonders. 1)

But these miracles deceive inexperienced people, because they do not pay attention to them, or because they do not know how great the power and the strength of the devil is, with how great a deception he can bring it about that you think you are blind in one eye, wounded in the thigh or another limb, or sick in the whole body, when in fact you are blind in one eye, wounded in the thigh or another limb, or sick in the whole body.

1) Cf. the table speeches of Cordatus No. 128. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XXII, 1822.

But after that, if you vow something or call upon some saint, he subsides, so that health returns. Then it is thought that this happens by the merit of the saints and by divine power. Thus, he can keep one who is [apparently] suffocated in water alive for a few hours without perceptible breath and sensation, since nothing is easier for him than to deceive the senses.

In all these things one must not look both at the miracles and at the cause of them. If it is a matter of works and outward appearances that these are to be proved, it is the devil. But in matters of word and faith, he does not play with miracles in such a way, because he hates the word of faith. Even if something true happens, so that it is a real disease and a real health, one should not give greater credence to it, because the miracle worker knows the powers of the body and the properties of the herbs and all healing and all harmful things, which he sometimes uses at his discretion, sometimes keeps away, as he does through the witches, who injure the bodies of those who hate them, sometimes even kill them, but also make the injured healthy again 2c.

This is enough from the prophets. The secret interpretation of the fact that the Levites among the children of Israel possess nothing is that the servants of the Word should not involve themselves in the business of food, and abstain from all things, so that they may please the Lord, who is their inheritance. That is, the word is their possession and their riches, with which they may please God.

To serve and preserve the people, that they may inherit the land of promise, that is, the blessedness of souls. The priests' right to the sacrifices, namely the shoulder, the cheeks, the belly and the firstfruits, means the same thing, that they are in the practice (usu) and service of the word. With their arms they are to be strong in their work, and with their cheeks they are to bite and crush the wicked, with punishments, with reproaches, with fervent supplications. But with the strongest part they should take care of the weak and carry them; but the firstfruits they should use, teaching that everything must be attributed to the grace of God, not to our strength.

But the soothsayers and the whole array of abominations, which Moses lists here, mean the godless teachers, who prophesy out of their heads what God has not commanded them, and burden the consciences with certain days, certain works, certain places, certain persons. Therefore they deceive the consciences with deceptive and apparent opinions and empty words, not unlike the sorcerers and conjurers who blind the eyes with their dazzling work, so that they think they feel or see something where they neither feel nor see anything. Paul calls such people Eph. 4, 14 and they are actually represented by these deceivers and sorcerers. They also make their children pass through the fire, that is, they inflame and corrupt the people through a false zeal in godliness, as this can be easily applied and understood.

1) That is: cunning, mischievous people. In the place indicated it says: cv

## The nineteenth chapter.

**V. 1-4. When the LORD your God has cut off the nations 2c.**

After the provisions on worship and authority are completed, Moses continues with the second part of the Law, namely love, which is contained in the second tablet. Therefore, this whole chapter is about

of the death stroke and of the avarice, how an accidental death stroke should be forgiven, but a deliberate one should be punished. Then he decrees by a general judgment that every injustice shall be avenged by equal punishment (talionis lege). For love demands that public peace be maintained, but when the

If the evil are not kept in check, peace cannot exist. Therefore, it is the duty of love to administer the laws strictly and without mercy, to take vengeance on the wicked, so that the good and godly may be preserved. Again, it is the business of love that the severity of the law be mitigated by equity, that he may obtain mercy who, though he resembles a wicked and harmful man, yet is neither wicked nor harmful because he has done it contrary to his will and unwillingly. Therefore, three cities are commanded to be set apart as a refuge for people who have unintentionally committed a death.

**V. 4-7. if someone strikes his neighbor, not intentionally 2c.**

He explains with an example how he wants to understand the unintentional death stroke, which is crasso enough, namely, if someone handles something else, as if he chops wood, and leads him the iron from the handle and slays the neighbor. Here you see quite beautifully how God requires fairness in the laws, how he wants people to judge not only according to their deeds, but also according to their will. For this example must be applied to all laws in general, so that in everything that may be sinned against, it is the heart rather than the hand of the sinner that is considered, as Moses here expressly declares that he who has not killed someone out of hatred, but by chance, without his will, is not guilty of manslaughter. But this attitude (*animus*) must be proved by certain signs and circumstances, so that no one may say after such an event: I did not do it with will. Therefore, Moses sets the example of the iron falling from the handle and clearly states the circumstance that proves that the man who killed him was busy with something else and did the work of killing against his will. In the same way, if someone knocks out another's eye out of carelessness, either with his fist or with a stone, but by all means with something else than wanting to knock out his eye, he is not guilty of this wrong. Likewise, if he has

I was an eyewitness (*vidi factum*) that one brother pierced and killed another with his sword because he wanted to stab the wild boar that had his brother under him. For so it is in this life that everyone must expect danger from his neighbor. For whoever wants to live among people (*societate communi*), and enjoy peace, security, protection, and make use of all rights, advantages and goods, must also bear the dangers, damages and disadvantages, and all dangers, however they may happen. Thus the jurists say: one citizen owes another a fire, that is, if someone wants to be a citizen, he must stand with his neighbor in danger of conflagration or some other danger.

**V. 8. 9. And if the LORD thy God shall enlarge thy border 2c. If you will keep all these commandments 2c.**

You see that it is quite different with the legal promises for the temporal kingdom than with the promises of grace or the spiritual promises. For the legal promises are based on the will and merit of men, as he says here, "If thou shalt keep otherwise." Therefore they are not fixed nor everlasting, because no merits of men endure (permanently), just as neither do men themselves, however holy they may be. But the spiritual promises, regardless of merit, are based solely on the eternal mercy of God, which is given freely by grace, for "it is not up to anyone's willing or running, but up to God's mercy" [Rom. 9:16]. Therefore, in those [legal promises] free will prevails, indeed, it corrupts and ruins everything. In these, however, grace and the Spirit reign and sustain.

**V. 10. So that innocent blood will not be shed.**

You see that a death stroke that is not premeditated is declared by GOD Himself to be one that has no guilt (*innoxium*), as He also said shortly before [v. 6.], "That

he does not strike the soul of him in whom there is no judgment of death, because he did not bear hatred to him before." See the heart, which is not guilty of hatred, makes that the deed also does not have the guilt of the death blow. That is why he wants to have many cities for refuge, because in a large nation there are many dangers that one suffers from the other.

And it is to be noted that the word where he says [v. 6. Vulg.], "Lest he that is nearest to him that is slain pursue him, and smite the soul of him that is not guilty of death," is by no means to be understood as if that avenger, if he be a private man (*privata manu*), should or may kill the slayer of death, as the text seems to read to seditious people, but that, taking up the cause of him that is slain, the judges by lawful witnesses should settle the matter. Because this is done at his instigation and urging, it is said that he does it, according to the word [of the jurists]:. What others, prompted by us, do, 2) it is rightly said that we have done it. For no man is allowed to avenge himself, but: "Mine is the vengeance", says God [Deut. 32, 35]. That is why he has appointed judges and authorities.

#### **V. 11-13. But if anyone bears hatred against his neighbor 2c.**

Here also thou seest that vengeance is commanded to the authorities, for he saith [v. 12.], "Let the elders of his city send and fetch him thence," and yet, as if the avenger himself should do it, he immediately adds, "And let him deliver him into the hands of the neighbor or avenger," not as if he himself, as a private person, should strike him with the sword, but should convict him of his guilt in court, and put him to death. Yea, even as if the whole people should do this, he says [v. 13. Vulg.], "Thou shalt not have mercy upon him, and shalt put to death the innocent blood of Israel." So it only remains that those rights and the

Public executions of rights are indeed ordered to the people, but to such a people, which is provided with sovereign persons and judges, who, if the avenger accuses and the witnesses prove it, judge and kill according to the law with just judgment.

But he wants them to have no mercy on a deliberate death-beater, because he has sinned out of malice and disturbed the public peace. And by this example you see that the liberties of the Oerter, which are with us instead of the cities of refuge, are only to benefit the innocent, but to benefit the guilty nothing. For so he also commands in Exodus 21:<sup>2</sup>, 14, that one should seize a deliberate killer and even tear him away from the altar of the Lord and put him to death. Nowadays, however, these sanctuaries (*immunitates*) serve completely without distinction and mostly only the guilty as a place of refuge, and protect public injustice, perhaps after the example of Romulus, the father of the Romans, who first made Rome a protector (*patronam*) for the robbers through the sanctuary.

#### **V. 14. You shall not push back your neighbor's boundary.**

An excellent passage against avarice and tyranny, for the sake of which not infrequently even death is committed in order to be able to take the borders. Therefore, it is the duty of the authorities to ensure that one citizen is safe from the other with regard to his inheritance. Especially in this people of Israel this was necessary, where he wanted that the hereditary estates should not be mixed with each other.

#### **V. 15-18. Let no single witness appear against anyone 2c.**

So he also said above in chapter 17, v. 6: "On the mouth of a witness no one shall die. These are beautiful sayings (*gnomae*), worthy that they would often be in everyone's mouth, because Christ also cites this saying more than once [Matth. 18, 16. Joh. 8, 17.]: "All things shall stand on the mouth of two or three witnesses." But how, if both witnesses say the untruth (*falsum*), which is

2) Wittenberg and Jena: Lxou. 23. Erlanger: Hxo. 25.

1) In the first edition and in the Wittenberg: Huoä per vos alii tueiunt, which we have assumed. In the Erlanger and in the Jenaer: Huod nos per ulios luoiuius.

shall the judge then do? The answer to this is: If he knows that they speak falsehood, he shall not judge; but if he does not know, he shall judge according to the testimony of the witnesses. For this is enforced by the order of the court instituted by God, who commands that two witnesses be believed. God will see to it that he repays those witnesses in kind, and they may see to it that they answer to God for having abused his order and reputation to the destruction of their neighbor. Such false witnesses arose against Naboth, the Jezreelite [1 Kings 21:13], against Christ [Matthew 26:60] and Stephen [Acts 6:13]. And whoever perishes in this way must consider his misfortune as such, as we have said above, that one citizen must expect it from another, as there is conflagration, pestilence, contagious disease, war, wounds and all kinds of other damages. For just as one must suffer the danger of conflagration from one's neighbor, so also false witness and all other troubles.

**V. 19: Do to him as he would have done to his brother.**

Here you have an obvious and clear text that the attempt (conatus) should be punished, even if it does not come to the execution of the deed, because he orders to kill the witness, and without mercy to take soul by soul from the one who has given false testimony against a soul. For this reason, he immediately adds the law of retaliation (legem talionis), that one should do to the one who bears false witness as he himself wanted to do, so that one can also say here: There is no fairer law than that those who plot to put someone to death (necis artifices) perish by their own plot. For in this way "tooth for tooth, eye for eye" 2c. is understood not only of the completed deed, but also of the enterprise of the attempt.

But here is a question left, which concerns the innocent and unintentional death-beater. If he is innocent, why is he subjected to such a punishment that he is killed?

is forced to live outside his city in the city of refuge as an exile until the high priest dies? Furthermore, if he is found outside the border of the city of refuge and is killed, it is determined that the avenger of blood [if he slays him] is not guilty of blood, as is written in the fourth book of Moses Cap. 35, 27. is written? The answer to this is: Just as he who is killed by chance is forced, together with his own, to suffer this evil from his neighbors and those with whom he lives in a civil way, as I have said, so also he must bear his banishment according to the same right as an evil that befalls him because he has neighbors (ex vicinitate). The law, however, makes such a strict provision about this, in order to deter the more from the intentional death blow, and in order to compensate and make up for the damage, although it was not inflicted with will, but is nevertheless difficult to bear for the friends (molestam), in some way, as it were<sup>1</sup> ) by an opposite damage.

**Secret interpretation.**

To kill one's neighbor means to corrupt one's soul and deceive one's conscience with the word of doctrine. If this happens without intention, that is, if the word is not acted upon according to its right meaning, as the fathers are sometimes wont to do, since they have made Peter out of the rock (petra), Christ, or have taught the works too much and have drawn the words of faith carelessly (imprudensius) on the outward appearance, as if they had rules, As they have established rules how to live, certain orders of fasting, feasts and other ceremonies, they have indeed killed souls as far as the deed is concerned, but they did not intend to kill, but the fate and the harm (casus) of human nature, which is blind and imperfect in faith, has brought them down. They are given a free city, the promise of salvation, namely the word: "Forgive".

1) Instead of v[1 nt in the Jena and the Erlangen habe" we assumed with the Wittenberg velut.

our guilt", and their weakness is borne until the priest dies, that is, until they realize in fuller faith that it is Christ who by his death destroys all sins and makes us free. For by this consciousness we are all obtained to know that all sins, whether committed in ignorance or in weakness, are remitted in Christ, if we flee to him and ask that they may be forgiven us.

But he who in ardent hatred knowingly kills someone will be killed without mercy. These are the heretics who, on Satan's impulse, deal with seducing souls, luring them into their sects, tearing them away from Christ and the pure word, even delighting and boasting in the multitude of those who are lost and cling to them. Therefore they do not deserve grace, nor do they have forgiveness of sin, since they are condemned by their own judgment, Titus 3:11, and commit a sin unto death, which, as it is not borne, so it is not forgiven. For it is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, for which one should not ask, as John says [1 Ep. 5:16].

Not that one should not ask for any sin, but that one should not ask God not to count it as sin or to accept it as righteousness, as Moses asks in the fourth book Cap. 16, 15, that God should not turn to their sacrifice, that is, that he should count it as sin, as it is in fact sin, because they do not count it as sin, but praise it as righteousness. Otherwise, we are asked for all sin that we recognize, and so it is not imputed, even if it should continue, as the remnants of sin are in the flesh, Gal. 5:17 ff. For this is the opinion of John, since he does not want one to pray for a sin to death, that is, he does not want it to be considered a sin that is not imputed, or not a sin, as he wants it to be considered of all sins that we recognize and confess. For if one prays for such a sin, that it may not be counted as sin, that is, to ask that its heresy and ungodly nature may not displease God, or

that he is a god, pleasing to the ungodly being, against the 5th Psalm, v. 5.

That one should not push back the limits set by the forefathers [v. 14], that is, that one should not add anything to the doctrine handed down by the apostles, as if one could thereby better counsel the matters of conscience. And this passage the sophists and the bishops raise high for themselves, crying out for their statutes and customs: one should not move the boundaries which the fathers have set. But by fathers they mean their bishops and teachers, but not the apostles. Thus they justify (stabilize) their fables with a figurative speech, not seeing how they themselves are the first, and only of all (even if the spiritual interpretation would hold), who move the limits, not only of faith and spirit, which are set by the forefathers, the apostles and Christ, in the Gospel, but also their own, which are set by their predecessors and by themselves, since that is their only endeavor, that they change and heap laws with laws, and, as that one says, establish laws and repeal them again for money, so that one sees that they have the legislation instead of a game and the dice, in order to play their game with it in the consciences of men; and yet they hold against others that they should not transgress the limits which the forefathers have set.

The law of retaliation: "An eye for an eye" 2c., means that the false teachers will be punished by God, just as they themselves have done harm, so that they will be killed if they have killed; if they have harmed and made people weak in faith or works and have not taught the pure word, they themselves shall also receive again from God according to the same measure, as Paul says in the letter to the Romans Cap. 14, 1) 15. that they sin against Christ by corrupting the weak, for whose sake Christ died. Thus the false witnesses who bear witness against their neighbor are those who make a conscience of sin and death where it is not, so that they kill the souls that do not die, and

1) In the editions: Roiua. 1p.

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| Make alive those who do not live. These then shall be carefully searched out [v. 18], and done to them as they thought to be done, that is, by the word of Scripture they shall be overcome and condemned, that is, by the word they shall be condemned to eternal damnation. | They will be judged if they do not repent, and it will be proven to them that what they have taught is false. Thus they are killed and condemned by the spirit of the mouth of Christ, that they may live if they will, or perish eternally with their doctrine. |
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## The twentieth chapter.

### V. 1. ff. When you go to war against your enemies 2c.

Moses still remains with the matter of the death stroke up to the 23rd chapter. Therefore, so that everything in this people would be guided by a certain word, he also gives them a law for war, which is truly very beautiful and would have always given them the most glorious victory (*victoriosissimam*), if they had kept it. For as often as the Jews have been defeated, they have suffered this because they did not keep this law, since it was impossible that they could have been defeated if they made war according to this law. First, he takes away their confidence in their weapons and power, lest they should think that it was they who were victorious and triumphant, and lays an insurmountable foundation and constant strength of victory, namely, a word of glorious promise and faith, saying, "Fear them not, for the LORD your GOD is with you." He then commands that this word be preached and inculcated by the priest before the battle, saying, "Israel, listen. You are going to battle today against your enemies; do not let your hearts be troubled, do not be afraid, do not be terrified, and do not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God is going with you to fight for you with your enemies to help you." Dear one, what wonder is it if a people armed with such promises, even without weapons, defeated and beat not only their enemies, but even the whole world? What walls, what weapons, what power, what multitude could resist those for whom the Lord contends? Are not the Egyptians in the

The people of the Red Sea realized this when they said [Ex. 14:25], "Let us flee from Israel; the Lord is fighting against us on their behalf"? From this came the defiant boast [Ps. 44, 7.]: "I do not rely on my bow, and my sword cannot help me", and again [Ps. 147, 10.]: "The LORD does not delight in a man's legs, nor in the strength of his steed", and [Ps. 33, 17. 16.], "Horses do not help, and a mighty man is not saved by his great strength," and [Ps. 144, 1. 10.], "Blessed be the LORD, who teaches my hands to fight, and my fists to war, for he gives victory to kings." So says Jonathan the son of Saul [1 Sam. 14, 6.], "It is not hard for the LORD to help by much or little." Hence it is taught that the wars of this people should be waged by faith in the word of GOD. For by faith David slew Goliath, and obtained all his victories. But as often as they have made war without faith alone, with their great numbers and power, they have been defeated. Secondly. He clothed those who were thus armed with the word of God also with the armor of the flesh, and put the army in battle order, and called the newcomers and the timid to go home, and appointed a chosen crew, and arranged everything not differently, as if they were to wage war in confidence in their power and weapons, after the manner of the other nations. He does this in order to hide himself under the outward mask, and secretly, through faith in his word, to prepare the victory, so that it would not seem as if Israel was tempting God by fighting bare and unarmed. Now



But he teaches them to use weapons and armor, but not to trust in them. For He does not want them to be victorious by arms or by armor, but under arms and armor, so that faith may have a place, which has to do with that which is not seen [Heb. 11:1], and a temptation of God may be avoided, which leaves in place what God has outwardly given for use in war. That God hides Himself in this way (*de hac larva*) is also what we said above. For David did not say: I will wage war without a sword, and without my bow I will be helped, but: I will indeed make war with sword and bow, but I will not put my hope in it. I will not live without bread and wine, but I will not set the hope of life on the bread and wine. So it is in all other things.

Thirdly, lest the Jews should think that they were born only to kill men, and not rather to preserve the godly and quiet, and to chasten the ungodly and turbulent, he prescribes a law that they should first offer peace to their enemies, which also some Gentiles have kept, as the poet 1) says of the Romans:

*Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.*

[The subjugated spare, the proud you must fight].

And Augustus always preferred peace to war, and said that one should only wage war out of urgent necessity, since war, he said, is like a golden fishhook, where the cost is greater than the gain, and yet, if it is lost, cannot be compensated by a catch. And we see almost in all wars, by the outcome they have, that God is present as judge, so that those who leave peace and first start war are always defeated. Thus also the king Josiah fell [2 Chron. 35, 22. f.], because he despised the peace that was offered to him, and began war against the king of Egypt. Thus are

the world empires, which were brought about by war, perished by war, and even the last empire of the Romans, which forced everything under itself, became a robbery of all nations.

Fourth. This law of war is given against the foreign nations, that when those who resist are subdued, they shall slay all that is male, but spare the women, the children, and the cattle, and all the spoil of the city, and divide it among themselves. But the Cananites and Amorites themselves, in whose land they would dwell, the LORD commands to be utterly banished, that nothing may remain from which they may learn ungodliness and abomination.

According to the secret meaning, the wars to be waged in the cause of faith are meant here. Here it is above all necessary that we know that God is among us and fights for us; in this knowledge we can safely and courageously wage the wars of the Lord. But after that [it is necessary to know] that our powers, that is, wisdom, knowledge, understanding, then also our weapons, that is, the sword of the spirit and the Scriptures, are only an outward effort (*operam*), under which God is powerful in us, and fights and conquers, as Paul says [2 Cor. 10, 4.], "Our weapons are not carnal, but mighty in the sight of GOD," so that we do not boast as if it were we who have won the victory, but GOD alone helps us to victory everywhere, who works all things in us all.

We have three kinds of enemies: first, those who accept the peace offered and submit to us; second, those who resist. Moses refers to these two as foreign peoples who are far from the land of promise. The third kind is inward and in the homeland, as there are the Cananites, Amorites 2c. These mean three kinds of heretics. The first are not stubborn, give way to admonition with ease, and as subjects make peace and serve in love. The second are those who resist and defend themselves with the weapons of Scripture. Of these, those who are male are to be killed; the rest are to be taken as a prey, that is, by the word of the Spirit, the chief and mightiest among them are to be

If they are obstinate, they are to be abandoned forever as if they were dead and considered heathens and tax collectors; but the rest of them are to be accepted and distributed so that our love may work on them (*distribuendi in opera caritatis*). But the native and near ones shall be utterly destroyed with all. These are the ones who are completely hardened and obdurate, incorrigible people. These are to be put under ban by the word and separated from us.

For here it is not an outward sword that strikes the bodies, but the word of God that strikes the consciences. But when the consciences are overcome, then enough is overcome, because the arrogant mind is destroyed, which rose up against the knowledge of God [2 Cor. 10:5]. The rest, which still lives in the flesh, must be carried, even though it is weak. For after the ungodliness of the heart is killed, the weakness of the flesh does no harm, since sin in the members is now no longer imputed, after the head of the serpent is cut off, that is, the sense and delusion of ungodliness. But where the head and the delusion do not depart, that which is best lived in the flesh must also be killed at the same time as the ungodliness of the heart, that is, banished, because there is no forgiveness, no mercy, no grace left for the sin that is still left in the flesh, since they hold on to the ungodliness of the heart. These are the Cananites and the nearby Amorites.

Offering peace means offering the gospel of peace and the teaching of a calm and cheerful conscience, that is, of pure faith, to the godless and restless teachers and tormentors of consciences who struggle with works.

That one should not cut down the trees that bear fruit means that if they have true sayings of Scripture, one should not deny them. For there has never been any heresy that has not also said something true. Therefore, one must not deny the true for the sake of the false. The trees that do not bear fruit are to be cut down and used as bulwarks, which means that the scriptural passages which they misrepresent and hold against us are to be driven back on those who use them in this way, and they are to be refuted by their own useless lies.

That a new spouse, and one who builds a house, and one who plants a vineyard, should not be sent out to war, means that a newcomer should not be put into the ministry of the word (as Paul teaches [1 Tim. 3, 6. f.]), "lest he puff himself up, and fall into the snare of the blasphemer." So also not a fearful man, that is, one who is weak in faith, but, as he exhorts Titus [Cap. 1:9], one who holds fast the word of pure doctrine, and is mighty in the word to exhort and overcome the gainsayers, lest he either perish or flee in the war, that is, either be overcome by ungodliness or yield to ungodly teachers. For what he says here about dedicating the house and making common the vineyard and bringing home the wife means that a fighter of the Word must be trained by application (*usu*), so that he knows the teaching not only by hearing but also by experience. For according to the Hebrew way, a house is dedicated when it is taken possession of by being used and inhabited, and the vineyard is made common when someone takes possession of it by using it and benefiting from it. The bride is taken home when one lives together with her.

## The twenty-first chapter.

V. 1. ff. If you find a slain man in the land that is yours  
2c.

Moses remains in this chapter still with the things, which concern war and blood. First, he introduces a great ceremony (*ceremoniam*), which is to take place when a slain man is found in the field, and one does not know the culprit: how one is supposed to pay off the debt. This evil also belongs to that which is civil, and of which we have said that one must suffer it if one wants to live together with neighbors (*jure vicinitatis*). Otherwise, why should those who live in the immediate vicinity of the place of death (*occisi*) be the most burdened with guilt, since it is possible that he would have been killed by people living far away or by strangers? But this law, in my opinion, is given so that the rough people of the law would be deterred by this outward show of sadness and repentance 1) and held back from the death stroke, just as children are used to be deterred from evil by outward things that are shown to them (*spectaculis*) and by frightening images.

Secondly, he gives them a law about the captive wives. And here you see how much the law allowed the Jewish men of war, that they were not only allowed to have several wives, but also, if they felt like it (*si amor jusserit*), a Gentile woman and prisoner of war. For since he dealt above with the men of war, who are not new husbands [Cap. 20, 1-4.], it is evident that almost all of them who were to do war service had been husbands for at least more than a year, and these married men of war are permitted to take even a heathen wife home with them, and, what is more, after that, if she displeases him, he [Moses] gives him the right to let her go from him, but as a free woman, so that she may marry another but not be sold or ravished.

1) We have adopted *posnitsMias* with the Jena instead of *poslitsltin* in the Wittenberg and in the Erlangen.

(*prostitui*) could. For it is not befitting for civic respectability that one sells or disgraces a humiliated woman.

But what is this? Were the Jews free to ravish the women? The text does not have the word "ravish" (*prostituendi*), *fondas* word which means to sell or to hire (*locare*), so that the meaning seems to me to be that she should not be sold for money, or in any other way given away for profit, to whomever the husband wants, namely to a servant or a friend, but she should be left completely free, so that she can rather, free of him, marry whomever she wants.

In short, this law also belongs in part to the things that Moses left for the Jews because of their hardness, as Christ teaches from the letter of separation Matth. 19, 8. For it is unjust that a woman should be cast away (*dimitti*) from her husband through no fault of her own and only because of her own will; nevertheless, this unjustice is allowed to the hard and rude (*barbaris*) people, so that they do not commit a greater misdeed (*malum*). But polygamy was common among this people, both according to the example of the fathers and according to the law. 2)

But this use, that she trim her nails and take off the clothes in which she is imprisoned, and sit and mourn her father and mother for a month, is instituted in order that the harshness of the deed may be alleviated, namely, that a heathen woman may be taken in marriage among the people of God, so that by these purifications she may be sanctified, as it were, and mixed with the holy people, after she has forgotten her people and her friendship and has become a new creature according to the flesh. For the brute rabble must be led and urged to respectability and reverence by outward ceremonies and ostentation, since they cannot be led by the spirit.

2) The last sentence is missing in the Wittenberg.

Thirdly, he gives a law about two wives and their offspring, lest the husband, according to his affection and love, should give the firstborn to the son of the wife whom he loves best, who is not the firstborn. For the firstborn was the noblest and highest honor of children, which was not by the will of man, as marriage to a prisoner of war, but by the heavenly blessing, whereby there is no respect of person. Therefore, it may not be transferred according to human will [from one to another], or changed according to the will of the lover or the beloved, so that this is a generally valid sentence (*gnome*) that this law contains: What GOD gives as a gift, man may not take away. This law was even harsh, since it prevents both enmity (*vindictam*) against the hated wife and favor against the beloved. For to put away enmity and favor requires no small virtue, indeed, it is impossible of nature. Therefore it is enforced by law and by force, which wickedness neither wants nor is able to do. So you see that polygamy is permitted by the law.

Fourth, he gives the law of the disobedient sons, who are to be punished by death. The best and most just lawgiver is Moses, who pronounces the death sentence not only for lesser offenses, but much more also for greater ones. Among men the laws and customs are such that they punish murder and theft with death, but adultery is seldom punished with death. Furthermore, disobedience and the shameful life of children are not punished by death, much less offenses against sacred things (*sacrilegia*), and impiety and blasphemy against God and God's word. Here, however, Moses commands so strictly that the rebelliousness of the children be punished that he even commands that the parents themselves be the first to initiate this death penalty, since they themselves are to bring their own sons to court, accuse them and testify against them. This is how highly God values obedience and reverence to parents, and how God wanted us to follow this law as well, so that the licentious and insolent parents would be punished.

The youth would be taught more fear and timidity, which is being destroyed everywhere by such miserable examples and such impudent manners.

Fifthly and lastly, he decrees that the malefactors who are punished with death on the gallows should be taken away on the day, and that they should not be left on the gallows during the night. He adds the reason: "For a hanged man is accursed in the sight of God, lest the land be polluted." He says in active form: He is a cursed by God (*maledictio Dei*), that is, he is considered a cursed by God and before God and by God. Now, however, you are to put out of sight what you know is so displeasing to GOD that it is also cursed before Him, so that it will not seem as if you are hanging it as if you take pleasure in it, so that the land will be filled with the curse of GOD and thus be defiled. All this is ordained in order to make the killing detestable, as well as that worshipful use (*religio*) with the corpse of the one who was found slain, so that they would be deterred from killing, to such a degree that they would also kill the one who was worthy of death, forced by the coercion of the law, but themselves would like to kill only unwillingly, and should take away the killed as a gruesome image (*spectrum*) of the death stroke, so that the horror of killing would not become small and cool through the habit of looking at the corpse and to tolerate.

### Secret interpretation.

Above [Cap. 19 It has been said that "killing" has a twofold secret interpretation. For either godliness or godlessness is killed; both are spiritual killing. The former is meant by the death stroke as guilt. The latter is meant by the sword of the avenging judgment as the punishment. Thus he is killed in an evil way who is alienated from God and the word of life by the word of ungodliness; but he is killed in a right way who is struck by the word of the Spirit as punishment and is frightened by the future wrath of God so that he may repent and live. If he is not made alive in this way

If he wants to die, he will remain a dead man in twofold death, both in his ungodliness and in the future wrath against his ungodliness, with which God will kill him. But we kill spiritually by shrinking. Therefore, the found corpse means either a killed brother or any killed people (populum), whom we find infected by false delusion, whose author or teacher is not known. Here, all those who are closest must run to it and, terrified in a godly conscience, take this guilt upon themselves, fearing that it might have happened through their fault, or that it might be among us who did it, especially the elders, that is, the ministers of the Word, and act no differently to remove this trouble than if they had caused it themselves.

Therefore, they are to take a young heifer from the cattle that has not yet pulled at the yoke, which is Christ in his flesh, which he took from our human race. But he is taken in the spirit, that is, preached and believed. But he was never under the yoke, that is, he was without sin, owing nothing to the law, but sacrificed for us according to his will. They shall lead it into a rough and rocky valley, which has never been tilled, nor received seed, and shall cut off its neck there, that is, they shall preach that he suffered in the world and for the world, which is barren, rough and ungrateful to God, never having heard or received the word of God before, but only preening in righteousness and wisdom of the flesh. Then, while the Levites stand by, the elders shall approach the slain man, and wash their hands over the young heifer, and pray that this blood may not be imputed to them, that is, over Christ thus preached and believed, the ministers of the word shall become innocent, and 1) act [as if it were their own business], 2) and pray that this offense may be forgiven them. Thus through Christ all things are forgiven, both the

The sins that are right and recognized, as well as the unknown sins and those that we fearfully suspect to be sins. An excellent example of this spiritual interpretation is given to you by Paul in the whole epistle to the Galatians, where he, having found the body of a slain man in the field of the church, and not knowing who had done it, runs to it as the neighbor and acts as if it were his own business. See there.

The captive woman who is taken as a wife, thinks St. Jerome, is the eloquence. For in such a way they consider the secret interpretations as a kind of game. We say that the secret interpretations must be applied to faith. Therefore, this woman is either the synagogue, or the church from the Gentiles. We understand by it (facimus) the synagogue, which was beautiful through the gifts that Paul enumerates Rom. 9, 4. 5. and says: "To whom belongs the law and the covenant, the glory, the fathers" 2c., and completely suitable for love and marriage, that is, to hear Christ's word. The hair (caesaries) was her shining priesthood; this is shorn off and cut off. The garment in which she is caught, the outward appearance of righteousness, also had to be put off, so that the true righteousness of the cross might be introduced, which considers everything that was gain before as dirt [Phil. 3, 7. 8.]. She shall also trim the nails, that is, she shall also lose the hardness of the law which lacerates the consciences. Then she shall mourn her father and mother, that is, she shall recognize and confess that sin is original and in nature, which cannot be removed by the righteousness of the law, but rather is increased. And so she should be married (maritetur), that is, receive and believe the word of God, and be the wife of Christ.

Up to this point, the spiritual interpretation of the synagogue for one part has endured, as it is the custom of Scripture to speak of the whole in the figure of the synecdoche, since it means only one part. Now follows from the other part, which is rejected, namely it is the same woman, who is accepted and rejected, because it is one and the same people, to the

1) et is missing in the Jenaer.

2) Such an addition: si sua res agatur, seems to us commanded by the context and by the parallelism at the end of this paragraph.

Partly accepted, partly abandoned. If then the woman displeases you, that is, in this ungodly part, you shall let her go free, that is, Christ has left the Jews and does not subject them to the law anymore, nor does he hand them over to another master, but they [the synagogue] are free to go away as they please and follow the master they want. Thus the Lord foretold Isa. 5, 2. ff. that his vineyard would leave him. Now you can draw this secret interpretation quite generally to all works saints, some of whom are caught by the word, who shave off their hair, trim their nails, and condemn all glory of former righteousness, and realize that they are sinners. Again, some are left as hardened in their minds.

Two wives of one man are the twofold and yet one church of the Jews and Gentiles. The synagogue is the hostile one, because it kills the prophets and crucifies Christ 2c.; the church of the Gentiles is the beloved one, because it accepts the word with joy. Nevertheless, the synagogue has the firstborn, because from it comes Christ, the apostles, the word, and not from the Gentiles, "because salvation comes from the Jews", Joh. 4, 22. Therefore, even today one should not despise the Jews, because from them, not from us, comes all glory, as Paul does Rom. 9, 3. ff. For they were the first Christians, and "to them is promised and trusted what God has spoken" [Rom. 3, 2].

The son, who is rebellious and a drunkard, means a teacher in the church who is first begotten by the Word, but then corrupted by human doctrines and dreams and stubbornly adheres to them. This one is to be accused and convicted before the court of the church, and to be killed with stones, that is, with hard sayings of the Scriptures, that is, to be overcome, so that he may live. If he does not want to live, then the severe judgment of death and the wrath of God must be applied, so that he may be killed and live.

The one hanged for an iniquity, who is to be taken down because of the curse of God, so that the land will not be defiled, means that an ungodly person, who by

the word is condemned, and does not repent, should be completely removed, and should be set apart as a curse before God and considered a ban, lest, if it were tolerated among us, it should infect and corrupt very many of us, as it says in 1 Cor. 5, <sup>1</sup>) 13. 6: "Put out from among yourselves whoever is evil," for "a little leaven leaveneth the whole dough."

But what shall we say to Paul, who in his letter to the Galatians Cap. 3, 13. understands this passage of Christ, saying: "Christ became a curse for us, for it is written: Cursed is everyone who hangs on the wood." Jerome agonizes over this passage, saying that Moses speaks of a hanged transgressor, but that Christ committed no sin. But he does not see that Paul speaks in the most simple way, and Moses, who speaks in general terms, understands Christ correctly and according to the letter, without figurative speech. For if every hanged man is a curse before God, 2) as Moses teaches, Christ is also a curse before God, and if every hanged man is an evildoer, Christ is also an evildoer. Therefore, it should not have been said here how Christ was without sin, but how he had sin; likewise, it should not have been said how he was the one who gave and was not subject to this hanging, but how he was and could have been subject to it.

Here Paul solves the whole difficulty with one word, saying: "He became a curse for us"; for us, I say, not for himself. By this word he clearly teaches that someone has two kinds of sin and that a hanged man becomes a curse before God; once for himself and his own sin; such are all others; the other time for others and for foreign sin; such is Christ alone, who says, Ps. 69, 10.: "The reproach of those who revile you falls on me", and Is. 53, 4.: "He bore our sins", and again [v. 8.]: "For the sins of my people I afflicted him", and [v. 10.]: "So the LORD wanted to bruise him for the sake of our sins".

1) In the issues: 1 Cor. 15.

2) Erlanger: vso instead of: l)si in the other editions.

for the sake of other sins" 2c. Whether someone is hanged for himself or for another, the simple understanding of the law remains that anyone hanged for sin is a curse before God. Therefore, Christ, in bearing our sin, became a curse for us in truth, as the text reads to the letter. As he was circumcised and put under the whole law for us, while he was free from every law for himself, so he "who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might have in him the righteousness that is before God," 2 Cor. 5,<sup>1</sup> ) 21. Thus he became a curse who did not know the curse, so that in him we might be a blessing from God.

But that this curse before God from the wood

To be taken, lest the land be defiled, means to preach and believe the gospel of the cross, namely, that the cross is glory, death life, sin righteousness, the curse blessing, damnation blessedness, or as Paul says [Gal. 6:14], that we glory in the cross of our Lord, that the world is crucified to us, and we to the world, according to the words [Matth. 5:10]: "Blessed are those who are persecuted" 2c. Otherwise, if this is not preached and believed, there is nothing more detestable, nothing more abominable, than the cross and death, and the whole land is defiled by this opinion and this vexation of the cross, for "to the unclean nothing is pure, to the pure all things are pure" [Tit. 1, 15.]. This [that everything is pure] happens through the word, that [that nothing is pure] without the word.

1) In the issues: 2 Cor. 6.

## The twenty-second chapter.

### V. 1. ff. If you see your brother's ox or sheep going astray, you must not withdraw from them 2c.

Up to this point, Moses has taught love almost only insofar as it belongs to the fourth and fifth commandments, namely, obedience to parents and the avoidance of death by which the person of one's neighbor is damaged. Now he goes on to the rest, so that he teaches to show love to the neighbor in regard to external goods, and treats in general the sixth and seventh commandment, in which adultery and theft are forbidden, but chastity and goodwill are commanded, which belong to love and are fruits of faith, Gal. 5, 22. But in this chapter he gives various laws on how to prove goodwill and chastity.

First, he commands that an object lost by a neighbor, whether it be an ox that goes astray or a garment or any other thing that is lost, be taken, preserved and restored, and not neglected as something foreign, but cared for as if it were our own. Sol

If anyone sees his brother's donkey fall, he should help him up as if it were his own. You see that this commandment teaches the same thing that Paul says in Phil. 2:4: "Look at one another's things." This is quite proper to love, 1 Cor. 13:5: "Love seeketh not its own," except that the gospel, in explaining the law more fully, teaches that this is to be done even to enemies, while Moses forbade the rude people of the law to hate their enemies.

Secondly. [V. 5: "A woman shall not bear a man's weapons, nor shall a man put on women's apparel." Here it is not forbidden that, in order to avoid danger, or as a joke at play, or to deceive enemies, a woman should not bear a man's arms, or that a man should wear a woman's garment, but that this should not be done in earnest and in ordinary life and usage, so that due honor and dignity may be preserved in both sexes, since it is shameful for a man to wear a woman's garment, and not decent for a woman to bear a man's arms.

But he seems to punish by this law some people in whom this way may have taken place, as the writers generally write of the Egyptians, that the women do man's work, but the men do woman's work, the women do business and feed the men, the men take care of the house, and many such things in an inverted and opposite manner than is the custom among other peoples, so that this law must be understood as a general one, namely, that a woman attends to female tasks, a man to man's business, and in general each, content with his fate, plies his trade and needs his gifts, Rom. 12:7, 8, that the cobbler should stick to his last, and that the common man should not be the ruler of the council, but that the variety and diversity of persons should exist for a good government. If this is reversed, it shall be as shameful as if, according to a reversed order of things, a woman wore a man's weapons and a man wore women's clothes. God wants His people to keep away from the customs of these peoples, since He has an abomination against them.

Third. If a nest is found on the way, the young may be taken, but the mother sitting on it should be let fly. What does this law teach but that they should also learn gentleness and goodwill through benevolent treatment of animals? Otherwise it would have to be regarded as a foolish law, since it not only gives a commandment about such an insignificant matter, but also promises well-being and long life to those who keep it, saying [v. 7]: "That it may go well with thee, and that thou mayest live long" 2c. This, too, can be drawn on it by a general and, as it were, proverbial figurative figure of speech (figura), that one should beware of all excessive exploitation (usum) of one's neighbor, as we say in German: A willing horse should not be driven too hard. So we should use our friends and neighbors in such a way that we leave something for them, so that we can also use them at another time and on another occasion. Let this be a saying to the Hebrews: When one has taken the young, let the mother fly, so that there may be

they are well off. Otherwise, when they have completely sucked their friends dry, they must finally be in a bad way, so that this law is, as it were, contrary to the first one given, against those who like to have others show them kindness and love, but do not show any themselves, as if this were the will of the Lord, that those who always give abundantly should never cease [to give], but those who receive should never become full [to take], and that through the work of the latter the idleness of the latter should be nourished [2 Cor. 8, 13.], which is something quite unreasonable in social (sociali) life.

Fourth. When a house is built, a wall is to be made on the roof all around, lest someone fall down and bring a blood debt on the house. He speaks according to the custom of the people, who built the houses in such a way that the roofs were flat above, like the streets, which are paved with stones. Therefore we also read in the Gospel [Luc. 5, 19.] that they broke off the roof and let the gout-broken man down through the tiles, and Christ says that the Gospel should be preached on the roofs [Matth. 10, 27.]. For there people came together, played and ate, just as with us in the hallways. This can also be a proverbial and general law, that in public society one builds in such a way and behaves in intercourse in such a way that one does not cause danger, harm or damage to the other, but rather provides him with protection and benefit, so that you do not seek your benefit through another's misfortune, as it is said that selfishness destroys cities and empires. 1)

Fifth. The vineyard shall not be sown with divers seeds, neither shall it be plowed with an ox and an ass at the same time, neither shall any man use a garment of wool and linen mingled together. This law may have a reason of respectability in mind in the letter, but I believe that this is also a proverbial and general doctrine, by which the Jews are taught that they are to be of one mind, simple, honest, without sectarianism and the creation (studiis) of factions. For

1) Oak Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. VIII, Appendix L., Sprüchwörter s. v. Neidhart.



a house divided against itself becomes desolate, as the Gospel [Luc. 11, 17.] says, and through unity small goods become great, through discord the greatest goods fall apart, says Sallust. Therefore, some people say that civitas [city] has its name, as it were, from civium unitas [unity of the citizens].

But he adds the reason why some seeds are forbidden, namely, "that you do not sanctify in your abundance such different seeds besides the income of the vineyard". He calls "abundance" [the yield] of the harder fruits, as he calls "tears" [the yield of the juicier (liquidiorum) fruits, Ex. 22, 2) 29: "Your abundance and tears you shall not forgive" to offer. 3) So God, who loves simplicity (simplicitatem) and sincerity, does not want firstfruits and tithes of mixed seed to be sacrificed to Him. He also wants his citizens to be simple and sincere, of the same mind, and to keep their customs, so that they do not work with an ox and an ass, nor use a garment made of mixed material, and everything becomes unequal.

Sixth, he commands that they make lappets 4) on the four fiddles of the cloak. This is commanded to be worn by the Jews as a special sign by which they are to be distinguished from other peoples as a watchword and a sign of recognition. 5) Not that the Lawgiver had this in mind alone, but that it was to be a symbol of confession, by which they were to confess that they were the people of God, and from this arose the cause of their being hated and suffering persecution, so that through this saying (proverbio) of the Law God would train His citizens to patience, and they, exercised by the adversaries, would become the stronger, more united and more unanimous.

This is said about benevolence and love toward one's neighbor in bodily things by virtue of the seventh commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." Now he will deal with chastity by virtue of the sixth commandment. In this chapter Moses is not concerned with the order of the commandments, just as in the previous chapter he spoke of the death stroke rather than of the disobedience of the children, because in common life things do not happen and do not occur in order, which otherwise can be written in order; Moses indicates this by neglecting this order of the commandments.

Seventh, he gives a commandment of a woman who has not been found a virgin by her husband, and has been brought into an evil cry by him, either with truth or out of hatred 2c. It is uncertain what kind of a way (rite) this was, in order to inquire or prove publicly the virginity. For I see that almost everyone agrees that one can know privately at the first intercourse whether she is weakened or not, because the first intercourse is unpleasant and troublesome, since the hymen is injured, and a sign of it remains on the garment through the blood of the injured hymen, although Augustine also makes this uncertain, who says that this very hymen is sometimes injured by the women (matronis), or also by the girls themselves, by examining it with the finger. But let us admit that it is certain; how can it be proved publicly? Will the man say that the habit was neither unpleasant nor severe? If the woman denies it? Or shall she show the blood which remained on the garment? Who would tolerate that these shameful things (pudenda) are shown in public court? Rather, I want to say that I do not know this custom. I would agree with those who say that the father and the mother of the girl, when they give away the daughter, first inquire about her virginity through respectable women, who afterwards can be witnesses in court that she was a virgin, and that this is what Moses says here, that the father spreads out the garment, saying, "Behold, here is the virginity of my daughter."

1) Here in the Erlangen edition the punctuation is wrong. The punctum before ssmvn is to be deleted and after viuess a dot is to be put.

2) In the issues: Lxoä. 23.

3) Compare Luther's marginal gloss on this passage. Walch, St. Louis edition, VIII, 1682.

4) lunioulos in ünrbriis cords plucked into fringes.

5) We have adopted with the Wittenberg "tisoornsutur instead of <li86sruuutur in the Jena and in the Erlangen.

ter," that is, through these women I show that she was a virgin, that is, as a sign I spread out the garment, the spreading of which is to mean that the matter is clear and proven, as it was the custom of this people to shake out the garment when they threatened, as Nehemiah did, Cap. 5,<sup>1</sup>) 13., and to tear the garment when they were angry, so also to spread out the garment when they wanted to express that a matter was clear, distinct and bright; although this custom of having a bride examined by women before the wedding is also disgraceful. But since we do not have anything else, let us allow it in the meantime.

This law also serves for general application against slanderers and spreaders of evil rumors. You see how severely this misdeed is punished here; First, he is chastised, namely with forty strokes less one, then he is fined a hundred shekels of silver, which are to be given to the girl's father, finally he is also forced to keep her himself, whom he hated so much and himself infamously, forever as punishment, while the one who had simply defiled a girl should only give fifty shekels to the girl's father and keep her, as he will say afterwards.

Furthermore, the woman who is not a virgin they stone. By this evidence it is seen that this law speaks of a bride committing fornication, which is a right adultery. For a girl who commits bad fornication is given in marriage to her abuser, as I have said. Or if it is not understood by a bride, the girl's fornication is punished so severely because she has fornicated secretly and willingly, and has deceived her future husband and dishonored her father's house. But by the girl who is to be given to her abuser is understood one who has been violently defiled. And this is the more probable to me.

Eighth, he sets a threefold kind of adultery. First, if a man sleeps with another woman, they shall both die. Second, if a man sleeps with another man's bride, but in the city, they shall both die.

1) In the issues: "7."

die. By town here is meant any place where the girl could have protected herself by screaming, but did not do so, as if she were in a forest or in the field and knew that people were near who could hear her. For a city is put here only for the sake of example, because in it people are at hand to help. So the one who does not cry out indicates that she has allowed herself to be ravished with her will. Thirdly, if someone sleeps with another's bride, but in the field, only the adulterer shall die. And here the field is also only mentioned as an example, that by it is understood any place where a single girl cannot help herself by crying, as if someone seized her alone in the house or in the porch or in the chamber, as Ammon did his sister Tamar; as if someone forced someone's bride in bed by a drawn sword not to cry out. This one, of course, is not in the field, and yet she is more than alone; she would cry out, but dare not for fear of death; therefore the equity of the law shall interpret it as if she had cried out, as the text says.

The last is the law: Whoever defiles a girl who is not a bride shall give fifty shekels to her father and have her as a wife. In the second book of Moses Cap. 22, 16, he calls these fifty sovereigns a "morning gift" which he shall give to the virgin; here he fixes them at so many sovereigns, which according to our coinage make about twelve florins, for a sovereign is the place of a florin. 2) But he adds there that he shall have her for a wife, [but only] if the father of the girl wants it; if he does not want it, he must nevertheless pay this morning gift. Would that God would use this law as an example also in our country, for the sake of the wretched female sex. 3)

### Secret interpretation.

The brother's animal that goes astray, or the lost thing that is to be returned and taken care of as if it were one's own, means that we are to seek that,

2) quartate only" - a local guilder, a quarter guilder.

3) The last sentence is missing in the Wittenberg.

What Christ is, as He Himself also did (whether it be an ass, that is, a slow, unsluggish, and weak in faith or life, or anything else, as there are errors and defects), 1) in word, in exhortation, in walk.

A woman does not bear the weapons of a man, and a man does not wear women's clothes, if faith is not perverted by works, that is, if what is due to faith is not attributed to works, and again, like those who are possessed by the statutes of men, who trust in men as their teachers, who must be served only by the works of love, which they do not do. On the other hand, they serve God, whom they should trust, with works and services of their own choosing, and do not trust in his word. But both are an abomination, for a man is not to be believed, but to be served by works; but God is to be believed, not served by works. Thus a man becomes a woman when he believes a man, and a woman becomes a man when he serves God with works, as is said elsewhere.

The mother bird is set free, and the young are caught on the way, that is, the synagogue is left, which by the law had the apostles and the first believers among them, whom Christ accepted to spread his word among the Gentiles in this life. The house, built with a wall around the roof, is the church of Christ, which he has so fortified by his word that no danger or trouble to the soul can arise from it, but that it can be used safely and confidently in every way.

The vineyard is not sown with various seeds, that is, in the church there is not both the teaching of faith and works, but the pure and simple word of faith. Neither is there plowing with an ox and an ass at the same time, that is, there is not a teacher in the church who teaches both faith and works, but a sincere and faithful servant in the truth. In the same way, we do not use a garment that is

We must live in such a way that faith is our life, not the hypocrisy of works, because the conscience cannot grasp this at the same time, that you base yourself on faith and works, although the work by heart is necessary for the ass and for the outward man.

The various seeds, the ass and the linen, are to be separated into their own fields, and they are not to be mixed together, that is, they are to be taught, believed and lived in such a way that faith alone governs the conscience without works, and works oppress the flesh without faith, so that the spirit and freedom may be inwardly in the heart, but the law and the yoke of works inwardly in the body, that the flesh may not have freedom but bondage, but the spirit freedom, not bondage, nor on either side either bondage or freedom.

The small tabs on the four fronts of the cloak signify the confession of faith in the outward walk through the whole world, which is to be spread in the four regions of the world. The Christians are to be recognized by this sign and be a foolishness to the Gentiles and an annoyance to the Jews.

An adulteress always means a soul that becomes unfaithful to Christ (fornicantem) by leaving the word and trusting in works. Therefore, by the word of the Spirit, both she and her husband, that is, the teacher of error, are killed. Furthermore, some are defiled here with their will, and do not cry out, although they are in the city. These are the ones who, having grown weary of the word, turn to fables and get masters of their own free will, since their ears are itching to hear something new; they do not ask the believers who are there for advice, so that they may be delivered. Others are those who alone are ravished in the field against their will. Rather, these are not adulteresses. Among them are those who are inwardly in sincere faith, but are forced to hear outwardly godless teachers and live among wicked people, like Lot in Sodom, and godly people among godless tyrants.

But the virgin who is not trusted,

1) These brackets are set by us.

is the synagogue or any other community (congregatio) without the Word, which nevertheless has a beautiful appearance and spirituality (religiosa) in its own righteousness. Their virginity takes (violat) Christ by his word and keeps her as a wife, if the father wills it, that is, if she leaves her paternal statutes and is abandoned. But if she does not leave them, he gives her a morning gift, that is, temporal benefits for that righteousness and hearing of the Word. For one must assume a twofold virgin, if the secret interpretation is to hold, a virgin of faith and grace, and a virgin of law and works. Both are chaste and holy in their worship (religione). The defilement of the latter is pleasing to Christ, that of the former is an adultery and a mortal sin. Thus, the husband who mistreats the wife is

The same Christ who accuses the virginity of the synagogue, which shines through works (religiosam), through the gospel, that it is not pure in faith. But the parents, who strongly resist him, mean the battle by which the righteousness of the works is defended with the testimony of the Scriptures and the spread out garment. And Christ is chastised with strokes, that is, with blasphemies, and is atoned for; at last he is forced to keep them, because in his kingdom there must be seemingly beautiful hypocrites whom he must feed, and their [the hypocrites'] teachers under his name, who do not want to be overcome. But if she is convicted that she is not a virgin in faith (non esse virgo fidei), she will be killed, that is, killed by the word of God, so that she may live in the spirit, having lost the glory of legal virginity.

## The twenty-third chapter.

Cap. 22, 30. No one shall take his father's wife 2c. 1)

Moses continues to teach the commandments of love, and still presses with various laws on the sixth and seventh commandment regarding chastity and peace and public respectability, until the 27th chapter. In the third book of Moses, Cap. 18, 6. ff., the persons are enumerated whom it is not right and forbidden to take in marriage; here only one person is mentioned, namely the stepmother, whom one should not take if the father is dead, much less if he is alive. This indicates that one should take much less close blood relatives than the sister, the daughter, the mother-sister (amita) 2c. Nevertheless, I believe that the marriage in the second degree was not seldom abated, since also in many other places there is not such a great strictness of the law.

But it is probable that that Corinthian, whom Paul condemns in 1 Cor. 5, 1, because he saw that freedom was taught by the law of Moses, abused this freedom and took his father's wife against this law. Therefore, Paul does not so much insist that he acted against the law as against nature, saying that it is such fornication that is not found even among the Gentiles who are governed by the law of nature, because nature teaches that such a marriage is an abomination, so that it is vain for anyone to presume to claim freedom from the law.

Secondly, a man who has his testicles cut out or crushed should not enter the church of the Lord. Here he is not talking about the place of worship, but about the church itself, and coming or entering the church is something different than being and living in the church. For how should those be kept from hearing the law and from worshiping who do not

1) In Hebrew, this is the first verse of the 23rd chapter.

Since the law is generally given to all who are of the seed of Israel, and does not exclude Gentiles from the law and worship, but rather calls them proselytes, and often commands that strangers be taken care of.

It is therefore "to enter into the community", to administer an office or public service (magistratu), because he does not say: to enter into the community, but: to enter into the community, just as Christ also calls those who do not enter the door into the sheepfold wolves, that is, godless teachers. Therefore, there may be those in the church who are cut off, but they should not hold any magisterial office, because of this physical infirmity, lest the office be looked down upon or reviled; and also because such people generally have a cowardly heart and are effeminate. But the magisterial office in an honorable community requires a man, as Bias says: Regiment shows what kind of man one is. 1)

Third, a whore child, that is, one born of a whore, shall not come into the community, that is, he shall not be considered fit to hold office or a position of authority, because of the contempt and disgrace of his origin and birth, even after the tenth generation, that is, forever, because even this is not proper in an honorable community. Secondly, because it is a proverb that whorish children are seldom good people and always have a great infirmity about them. This law is also kept by many peoples, especially in some imperial cities (municipiis), so that they do not admit them to the trades, perhaps because they have formerly experienced their unworthiness. Furthermore, it is right that those who are born in honor and in wedlock should be honored more in the outward show and appearance of the world than those who are born out of wedlock, lest marriage be regarded as equal to fornication, and the honor bestowed on an unworthy person give occasion to disparage fornication and to hold marriage in contempt.

11 iHnZistratus ostsnäit virnm. Cf. St. Louis ed. vol. VII, 1374.

2) In the text: ummssr; in the Vulgate: wanEr; in Cordatus No. 339, Schlaginhausen No. 95 and Hliutssil I, 374: luanssr. Hebrew: IMY. Cf. St. Louis edition, vol. XXII, 1628 and Introduction, p. 51.

Fourth. The Ammonites and Moabites shall not come into the congregation, even after the tenth generation, that is, forever. These heathen are not accused of any physical infirmity or defect of birth, but of their ungodliness and hatred of the children of Israel, that they not only did not forestall them with water and bread by the way 2c., but also desired that they should be utterly destroyed, desiring that they should be accursed by Balaam, whereby they showed their heathenish 3) and unquenchable hatred, from which they would never desist, as also the histories afterwards testify. But to make such a person a leader or a person in authority, who is known to seek your ruin out of natural hatred, is not only improper and inconsistent, but also foolish and sacrilegious and a temptation of God. But to enter into marriages with them and other covenants, and to have intercourse with them, is not forbidden here. For Ruth also, the Moabitish woman [Ruth 1, 4.], was a holy and godly woman. For he says here of men, not of women, so that I believe that it was not forbidden to take in marriage either the daughter or granddaughter of a harlot child, or the daughter adopted or begotten before the intercourse of one who had been cut.

"Thou shalt," he says [according to the Vulg., v. 6.], "make no peace with them, neither shalt thou wish them well all thy life for ever." What is this? Does he then forbid that one should not do good to the wretched or enemies or strangers of these nations? Did not David comfort Hanon, king of the Ammonites [2 Sam. 10:1 f.]? Did he not keep peace with his father? I answer: One must look at the object of which the Lawgiver speaks in the present. But he speaks of the enemies who glow with pagan and unquenchable hatred, that the same should not be placed in a magisterial office. It is forbidden (I say) to protect such haters and ill-willed people the public peace and the common good in

3) Asntio oäiurn, that is, their hatred as Gentiles Wider the people of the Jews. Nowadays, we would call it "national hatred.

He does not, however, forbid private individuals to do private good deeds, but rather commands them to do private good deeds, so that their hatred will not be declared just and they will not be accepted into governmental offices, lest their people (natio) gain the upper hand and rule. But he does not forbid to do private good deeds to private persons, but rather commands it.

Fifth. He lets the Edomites and the Egyptians come into the congregation of the Lord after the third member, because the Edomite (he says) is your brother, and the Egyptian has been your guest. Therefore, although you cannot take a king from them, you may give them magisterial offices and higher positions (praefecturas), but only to those who were born after the third member, so that they have already lost their kind and have passed into the blood of Israel. But the third member must be counted from the time they were converted to Judaism and became fellow Jews; otherwise, what should be the third member? And so you see that the Ammonites and Moabites and the sons of whores in Israel were not denied marriage, since he says that they were not to come into the church even after the tenth member, namely, after they had become fellow Jews. These members would not be there if they were not husband and wife among the Israelites and fellow Jews.

Sixth, he commands that when they go out of the camp against the enemies, they should beware of all evil. A dark saying, which can be understood in such a way that they, when they want to fight against the enemies, should first see to it that they themselves are good and without guilt, so that they would not be affected by a righteous judgment of God by having a beam in their own eye and trying to pull the splinter out of the eye of another, as it happened to them with the Philistines, 1 Sam. 4, 1) 2, and with the Gibeonites, Judg. 20, 2) 21, and elsewhere. For also the glorious promise Cap. 20, 14, where he promises that he will be with them in war, should not make them so sure that they think they can be evil with impunity, or that God wants to be with the wicked, or that they can escape judgment.

God if they did the same thing that they were judging and fighting.

Secondly, [this saying can be understood] in this way: If thou wilt fight, take heed that thou have not an evil cause, but a good and righteous one, for the promise of God does not extend to evil and sacrilegious causes to make war, since He says He will fight for them [Cap. 20, 4.].

But the following text seems to enforce that it must be understood by a certain martial discipline (religione militari) and chaste behavior in the camp during the war, since it itself interprets what is evil; first, if something happened to someone during the night, he should go out of the camp and return after bathing himself at sunset; secondly, they shall go out of the camp for necessity and behave honorably out of reverence to GOD, who is present in the camp, so that if they despise this and are disrespectful, GOD will not hand over the enemies to them, but rather hand them over to the enemies. This, then, is the evil from which they should beware if they wish to go into battle.

These two things are so small and little, yes, of course, why does he insist on them so much and make them big? For a very good and just reason, because war is in itself something very stormy, which wants to suffer nothing less than any law or respectability. For look at the warriors (milites), whether any wild animals are more cruel, unrestrained, unruly, insolent and shameless, both in deeds and words, than they. For nothing that they like is denied them there, if you look to morals and respectability. So the Lord wants his people to wage war with the greatest reverence, with the greatest respectability, with the greatest discipline. For this reason he also makes regulations about these small and natural things, so that by practicing these things and following their example they may be much more careful and have an abomination of deeds and words in which a willing and greater dishonorableness, shamelessness and lack of discipline is manifested in other things that are not necessary and not natural. For he who, because at night

1) In the issues: 16.

2) In the Jena and Erlangen: Zuä. 17.

If a man who has been harmed shuns the Lord and goes out of the camp, how can he stay if he has an evil conscience because of fornication, theft, swearing or any other sin? And whoever hides the natural walk with such reverence even from the camp, how should he dare to do or speak anything in a shameless manner in the camp? Therefore, by this law, he drives the rough and stubborn people to fear God in warfare, so that they may put away their presumption and insolence and fight with fear in faith in God.

Seventh. You shall not deliver up a runaway servant to his lord, but let him live with you where he pleases, and do not oppress him. This is also dark, for one may not keep the property (rem) of another. A servant, however, is the. A servant, however, is the property of his neighbor, just like an ox or donkey, which must be returned when found. This must therefore be understood by a cruel master who seeks the servant in order to kill him (ad mortem). For it indicates cruelty that he forbids to "deliver him up" (tradi), but that one delivers someone into the hands of another has in general the meaning that he is delivered up to death. So he wants the servants to keep their life and to give them food, so that in a well-ordered community the masters are not free to do anything. And in order to preserve his life, he was allowed to escape and become free, since he also had to be given freedom for a knocked-out eye, Ex 21:1, 26. For it is fitting for a good community that the servants be given life and food.

Eighth. "There shall be no harlot among the daughters of Israel, and no fornicator among the sons of Israel." He is talking about prostitutes and harlots, or public and shameless prostitutes, who feed on the prostitution trade, because even this public shamelessness and licentiousness of wicked people is not befitting for a well-ordered community, which must grow through honorable marriages and lawful (liberali) offspring. Lets

Moses to whores from other peoples? This is what the text seems to indicate. 2)

Ninth. Thou shalt offer neither whore's wages nor dog's money. A strange law! Of course, the first part, of the whore's wages, is given, as one can easily see, so that public shamefulness is abhorred. For God hates predatory burnt offerings [Isa. 61, 8], as well as everything that is acquired with sin and ungodliness, since He wants one to serve Him with reverence. Therefore, it should not be brought into the house of the Lord, either as a sacrifice or for building, where it is common, and shameful or disgraceful, lest God also be held in low esteem, who allows it to be served with such bad and disgraceful things, as the great crowd easily despises those of whom they see that they take pleasure in despicable things. For he certainly wants the rough crowd to be seized by an outward appearance (larva) and to be held in fear and reverence.

And this is the reason why also the money, with which a dog is bought, is not to be sacrificed, because a dog is held in the Scriptures for the most contemptible animal, so that it also serves for proverbs, as Abner says [2 Sam. 3, 8.]: "Am I then a dog's head?" namely nothing more contemptible he could have put forward. So he who honors GOt with the proceeds (pretio) of a dog despises GOt and holds Him in low esteem, as if he wanted to sacrifice the money redeemed for dung to GOt. These signs show how little opinion the heart has of God.

It could be that all that has been said so far belongs to the previous, since he taught that those who want to fight should beware of evil, namely, that this requires a respectful behavior in the camp, and that by the custom and example of these two shameful and contemptible things, he generally all shameful and lowly gain

2) Instead of the words: 8io viäotur toxtus innuors What is found in the Jenaer and in the Erlanger, also in the Strasbourg edition of IMS, the Wittenberger has the words: Non oroão (I believe it nothing That the latter reading corresponds to Luther's meaning, there is no doubt. Perhaps something was omitted here (by mistake) in the first printing.

and to make money an abomination to the people. For the lesser and the smaller are forbidden, that it may be known that the greater and the more important are still more forbidden. For whoever does not dare to offer dog's money or whores' wages, one of which is acquired without sin, the other with sin but without harming his neighbor (*sine injuria*), how should the god esteem so small that he should dare to offer what he has acquired by theft, robbery, cunning, fraud, injustice?

Tenth. That one should not usury on a brother, but on a stranger, of this law enough has been said above [Cap. 15, 16.], where we dealt with the promise, 1) that the Jews would practice usury. From this it will be easily seen how the Jews were permitted to usury on Gentiles and strangers, not by their merit or right, but by the will of God.

Eleventh, he commands that a vow be kept, otherwise it will be counted as a sin. About vows we have spoken elsewhere superfluously, now we will only briefly say that two things must be in a vow, so that it is godly and of such a nature that it must be kept. First, that it be not contrary to godliness, or that it be not an evil vow. For in evil promises one does not have to keep his promise, as if you vow a good work in order to be justified thereby and to take away sins, it is an ungodly and evil vow, because it is contrary to faith in God, who alone justifies and takes away sins, Rom. 1, 16. But if you vow something of this kind, solely for the glory of God and freely, or for the benefit of your neighbor, it is godly and must be kept. Secondly, if you make a vow in things that are not yours, or otherwise impossible, as if you vowed to give a kingdom to Caesar when you would be a beggar, or to darken the sun. Such is the vow of chastity, because chastity is not in any man's power, but

God alone. Therefore, chastity cannot be vowed unless you have it first, but you never have it. Therefore, this vow is nothing, and is as much as if you vowed that you would not be a man or a woman.

Twelfth. In the vineyard and in the seed of one's neighbor one may eat the fruit, but from there one may carry nothing away. This is a law of civil friendship, which indicates that one should be beneficial and serviceable to another, as if to teach that everything is common among friends, but in such a way that the other is not burdened, or that what is his is usurped by another.

Secret interpretation.

Not to take the Father's wife means to leave the synagogue and every sect that has educated us by the law and by works, and not to be united with the word of life. This also Christ did, and we are to do it after him, because faith does not suffer the righteousness of works to remain and be joined to him. But the synagogue had our father, that is, the law, which Paul calls Rom. 7:2, the man 2c.

A eunuch, or one whose testicles are cut out or crushed, is one who has no knowledge of the Scriptures, or one who is injured and crushed by the wrong opinion of the works. Such a one must not be placed in the ministry of the word, since he is unfit, since he should have testicles, that is, the law and the prophets, which testify to the righteousness of faith, Rom. 3:21, that he is mighty in the holy scriptures, Titus 1:9.

The whore child is much worse; he is born of a whore [that is, such a person], who is completely stuck in worldly statutes of men and in carnal opinions, that is, he will much less ever be fit for the service of the Word, but he is also a disgrace to the church, and takes away the honor we have from Christ. But what are the bishops in the whole world now but whoremongers? they are not mere cuttings.

1) In the Erlanger: Iraotnmüs instead of: traetavilnus in the other editions.



According to the spiritual interpretation, the Moabites and Ammonites are actually the Jews, and after them the heretics. For both are the bitterest enemies of the church, who should have come to meet the suffering church with water and bread to help and comfort it, as its housemates and hosts. Not only do they not help her, but they also incite Balaam, false teachers, who curse the right way of the church with blasphemous teachings. Thus they desire with the most ardent hatred that the church be destroyed body and soul. Therefore, they are never, ever to be put into the preaching ministry.

The names are also correct. Ammon means a sad people, because such teachers of works make sad and sorrowful consciences. Moab means from the father, because they are outwardly proud and boast that they are of God alone and that their things are right and true, as Moab is punished in the prophets as proud and arrogant, and Ammon as bitter and cruel. Their birth also rhymes with this, that they come from the father out of incestuous union. The father is the law, from which they are born through wrong use, because they take the law as if it required works, not that it is the power of sin, as Paul calls it [1 Cor. 15:56]: "The power of sin is the law"; but those would say: "The power of righteousness is the law. Balaam means as much as: you devourers, because the godless teachers become more and more angry and devour many; in addition, the belly also devours their possessions, and they corrupt the bodies through the heavy yoke of works.

We are also suffering such things today. Those who are supposed to help us when we are suffering from the Gospel, go away themselves and not only abandon us, but also curse us through their blasphemous teachers. But God does not hear them; indeed, He turns their curse into a blessing, so that we increase all the more through their raging. Therefore, one must not make peace with them, nor wish them well, namely, so that their raging may prosper and go forth happily, but one must pray against it, that they may fall from their nobility and be cast out.

But they are called sons of "Beor" because this means a fool. For they speak foolish things, and contradict themselves, as Balaam also did when he blessed, contrary to his desire [Num. 23:20]. For there is no heretic who is not taken in his lies by men of understanding, that he speak against himself.

The Edomites are brothers, but weak in faith, and sometimes fall into a delusion. These are to be admitted after the third limb, that is, when they have grown and become stronger in faith with us. So the Egyptians are our guests who are weak in life. Neither of them are to be regarded as abominations because of their weakness, but inan is to accept them, so that they may also teach at last.

In the fight against the enemy one should beware of all evil, so that if something has happened to someone at night, he should go out of the camp 2c., that is, if in the conflict and in the challenge, for fear of death, the word has escaped him, that he either denies it or does not act rightly, let him humble himself and separate himself from the church until the sun sets and the challenge is over; then let him bathe himself, and after confessing his sin, let him return to his duty. For God's word must be acted upon with fear and reverence, and enemies must be fought against, lest we lose the word through presumption and lack of reverence, and, where God forsakes us, be overcome.

In the same way, the excrement of need should be buried and hidden outside the camp with a little shovel, that is, the natural infirmities that are left in the sinful flesh should be killed and hidden by the word of faith, so that God will not see them. But they will be hidden if we do not let them reign in our bodies. In this way, then, a minister of the Word must have both the loins of the mind and the loins of the flesh girded, that he may be sound in the faith of the Word, and holy after the flesh is slain.

The servant shall not overtake his master-

The flesh is to be steamed (mortificanda) in such a way that it is not killed (occidatur). For the law, the master of the flesh, condemns it utterly and wants it dead. But consideration must be given to the flesh, that it may live, but not that it may sin, though it cannot live without evil desire, but it shall not reign. For that we may work good and teach faith, it is necessary that the flesh should live, though it cannot live without infirmities, which are hid by the small flesh. So also Paul teaches the Colossians [Cap. 2, 23. 1 that the flesh, as a weak vessel, deserves its honor.

The harlot and the fornicator mean the godless saints in hypocritical worship, as it seems according to the letter that among the people of the Jews there were certain sects in worship, which were called, as we read of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, who put them away from the temple [2 Kings 23:7]. But it means XXXXX and XXXXX fornicators and harlots, although according to the sound (allusione) of the word it also means holy men and holy women. For means holy, Isa, 6, 3rd, "Holy, holy, holy." Therefore I believe that by XXXXX is signified the worship of Priapus, in which they committed fornication 2c., and they are (as I said) the saints and righteous of Satan under a beautiful seeming worship.

The whore's reward seems to be the temporal glory of the ungodly worship of which I have spoken. This glory is not to be sacrificed, that is, preached, as if it pleases God or befits us, since the glory and reward of our righteousness is a good conscience toward God, and by heart cross and shame before the world. At-

of which those fornicators flee and seek glory before the world, but inwardly they are bad and shameful as dogs, and therefore such a reward is an abomination to God, that is, a rejected and evil conscience.

The brother is not to be oppressed with usury, but the stranger, that is, no law requiring works is given to the righteous, but to the unrighteous, so that the wicked may be humbled by the knowledge of sin. For the office of the law is to require usury more than we are able, until we groan after faith, and, having become brethren, are delivered from usury, Ps. 72:12 ff.

The vows do not easily allow for a secret interpretation, because this is a moral work; however, it can be said that there is only one vow that we owe to God, namely that we believe, praise and glorify him that he is our God. This confession and praise is signified by all outward vows made to God. About this vow the 50th Psalm, v. 14, says: "Offer thanks to God, and pay your vows to the Most High," and the 116th Psalm, v. 14: "I will pay my vows to the Lord, above all His people," so that "vow" is the same as the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; for this one thing we owe to God; we have promised it and can keep it.

To eat of one's neighbor's vineyard and not to carry away anything means that each righteous person may take possession of the goods of the other righteous person in spirit. This is the fellowship of the saints, by which it happens that all things are common to all, and yet through use and mutual benefit nothing is taken away or diminished from the other, but is left whole, yea, increases through use and fellowship. So much is lacking in it that anything could be taken away or diminished from it.

# The twenty-fourth chapter.

**V. 1. ff. If someone takes a wife and marries her 2c.**

That the law of divorce is only a secular law, and that it was left out because of the hardness of the common people, is sufficiently proven by Christ (Matth. 19, 8). Therefore we do not read any example of this law, which holy men would have left us. For even Abraham did not let his Hagar go until God commanded him anew [Gen. 21:10-12]. In a community, however, many things must be left undone for the sake of the hard and unyielding, so that no greater evil may occur.

Therefore, a distinction must be made among the laws, so that there are some that command good and others that forbear evil. Among those that command good, the first is the law of faith, which also rules over love, in such a way that if faith should require it against God, the neighbor is to be denied love, because God, who is worshipped by faith, must be preferred to a man who is served by love. According to faith, it is love that governs all laws, both ceremonial and secular; but faith is exempt.

Second. A young husband shall be free from all common burdens for one year. This is a law of equity and civil benefit. For it is reasonable that a newlywed (sponso) be allowed a year with his wife. It is useful so that the community grows through offspring and households (familiis), which would not happen if the husband were exposed to war and common dangers immediately after the wedding, and men would not easily be found who would marry. But that this is a general law, and must be extended to other cases, is sufficiently evident from Cap. 20, 5-7, where a bridegroom who has built a house and planted a vineyard is declared free from military service. In the same

In the sense this is also understood of the assumption of any other new office, by which a household is established, so that this law could serve as a proverb of the freedom of all who enter (neophytorum), namely: One must give a year to a bridegroom 2c.

Thirdly. "Thou shalt not take for a pledge the lowest and the highest millstone." This law likewise teaches in a general proverb that for the sake of debts no one should be deprived of his craft, by which he is nourished and sustained, as with us cruel people (barbaros) such rampages are found that we either imprison debtors, or forbid them their craft or their work, whereas here he says it is enough that he has given his soul in pledge, that is, that he himself is entirely a debtor, and by this craft he must acquire that by which he pays his debt. It is therefore cruel and inequitable to hinder his craft, namely, that he is forced to pay the simple debt with twofold damage; one is that his mill stands idle in the meantime, the other that he loads new debts on himself from elsewhere, or sells his own in order to pay.

Fourthly. Whoever steals one of Israel, either to sell him or to desecrate him, that is, (as we have interpreted the same word above [Cap. 21:14]) to hire him out for gain, or to deliver him to another, he shall be put to death. This law applies to thieves, murderers and robbers, and to those who capture people to extort money, as with us the vultures and wolves of the merchants are called noblemen.

Fifth. Beware of leprosy according to the teaching of the priests, the Levites; only let them teach as I (says he) have commanded them. 1) That is, the lepers are to be kept away from the common traffic of the citizens.

1) According to the Vulgate: juxta iū, xraeospi eis.

because leprosy is contagious and a community needs a clean and strong people. He gives the example of Miriam, the sister of Moses, who was excluded by the command of the Lord [Num. 12:14]. If she was not spared so that she could have remained in the camp, then no one should be spared. Others want to understand it like this: Take heed lest thou commit such a sin as to be beaten with leprosy, as Miriam was beaten with it, or if thou be beaten with it, that thou do as a leper ought toward the Levites.

Sixth. He who calls in a debt shall not enter the house to take what he pleases, for that is violence (as our cruel usurers 1) do with debtors, robbing them of what they want by judicial power), but what the debtor brings out according to his ability he shall take. Then it shall be returned before sunset, if he should be poor and in need of it. Of course, this law allows to reclaim what is his, which is forbidden by the gospel, 2) even though it prevents violence. But in a civil nation, such laws, which are somewhat lenient, are necessary in order to avoid greater evil. For if reclaiming did not take place, the worthlessness of idle people would find nourishment, and the fortune of the godly and good would be exhausted. Although the godly suffer both in faith, the law and the authorities must not tolerate this, just as the godly also bear all other evils, and the sword is nevertheless an avenger against the wicked, which a godly can also use for others, as I have said elsewhere.

Seventh. 4) One should give the poor his

1) *äünisias* of *δανειστής*. The Wittenbergers and the Jena edition seem to have taken this word for a proper name, formed from "Dan", because they write it with a capital initial.

2) The words: *guoā svanMliuw xroUiüst* are missing in the Wittenberg.

3) Instead of camouflage in the editions may well be *stiarn* to read what we have assumed.

4) Here the Wittenberger has again: *8sxto* and *darnach* in the following wrong counting.

He does not reserve his reward for himself, lest he cry out to the Lord 2c. This and the preceding law also show sufficiently how God takes care of the poor and afflicted, so that all who are abandoned and oppressed in the world can take comfort in God. At the same time, they teach that in times of need, the debts of the poor should also be forgiven, and that they should be helped in a well-ordered community, so that an intervention (*actio*) because of debt claims only takes place against the idle and frivolous.

Eighth. "The fathers shall not die for the children" 2c. That is, the wicked are to be punished in such a way that the good are not also injured at the same time, as in the Gospel it is forbidden to pluck up the tares for the sake of the wheat, lest the latter be injured. For if a guilty person cannot be punished without an innocent person being injured at the same time, the evil person is to be tolerated rather than the good person injured at the same time. This law is necessary for persons in authority, so that they do not, in a tempestuous excitement of the mind, let the severity of the law prevail, and by punishment sin more than he who deserves the punishment. Such is the case when a whole community is involved in war because of a villain, and similar things.

Ninth. "Thou shalt not bend the right of the stranger or the orphan, nor take the widow's garment in pledge." All these laws, as you see, are ordered for the sake of love and mutual goodwill. That the right of the orphan shall not be infringed includes at the same time that no harm shall be done to an orphan or a stranger. And the widow's dress also generally means everything she needs to live. Higher than all debts and rights is the law that the poor person is entitled to the necessary food and clothing, which he is not to forego so that the creditor may be paid, but the creditor is to forbear and give so that the poor person may live. And he adds the cause [v. 18.], "Thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in Egypt," as if to say: As thou wouldst have been

would do to you. For as thou hast been a servant, so mayest thou be made a servant again. So learn by your own example what you owe them and what you should do.

Tenth. What is left over in the fields, vineyards and oil gardens is not to be collected but left for the poor. This confirms what has already been said, that one should not only leave food and clothing for the poor, but also give them some of our abundance, so that they may share in our goods in their need, remembering again what we would want to happen to us in our need, as he says here, "Remember that you too were a servant in Egypt," and that it may happen again that you must be of service. I believe that Moses here acted very richly and clearly on the seventh commandment: "Thou shalt not steal," where it is forbidden to do harm to external goods and commanded to look to the benefit of one's neighbor.

Secret interpretation.

The outcast woman is the synagogue and all the sects of the works saints. The "unwillingness" or the nastiness is the seemingly beautiful righteousness of the works, which is full of ungodliness and hardness of heart. The bill of divorcement itself is the testimony of the Scripture, which Christ gives into its hand, which it also bears against itself. The second man is the law. When he has died, that is, after the law has passed away, he [the first man, Christ] does not accept her again, even so, if she does not believe; for the synagogue never returns to its first glory, nor is it accepted again by its first husband after she has married the other, even though he dies, because Christ does not admit the righteousness of works apart from faith in him. The new husband is a neophyte in the faith who is not to be placed in the public preaching ministry, as Paul says [1 Tim. 3:6]. It can also mean Christ who rules the new believers kindly and does not immediately expose them to the cross and persecution until they become strong. So he is cheerful with them for a year, that is, he gives

them peace and joy in the word just accepted, because the wedding party does not bear sorrow as long as the bridegroom is with them, Matth. 9,<sup>1</sup> ) 15.

It is rightly said that the lower and the upper millstone mean hope and fear, or the law and the gospel. For the law, the word of wrath, is the upper millstone; it sustains fear and humbles through knowledge of sin. The gospel, the word of grace, sustains the conscience through faith, so that it does not stand in fear. Both preaching is necessary. In a general sense, however, it means that not too much should be done on both sides, so that you neither punish sin too severely nor treat the sinner too kindly, neither comforting him too much nor frightening him too much. For guilt means sin, for the sake of which the lower millstone is taken away if punishment is too much; in turn, the upper one is taken away if indulgence is too much.

To steal a citizen means to turn him away from faith through false teaching (verbo) and to hand him over to works and external righteousness, which seeks reward and makes rich thieves, that is, godless teachers, John 10:8: "All who came before me were thieves" 2c. But he is killed by the gospel, that he may live, or eternal death is announced to him.

It is quite clear that leprosy is the plague of spiritual wickedness, therefore one must carefully guard against it according to the judgment and ministry of the Levites. For a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump [Gal. 5:9].

He who reclaims the debt does not receive what he wants, but what the debtor carries out to him, that is, the sinner is not to be atoned (mulctandus) according to our arbitrariness, but according to what he can bear, and if he is completely poor and weak, then everything must be restored to him and let up for the sake of the weakness of the flesh, according to the words Gal. 6,<sup>2</sup> ) 1.: "If a man would be overtaken by a fault" 2c. "Before sunset", that is, before he is in despair.

1) In the Jena and Erlangen: Lluttü. 12.  
2) In the issues: Onl. 5.

or be consumed by sadness, as Paul says [2 Cor. 2:7].

Thou shalt immediately give the laborer his wages, that is, to those who are oppressed by labor and wearied by the burden of the law and tormented by an evil conscience, thou shalt preach the word of life and exhort them to faith, or else he cries to heaven, because the oppression of consciences is the greatest tyranny; this [cry] 1) God, who is reconciled, soon hears against the tyrants of souls, unless his wrath be there, in which he punishes the whole world.

The Father is not to die for the Son, that is, even though we all die in Adam's sin, that sin is remitted after the gospel is revealed. And whoever

1) To Huum Will have to add about full olnmntium.

After this he no longer dies in his own sin but in the sin of others, as Ezek. 18, 2. 4. proves that it will happen that every man dies in his own sin. For now the teeth of the children are no longer blunted because the fathers ate herbs, because it now happens in the spirit, so that whoever dies dies because of his unbelief.

That the rest of the harvest and the grape harvest be left for the sinners means, since we gain everything through faith in Christ, that we should leave our remaining things to serve the sinners, so that they also may live with us through faith and the word which they have from us. And we must not live in the flesh as if we alone wanted to believe and be saved, but we should know that we live for this reason, so that we may also be useful to others for life and salvation.

# The twenty-fifth chapter.

First, a law is given concerning the punishments of transgressors, that those who are not to be punished by death or money, but by beatings, shall be punished according to the measure of their transgression, only this shall not exceed forty [strokes]. The cause is given: lest your brother be despised and abominable before you. He wills, therefore, that the punishments shall not be inflicted according to our will or out of revengefulness, but according to a moderate rule and with regard to respectability. This is befitting for a righteous community.

Secondly. "Thou shalt not bind up the mouth of the oxen that thresh" [, this is commanded], that they, being exercised by kind conduct toward the beasts, may become the more benevolent toward men. But it is a proverbial saying, which Paul richly interprets in 1 Cor. 9:9 ff. so that he says: "Does God take care of the oxen? Although God cares for the oxen, he does not write this for the sake of the oxen, since they cannot read, so that Paul's opinion is: This saying will be

This is not only understood by the oxen, but in general by all workers, that they should live from their work, as Christ also says [Luc. 10, 7.]: "A worker is worth his wages. Therefore, he who does not give a worker his living, or does not also give him all kinds of good things, Gal. 6,<sup>2</sup> ) 6. is the one who ties the mouth of the ox that is threshing.

Third. The law that one should take the surviving wife of the brother and raise up seed for the deceased brother was given for a very good reason. First, the reason given in the text is so that the generations would not perish but be increased, which serves to elevate a community and make it stronger. Secondly, that in this way God provides for widows and the wretched [female] sex, that they should be taken in and fed, since a single (per sese) woman is a weak and wretched vessel, and even more so a widow who is both abandoned and despised.

2) In the issues: 6n1. 5.

But he compels this demonstration of love by an exceedingly great disgrace, that he should be called a barefooter, and one should spit before him: Fie on you! that he should be worthy that all should despise him and spit at him on the earth and say: You are a fie on you, because he does not want to build up or increase the community in which he lives and whose rights he enjoys. But the unshod foot shall be a sign of shame and a cause of eternal disgrace, that he is worthy to be barefooted also, that is, without gender (familia) and subordinates signified by the shoe, since he makes himself a barefooter by this one act of not wanting to edify his brother's gender, so that the sign is similar to the act by which he sins.

Fourth. A woman's hand shall be cut off without mercy, who, to save her husband, seizes by the shame another man who contends with him. Truly a foolish law, as it reads. But this is to say that a woman, because she is fainthearted, is wont to do harm where we are most hurt. For example, such a tongue, which is ready (levis) to speak evil and to revile, easily injures the good reputation, since it attacks first of all that of which we are to be ashamed. This means the bodily seizure of shame, by which the person of the man is also greatly injured and violated (cogitur), and yet it is a feminine violence, which is even more effective (vincit) than the strength of a man; to say nothing of the shamefulfulness and shamelessness, which this law also condemns in a woman, although in this case it is useful and necessary for the woman and the man, so that the general opinion of this law could be that one should not do evil, so that good may come from it.

Fifth. Right weight and right measure must be maintained in a community, so that the poor and the neighbor are not cheated. This also applies generally to all commutationes in all contractuum, that the seller give just and equal (aequa) goods for the money of the buyer. For here the

The people's greed has led to unbelievable unworthiness and artifice in altering, adulterating, dressing up and decorating the goods, so that it must be no small matter of concern that the authorities take good care of the community in this respect.

Finally, he commands that the Amalekites be utterly destroyed under heaven because of the cruel outrage that they not only did not refresh those who were weary on the way, but even killed those behind them with shameful deceit.

But that he commands the Amalekites to be destroyed, he does not do so that they should avenge themselves, but God avenges himself through the hands of Israel. Otherwise, if He had wanted them to seek their own vengeance, He would not have delayed it so long, since those who had been injured had long since died, but He would have allowed them to avenge themselves immediately at the same time. Therefore, we are taught here that only this is true vengeance, which is not carried out according to our will, but at God's command and for God's sake, so that we alone are instruments of God's vengeance, and do not presume anything of vengeance, as you see here.

**Secret interpretation.**

The exactly determined measure of the blows, so that the brother does not go around in a terrible way, means that the flesh is to be chastised in such a way and the sin is to be punished in such a way that its vices are oppressed, not that it itself is destroyed. The number "forty" also means elsewhere all stages and the epitome of the killing of the old man in the Scriptures.

That one should not bind up the mouth of the ox that threshes, can also mean, in addition to the simile (metaphoram), of which we have said that it means that the servants of the Word are entitled to a living from their office, according to the secret interpretation (allegorice), that a teacher should not be forbidden to preach the Word freely, by which he consumes stubble and hay, that is, converts the godless people and incorporates them into Christ.

The brother's wife left behind is the synagogue or the church which the deceased

Christ left in the world as a barren woman, because he did not receive from her the children of the law. We therefore receive her and impregnate her with the Word, so that she may bear children not to us or to our name, but to Him and to His name, so that, though we teach the people, we do not teach them otherwise than in the name of Christ, so that the children begotten by the Word may not be called Pauline, Apolline, or Petrine, but Christians alone, that we may build His house, not our own.

But whoever does not want to do this, the church should accuse him as one who wants to teach for himself and not for Christ, who does not want to please God but men, who does not want to draw the disciples to Christ but to himself. Therefore she should publicly take off his shoe, that is, deprive him of the authority to teach, and make the declaration that his word is not "a doing of the gospel" [Eph. 6:15], as Paul says, so that all may know that he does not walk rightly, booted in the gospel truth, as Paul did to Peter. Further, let it spit out before him, that it may bring him into contempt by the opprobrium of the name of heretic, that he may be called a barefooter, that is, a heretic who walks not in the shoes of the gospel.

The two men who quarrel with each other are the law and the gospel, or rather the teachers and ministers of the law of works and the gospel of grace. These are constantly arguing about works and righteousness. The woman who has the shame of the other man

The one who takes hold of it is the wise people, who want to settle this dispute by forbidding to teach and [enjoining] to teach in a certain way, thereby hindering the ministry of the word. Their hand shall be cut off without mercy, that is, their work and conduct shall be utterly rejected, because this dispute will not be ended for eternity unless God is judge. Wrath and strife shall indeed be cut off where it concerns the matter of love, but in matters of faith it can never and must never be cut off, because there must be divisions [1 Cor. 11:19].

That two weights are forbidden and equal weights are commanded, that is, that a sincere nature (*simplicitatem*) is maintained in the church, so that we have one mind and opinion, which Paul often mentions [1 Cor. 13:11].

That the Amalekites are to be slain means that by the word of the Spirit those are to be slain who not only do not comfort the weak in faith and those who are weary in the way of God and those who are wearied by many tribulations, but add to it the pain of the wounds and kill the wounded. The 109th Psalm, v. 16, gives you an example of this, saying: "Because he had so little mercy" 2c., therefore [Ps. 69, 29] they "shall not be written with the righteous" 2c. For it shall be declared unto them that they are worthy of eternal death, as indeed they are.

## The twenty-sixth chapter.

### V. 1. ff. When you come into the land 2c.

After the explanation of the holy ten commandments is finished, he concludes in this chapter all the sermons that have been preached about the commandments by adding, as it were, as a corollary or instead of a conclusion to the speech, the customs of offering the firstfruits and tithes, thus confirming the covenant between God and the children of Israel.

But thou seest how beautifully he teaches to set the words [v. 3. ff.] in the offering of the firstfruits, that we may know that this offering is nothing else but a praise and thanksgiving for deliverance from enemies and for the possession of the land, not unlike when an hireling confesses by his interest to his lord that he has his field by the grace of him. But the firstfruits were the [fruits],



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| <p>which they offered to the priests on the feast of Pentecost, of which it is said in the 16th chapter.</p> <p>So he does with the tithes in the third year, teaching that they are to be given to the Levites, the fatherless, the widows and the strangers, with the confession that they have fulfilled the work of love. "I have brought" (saith he [v. 13.]), not for sacrifice, but to a special place, where in every city such tithes were collected for the poor, as it were into a sack (bursam) or common box.</p> <p>"I have not transgressed Your commandments (namely, as far as this work is concerned; otherwise, who fulfills even One commandment completely?), nor have I eaten of it in my suffering (that is, I have not done it sorrowfully but cheerfully, for a cheerful giver is dear to God), nor have I eaten of it in uncleanness" (that is, not with sins or uncleanness, but in holiness I have set it apart). For the sacrifice of the unclean is as little pleasing to [GOtte] as the sacrifice of the afflicted. "Neither have I given of it unto the dead," for thereby he who does this would also be defiled, and so the offering of tithes would also be defiled.</p> <p><b>V. 16. Today the LORD your God gives you 2c.</b></p> <p>These are words of the confirmed covenant, that they should keep the aforementioned commandments, and he adds the promise that if</p> | <p>they would keep the commandments, the LORD would make them high above all nations in glory and honor and honor, which he did as long as they kept the covenant. And this is the end of the holy ten commandments and [other] commandments. Now what is dealt with in the following chapters are some ordinances to be kept according to the occasion of the time, exhortations, orders, curses and blessings, to remind the people to keep the commandments of God.</p> <p>The secret interpretation of the firstfruits has been sufficiently discussed above [Cap. 15], that they signify the confession of faith and the thanksgiving of the righteousness of the Spirit, since we confess at the same time how great an affliction we have been subjected to, from which the Lord has delivered us, and how great goods we have received through faith. But the bringing of tithes means that we are completely given over to the service of our neighbor through love, as Paul says (Gal. 5, 13.): "Through love serve one another." But this does not happen if you have not first fulfilled all the commandments of God as one justified by faith and are righteous. Further, cheerfully, not sadly or unwillingly; finally, without impurity, that is, not desiring to be repaid in kind, but out of a simple and pure heart. You shall not give anything to the dead, that is, there shall be no unfruitful work in love, but it shall all be living, holy, free, joyful and pleasing to God.</p> |
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## The twenty-seventh chapter.

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| <p><b>V. 1. ff. And Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people 2c.</b></p> <p>What he commanded here about the altar that was to be erected on Mount Ebal from unhewn stones and about the law that was to be written on it is a temporal commandment that was to be fulfilled only once. Joshua also fulfilled it after he had taken the city of Ai, Jos. 8, 30 ff,</p> | <p>There the blessings and the curses were read before all the people, and the burnt offerings and peace offerings were offered, as Moses says here, admittedly in order to provoke (as I have said) the raw people by this outward show, so that they would be mindful of the law, since they are more moved by outward ceremonies than by mere, naked words.</p> <p>This altar later achieved great aer-</p> |
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The people sacrificed there and served God, puffed up by the example of the fathers, who sacrificed there only this one time, by order of Moses, who had commanded that this should happen. For the woman of Samaria also held this against Christ, John 4:20, saying, "Our fathers worshipped on this mountain." But they did not see that this temporary commandment did not have to be made a perpetual example, since they had elsewhere the express command, Ex. 29, 1) 10. f., that they should sacrifice in the place which the Lord had chosen, which Moses also repeated so often in this book [Cap. 12, 14, 16, 2.]. But the place he had chosen was always certain, namely, where the Ark of the Covenant was, over which he had promised to dwell among them, so that we see that we should not trust and base ourselves on the example of the fathers or a past word of God, which has already ceased with a past event (facto), but only on the present word of God, which concerns a present fact.

This is to be noted in this chapter, that Moses chose for the blessings the more respected (potiores) tribes, namely Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph (which includes two tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh) and Benjamin, and so here are seven tribes, all children of the free, Rachel and Leah; but to the curses six tribes, the children of the maidens, Zilpah and Bilhah, with the two sons Reuben and Zebulun of the free, Leah. Perhaps because the blessing is more honorable and worthy than the curse, so it had to be adorned with the more distinguished tribes.

Again, here he lists no blessings but only curses, since he ordained seven tribes to bless, and in Joshua it is written that they also proclaimed the blessings [Jos. 8, 33. f.]. I think this is because Moses wants to show that he is a servant of sin and death through the law, which keeps all under the curse, Gal. 3, 10. And finally, this people of the law is also ruined by the curse.

gone. But Joshua adds the blessing to signify Christ, who brings blessing to all who [desire] to be done away with the curse of the law [and] groan after him. And Judah also is here ordained for Christ's sake among the number of them that should stand to bless, because he should come from Judah.

Moses also took care that where he spoke of blessing, he added [v. 12] "the people," saying, "to bless the people," but where he spoke of cursing, he omitted "the people," saying [v. 13.], "to curse"; then that he commanded rather of the blessing than of the curse, that the blessing was first, as that which is more excellent, better, and more desirable for the people, but the curse abhorred, so that he had rather let it stand, that it might not affect the people.

But this stone altar, on which the other law (Deuteronomy) is written, is, according to the secret interpretation, the people of the law itself, on which the law of works is written as on a hard heart, which does not yet have the spirit that softens (the heart). Furthermore, the unhewn stones are the Israelites themselves, who are indeed outwardly ordered by the law in appearance, and are neatly smoothed with lime to form an altar, but in themselves they remain inwardly unworked, and have a heart that is unwilling against the law.

The two mountains mean that the people are divided into two parts, namely that among them there are those who keep the law in the spirit; these are on Mount Ebal and inherit the blessing; but the others who only express the law by works without the spirit are on Mount Grisim and are under the curse, Gal. 3:10.

But here one must not pass by the apostle Paul, who is a wonderful interpreter of this passage (Gal. 3, 10.): "Cursed be every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." For this he interprets in an affirmative way, in this way, as he says: "For those who deal with the works of the law are under the curse."

For it is written: Cursed be every man that abideth not. "2c. For what more wonderful thing can be said than that he who practices the law with works is said not to abide in the words of the law or not to prove them [in his life] (confirmare)? How can it be that the same one who does it [the law] does not do the words of the law? Shall it be said that he who does not lie with his sister, with his mother-in-law, with his stepmother, with his cattle, lies with them? And shall he then be accursed because he lieth with them, seeing he lieth not with them? For the same way of speaking applies to any part of the law as to the whole law, so that he who, doing one thing, does not do it, is equally cursed, as he who, doing the whole, does not do it.

Although I have said enough about this in my [shorter] interpretation of Galatians 1), I must repeat it briefly because the occasion demands it. Paul reads Moses in the spirit - as he says Rom. 7, 14: "The law is spiritual, but I am carnal" 2c. Therefore, because the flesh does not fulfill the spirit, it is impossible for any part of the law to be fulfilled, much less the whole, as he says Rom. 8:3: "For that was impossible for the law (because it was weakened by the flesh)." Therefore, if you look at the outward appearance (larvam) of the works, there are many who fulfill the law, at least in many pieces, and so they do not seem to be under the curse, like the hypocrites. If you

1) In Galatis INS18. This refers to the "shorter interpretation of the epistle to the Galatians" found in our edition vol. VIII, 1352 ff.

But if you look at the spirit that has read the law, there is no one who fulfills even one letter or one tittle. And so all are under the curse, and those most of all who practice the law by rote with works, without the spirit within. For these do the works, either forced by the punishment or irritated by the benefit, in constant hatred of the law, and so they do not fulfill it while they fulfill it, do not do it while they do it. For they do it with the hand and with the work alone, but refrain from doing it and do not do it with the heart. But God looks at the heart [1 Sam. 16, 7], and according to it He judges by His spiritual law.

So it is true that he who is flesh alone without the Spirit lies with his mother-in-law, sister and cattle, and does everything that is forbidden, and omits all the commandments, while he does not lie with them, and while he does not do what is forbidden, and does not omit the commandments, for if you look at the outward work, he is holy, but if you look at the heart, there is no work so shameful that he would not do it if shame, fear, and punishment did not oppose it, so that Augustine rightly said: There is no sin that one man has done which another man could not do, for we are all of One substance, One flesh, having all the same wickedness, being thus corrupted and accursed by the first sin of Adam. It follows, then, that the Jews were most deserving of the curses in chapter 28 even when they shone through the most apparent works without the Spirit, as can be seen from all the prophets, who echo their hypocrisy and scare them with such curses.

# The twenty-eighth chapter.

## V. 1. ff. And if thou shalt obey the voice of the LORD thy God, that thou shalt keep 2c.

As this chapter is the longest, it is also the easiest, for it contains nothing more than a large heap of blessings and curses, by which he continues the previous chapter.

and explains. Therefore, we have nothing concerning history that we can interpret here, 2) only that we say that one must consider it from the heart (affectu),

2) In the Erlanger: ooininenüslnur instead of: eomme-ntsinur.

how terrible it is to be under the law. For these curses, or those that resemble them, are borne by the conscience that serves sin, that feels anguish and shame in all things, for "the wicked have no peace" [Isa. 56:21], and no place is safe, no hour tranquil (*secura*), no creature reliable. Again, these and such blessings are enjoyed by a pure and godly conscience, to which everything is lovely and favorable (applaudunt).

Hence, also, after all the curses, gathering them, as it were, into one main sum, he describes the evil conscience, saying [v. 65.], "The Lord will give thee a trembling heart, and faint eyes, and a soul withered through sorrow." For thus the consciousness of sin by its nature makes fearful men, so that they are startled even by the rustling of a flying leaf, Deut. 26:36. and, as the poet says, He blanches at any lightning. Then it makes the face sad and pale; for as a merry heart makes a merry face (as Solomon [Proverbs 15:13] testifies), so a sad spirit digs wrinkles in the forehead, so that the poet again calls happy the one who does not blanch because of any fault. Moses calls such a face here "languishing eyes", because the eyes are the most prominent part of the face, in which cheerfulness or sadness is most evident. But the soul, withered away by sadness, is all life in the outward senses, sad, depressed, sullen, and morose, so that the man has no desire to live, and yet is afraid to die, as follows:

**V. 66. f. And your life will hover before you. Night and day you will be afraid, and you will not be sure of your life. In the morning you will say, "Oh, that I might live to see the evening! In the evening you will say, "Oh, that I might live to see the morning!"**

I have not yet seen a passage that expresses the sorrow of an evil conscience more clearly, with such puffing and appropriate words and sayings. For so stands the heart which has offended God, that is, which is tormented by the consciousness of sin. It also fears there (as the psalmist [ille

Ps. 53, 6.] says), where everything is sure. But Isaiah has summed it all up in One Word and says [Isa. 57, 20.]: "The wicked are like an impetuous sea that cannot be still." Thus the wicked are driven by the storms of thought, fear, distrust, despair, so that in truth they can be compared to a turbulent sea.

But it is not necessary to think that he wants the whole people to be subject to all these curses, and everyone to every curse, just as it is not to be understood that the whole people should be honored with all blessings, namely, that everyone should receive every blessing, but it is enough that all this is fulfilled in such a way that one takes a part for the whole (per synecdochen). While all blessings are given to the godly, this is done in such a way that they are distributed: one gets these, another those, the whole people and all get some; likewise some [blessings] at always another and another time: so also the curses must be distributed among persons, oerters, times, and a certain number (numerus), so that some are given to all (as captivity, desolation, servitude), some for a time (as tribulation among the enemies), some to some people (as pestilence, diseases, expulsion). 1) And this is the reason why the wicked do not feel their curses enough, again, the godly seem to be subject to many curses, while we do not see in each one all the individual blessings.

According to the secret interpretation, by these bodily curses are signified all the damages and destruction that human statutes and twisting of the Scriptures produce in the wicked. There is lack, hunger, thirst, fever, heat (ardor), festering, various pestilences, gluttony (devoratio) of children, imprisonment, servitude, disgrace, ignominy, futile labor and loss of all goods. But while all this happens and is carried out, it will not be felt before the rage and frenzy of the mind, which is enchanted by those abominations. It will

1) This last bracket is set by us for the sake of uniformity.

but are felt afterwards. And here is not a distribution of the ills according to places, persons, times and number, but every soul suffers all these ills at the same time and forever.  
Again, those bodily blessings signify the heavenly blessings with which we are

to be blessed in Christ. Here is abundance, supply, riches, health, strength, salvation, victory, honor, glory, and the fullness of all goods, and even these are not only distributed in part (per synecdoche) to persons, places, times, and numbers, but everything is available to all always and everywhere.

# The twenty-ninth chapter.

**V.1 These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, the second time after he had made the same 2c.**

This chapter with the two that follow is, as it were, the last sermon that Moses preached to the people, and it contains exhortations and reminders and other things of this kind to put the law to their hearts. And he says that this covenant was made "in the land of Moab the second time, after he had made it with them in Horeb," that is, it was renewed for the sake of those who were not in Horeb and were born in the meantime, when their fathers died in the wilderness, so that they should not think that the law, which was given to the fathers and was not kept by them, did not concern them. Therefore the lawgiver Moses had to live so long that he also renewed the law to the other generation.

**V. 2. ff. You have seen all that the Lord has done 2c.**

Ye, saith he, and your eyes have seen, as he speaketh unto the seed of them that have seen these things, but they themselves have not seen them, being born in the wilderness, and all the fathers were dead, except Joshua and Caleb, in whose stead they came up. Unless this is understood to be said of the descendants who were almost grown up when they went out of Egypt, and by the fathers who had died [are understood] those who were in full manhood, and, as the text says, the men of war who were

from the twentieth year and above had been counted, 4 Mos. 1,<sup>1</sup>) 3. that in such a way Moses addresses those who were nineteen years and under at the time of the exodus from Egypt or at the time of the counting, then the word of Moses could not exist. Or one would have to say that he speaks after the figure of speech of the synecdoche to those who belong to the people, although this had already died, except for two 2c. who had seen these signs. But I like the first opinion better.

Moses speaks this in the manner of a reproach and uses this former harshness to make the admonition sharper, as if he said: "See to it that you keep the commandments of God better in the future than you have kept them up to now. For even though you have seen all these things, you have not become more understanding and obedient, "for (he says) the Lord has not yet given you until this day a heart to understand, eyes to see and ears to hear". Therefore it is to be feared that he may not give you these things in the same way hereafter. Therefore you must be anxious and diligent to earn this grace through humility, that you may obtain an understanding heart, hearing ears and seeing eyes.

Here you see that it is not enough that signs are shown and the word is taught, if there is not also the spirit inside, which teaches. Thus Pharaoh with his own did not turn to the signs of Moses, and the Pharisees blasphemed even the signs of Christ. So great is the hardness of man's

1) In the editions: Nurne. 2.

The heart is so weak that it will not be moved by signs and wonders, it will not be instructed by words, it will not be frightened by threats.

And it is quite clear that from this passage the prophecy of Isaiah Cap. 6, 10. is taken, and similar ones, which the evangelists, since also the same hardness [of the Jewish people] moved them,<sup>1</sup> ) so repeat (Matth. 13, 14. Marc. 4, 12. Luc. 8, 10. Joh. 12, 40.), by saying: 2) "Blind their eyes, and let their ears be thick" 2c. And obviously Moses indicates by this word that those who deal with the works of the law would be such people in front of others that they do not keep the commandments of God, since he is sure that not all will be given this grace. Therefore, he speaks in such a way to humble and frighten them, if there were such people who realize that it is not in their power to keep the law, and would humbly ask God for His grace, as spiritual people do; but the presumptuous hypocrites do not.

After that he repeats the benefits that for forty years in the wilderness their clothes did not become stale and their shoes did not become outdated, that they did not eat bread and did not drink wine and intoxicating drink, by which the LORD showed them and they should know that he was their GOD, namely, that he could feed and clothe them without human intervention (opere), as he said above Cap. 8, 3: "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word of GOD" 2c.

Then he tells of the victory they had over the two kings of the Amorites, and that the land had been divided among them, and concludes, "Keep therefore," 2c., "that you may act wisely in all your doings," that is, that you may wisely and happily carry out all that you have undertaken. For this is what the Hebrew word [XXXXXX] expresses: "that you may act wisely," as it is written of David (1 Sam.

18, 30] that he acted more wisely than all the servants of Saul, as it is also said to Joshua [Jos. 1, 7]: "That you may act wisely", that is, happily and prosperously, and not commit foolishness; but this will happen when they will keep the law of God.

Then he confirms the covenant by listing by name all the ranks (ordines), the rulers, the officials, the elders, the tribes, the children, the women, the strangers, except for the hewers of wood and the drawers of water, so that all and every one, both those present and those absent, would know that this covenant concerns them. Moses certainly could not have spoken these words alone in such a large nation, for how could all hear him? It is therefore necessary that he had this preached in a prescribed sermon by the priests and Levites at different places in the whole people (per populum).

But he beats and preempts the secret malice of the heart, by which many console themselves inwardly when they hear the threats and curses of God, and say: It will not be so bad, and remain so secure in their wickedness. This is what most of all, deceived by the pretense of godliness, do the idlers and the idolaters, who believe that what the law threatens does not concern them, as can be seen in all the prophets. For as godliness by its nature brings with it the fear of God, so godlessness and hypocrisy bring security. Against this security of the godless Moses now proceeds very sharply, until the end of this chapter, as do all the prophets, and says before that they are most threatened by curses and desolations, so that they, reversed (subversi) like Sodom and Gomorrah, become the talk (fabula) and the mockery of the whole world.

And Moses shows in this passage that his sermons thunder especially against the hypocrites and works saints, who presume to fulfill the law without the Spirit, so that from this passage the prophets have taken a large part of their sermons against the same hypocrites and idolaters. Therefore he calls such a person a root that bears gall and wormwood, using the following words

1) Wittenberger: wonente instead of: movents.

2) In the form, as here, the saying is found only in Isaiah, but not in the Evangelists. Therefore it can hardly be doubtful that instead of "tioentss in the editions cioeiitis (referring to Esaiaes) must be read, after which we have translated.

bitter words and things attack the bitter and pernicious hypocrisy. These words are also used in the Epistle to the Hebrews [Hebr. 6, 8], 1) and almost also by Peter in the Acts of the Apostles, Cap. 8, 23, against Simon the sorcerer. So such a teacher of works is a root that bears gall and wormwood, for he brings bitter fruit by his teaching and examples, that is, the works of the law without the Spirit, which are sweet on the outside through false appearances, but on the inside they trouble and embitter the conscience. That is, they portray God as bitter and angry, since He is blasphemed by such righteousness, ascribing to our powers what belongs to His Spirit.

"So (he says) the drunken woman goes along with the thirsty." "The drunkard" he calls

1) The words "gall and wormwood" are not used in the briefs to the Hebrews, but: "thorns and thistles". Therefore, "these words" is to be interpreted by "bitter words".

a teacher who is full of his own opinions in the law of God. Therefore in the prophets, especially in Isaiah, much is said about this drunkenness and spitting and wine (Isa. 28, 1. Jer. 25, 27. 48, 26.]. But "the thirsty one" is the listener who is eager to know godliness and accepts and drinks everything without any distinction.

At the end he adds [v. 29.], "The mystery of the Lord is revealed unto us, that we should do all the words of this law." This also belongs to the sharpness of the exhortation, as if he wanted to say: The mysteries which God thinks concerning us, that He may curse the ungodly and bless the godly, and all that He wills that we should do, are revealed to us, and not to other nations, but not in vain. As if he wanted to say: Therefore fear. He who reveals these things reveals them for this reason, to frighten you, so that you may be sure that all these things will happen if you do not keep all the parts of this law.

# The thirtieth chapter.

## V. 1. ff. Now when all this comes upon you 2c.

In this chapter, Moses attaches the hope of repentance and the promise of forgiveness of sins if they repent, so that those who would recover through the instruction of the tribulation would have something to take refuge in, namely these promises, as King Manasseh turns to them. For just as the hard and sure wicked need a hard and severe rebuke, curse and threat, as we saw in the previous chapter, so the crushed and humbled and terrified need a sweet and wholesome promise and comfort. And Moses, in this chapter, truly holds out to them glorious promises of grace, so that he says [v. 5] that all good things will be shown to them, that they will be much more than before, [v. 9:] that the Lord will rejoice over them, so that the text is easy for the reader.

necessary for a distressed and despairing conscience.

## V. 11. ff. For the commandment which I command thee this day is not hid from thee 2c.

This passage the sophists draw on that they say, it is possible for us to fulfill the commandments of God, yes, it is easy for us. For these blind readers fall in such a way that they understand what Moses says: "It is not hidden from you" (Non est supra te = it is not too high for you) in such a way: It is not beyond your strength, nor is it impossible for you, and do not consider that if this were true, one would seek God's grace in vain. For what is it necessary that the grace of God should help me in what is possible for me and not beyond my strength? If they had had the Hebrew text, they would have taken much more out of it and would have been puffed up. For the Hebrew says thus: "This commandment, which I command thee this day, is not marvelous unto thee

nor heavy." Because XXXXXX means sometimes the miraculous and heavy, which exceeds our forces, and to which we are not able to reach. But we want to come to Moses now.

In this passage, Moses wants to show the way in which God's commandment is fulfilled, and first says: "It is not hidden from you, nor is it too far away," that is, you think that the commandment can be fulfilled immediately when you hear it; therefore, if it were not heard, you might say: I would do it if it were there. Now that what I am to do is not there, who will bring it to me from heaven or from beyond the sea, that I may hear it and do it? But it will not be fulfilled by hearing and by a work, but rather when the word will be in your mouth and in your heart. In the mouth, I say, and in the heart it must be, if you want to fulfill it, not in the ear or in the hand. Wherefore in the text these two passages are to be observed, the one [v. 12. 1: "That we may hear it and do it," the other [v. 14.], "In thy mouth and in thy heart." In these two passages, I say, lies the meaning (*vis*) and understanding of this text.

For there are two kinds of doers of the commandment; the first of whom he says, "That we may hear and do." These, presuming on their powers, immediately say and boast that they do it when they have heard. These do not assert (*causantur*) their powers, but hearing, and say, If we but hear, we shall do it straightway. This Moses rejects, and says of the others, "The word is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, it claims the heart, not the hand. But it is not in the heart unless it is written in it by the Spirit of God. For in the heart is what I want, what I love, what I like, what pleases me. That therefore the law should be in the heart, that is, that it should be loved, which is impossible for our powers. This the 37th Psalm has followed, saying [v. 31.], "The law of his God is in his heart," and the first Psalm, v. 2: "He delighteth in the law of the LORD." But if the law is loved in the heart, it is fulfilled in truth, for the law requires a heart (*affectum*) which loves it and has pleasure in it; so

is done to him enough and so it is fulfilled, if one loves it. So Moses is clear: "The word is in your mouth and in your heart that you do it", as if he wanted to say: You will not do it unless it is in your mouth and in your heart.

But why does he first say, "In your mouth," before he says, "In your heart," since it is in the heart rather than in the mouth, because it is loved rather than taught? He does this to indicate the way in which the commandment of God is fulfilled, that this is done through the word of the gospel, which is first preached with the mouth, then believed through the sermon (*auditu*). So Moses directs the people by this text to another future word, which, received with the heart, produces love against his commandment, as if he wanted to say: You will not fulfill my commandment if you hear it, but if you love it with your heart. You will not do this if the word is not preached with the mouth and believed with the heart. So my commandment will not be difficult or distant.

It remains that we now look at Paul Rom. 10, 6-8. who cites this passage differently than Moses has, saying, "Righteousness by faith thus saith, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (This is not different from bringing Christ down). Or, Who will go down into the deep? (This is not different from bringing Christ from the dead). But what does the Scripture say? The word is near you in your mouth and in your heart. This is the word of faith which we preach" 2c. Here we say first of all that Paul intentionally did not want to quote Moses literally, at least in the first part, but in a rich (*abundant*) spirit took the opportunity from Moses to write a new and own text, as it were, against the works saints. That is why he also omitted the part that is set twice in Moses [v. 12 and 13]: "And get us to hear and do it." Further, he does not say that it is written thus, but he says that righteousness by faith speaks thus. But afterwards, where he quotes Moses literally, he says, "But what saith the scripture?"



to indicate that it is the words of his Spirit and not of Moses that he ascribes to righteousness by faith, even though there is a similarity (analogia) between them.

In the simple sense, Moses and Paul agree in the last part, because Paul wants that through the words: "The word is near you" 2c. it is taught that one believes with the heart for righteousness through the word of faith. Moses wants the same thing when he pronounces the sentence (sentit) that his commandment is fulfilled when the word is in the heart, that is, when it is loved, which happens through faith. But what Paul plays on the occasion of the words of Moses: "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? This is not different,

For to bring Christ down," 2c., he thunders against the works saints. For since these fulfill the commandment with their works and out of their strength, they deny that Christ ascended into heaven and descended into hell, that is, they deny that he died for us and rose again, so that we might be justified by the word of faith and fulfill the law. For he looks upon their heart, saying, "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven?" as if to say: The ungodly does not believe that Christ has gone up to heaven, but draws him down from heaven, because he does not believe that through his resurrection faith is given, which fulfills the law.

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## The Thirty-First Chapter.

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### V. 1. ff. And Moses went and spoke these words 2c.

"He went away after the preaching of the law, the exhortation, the threat, and the way of fulfilling the law were finished, and everything that his ministry required of the people was accomplished. But after he had returned, that is, on another day, he spoke what is written in this chapter. It is written how he prepared himself for death, took leave and promised that the nations should be destroyed, how he appointed Joshua as his leader, how he commanded that the law should be written and read every seventh year, and how he made a song in remembrance. And so Moses concludes his sermon in this chapter. For the 32nd chapter contains this song, the 33rd chapter the blessings; the 34th chapter cannot have been written by Moses.

First of all, he says that he is a hundred and twenty years old and can no longer go out and come in, that is, take charge of the affairs of the people and administer his office. But even this would not have prevented him entirely, if the Lord had not said that

he should not go over the Jordan. He therefore proclaims to them that the LORD will be their guide against the heathen who are to be destroyed; but under the LORD Joshua will be their guide in his stead; and he adds glorious promises, saying [v. 6.], "Be of good courage, fear not, neither be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God himself will walk with thee, and will not turn away his hand from thee, nor forsake thee." The same he repeats and speaks [v. 7.] to Joshua, when he was called before the people, and appoints him as leader, so that in such a way both the people and the leader may base themselves in faith on the word of the promise of God, their supreme leader.

After the leader had been appointed and the people had been encouraged, he ordered the law to be read publicly every seventh year by the Levites in the place the Lord had chosen. Then the Lord calls Moses and Joshua and commands them to make a song as a testimony of the future transgression and punishment, for it was certain that they would later fall into transgression.

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| because they did not all have the Spirit; since, as Moses testified [v. 27], they disobeyed the Lord while he was still alive, how much more after his death! Finally it is commanded [v. 26] that the book of the law be placed in the side of the ark of the covenant for a testimony against them. And after the elders and officers were gathered together, he spoke the song.<br>The secret interpretation of the dying Moses and the appointment of Joshua has been touched upon above [Cap. 3], therefore it must be briefly repeated here. Moses is the office of the law, | which does not lead to perfection, that is, to righteousness, but it shows sin, and requires grace, which it does not confer, therefore he dies and departs on this side of the Jordan in the land of Moab, that is, in the righteousness of works. Joshua follows him as a leader, that is, the ministry of grace, and leads the people into the land of promise, that is, to the true righteousness in Christ, as the Israelites pass dry-footed through the Jordan, that is, as both sin and death recede and give way to grace. |
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## The Thirty-Second Chapter.

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| The Song of Moses is full of rebuke and reproach because of the so many and so great benefits that have been shown by God to the ungrateful and wicked people. And he clearly indicates that it will happen that they will leave God, turn to foreign gods, and the aforementioned curses will come upon them. And in this Moses does a work worthy of him (officium), that is, worthy of the office of the law, namely, that he bites, accuses, chides, threatens, curses, and through and through shows nothing but anger, and yet knows well (sentit) that the people are not made any better by it, so that one can also see here, as it were in a mirror, the nature of the law, that it causes anger and keeps it under the curse.<br><br><b>V. 1. Take heed, you heavens 2c.</b><br>He calls heaven and earth, that is, all creatures, as witnesses. And it also happens that when the wicked are afflicted, they think that all creatures are hostile to them. This is done by the consciousness of sin, which is indicated to them by the law. Thus the whole creature agrees with the law as a witness to it.<br><br><b>V. 2. My teaching drips like the rain 2c.</b><br>But he wishes that his teaching may trickle and flow like the rain and the dew, | like the drops and downpours on herbage and grass, that is, that it may be strong and fruitful, lest he sing in vain and tell a story to a dove, singing of great and necessary things, that is, that one should serve the true God, and of the danger of those who forsake God and turn to idols.<br>He opposes drops, rain and dew to clouds without water, as there are human teachings that are of no use. Therefore he wants his word to be rain, not an empty cloud. He opposes herbs and grass to pebbles, sand and similar unfruitful things, on which it rains in vain, although the rain is beneficial, that is, he wants listeners, with whom his word brings fruit. For both are necessary, that the teaching be wholesome, and the hearer be taught (docilis).<br><br><b>V. 3: For I will call upon the name of the Lord.</b><br>That is, I will sing about calling upon and serving only One God against the idolaters who will be among my people.<br><br><b>Give glory to our God alone.</b><br>That is, do not honor any other God, nor ascribe any glory or power to any, but to ours alone. |
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GOtte. For he alone has glory, greatness, power. All other gods are vain, lying and nothing.

**V. 4. He is a rock. His works are blameless.**

He calls God a rock because he is faithful and reliable to those who trust in him. He calls his works wholesome, blameless, perfect works, and speaks of the works that he works in us and all the godly who worship him in truth, contrasting them with the works of vanity with which we, having invented them from ourselves, serve either GOD himself or other gods. These [works] are not blameless and perfect, but rejected and condemned.

It is the same thing that follows: "All that he does is right," that is, the whole life of his faithful is right and true, going along in word and commandment, not in his own ways and opinions. Thus "God is faithful, and there is no evil in him; just and pious is he." He says all this of God, provided one serves him and believes in him, not only of God according to his nature, as when he said against false gods and those who serve them: Whoever serves this God is certain to have a faithful God with whom he is at peace. In this service there is nothing evil, but only justice and righteousness, and all this is faithful, certain and well founded. On the other hand, the idolatrous have nothing certain, nothing faithful or certain, but they waver, since their conscience is always inconstant and uncertain, so that everything they live and do is only wickedness and evil, however much they may appear otherwise.

**V. 5. The perverse and wicked kind fall away from him; they are stains and not his children.**

Thus he says of them that it will come to pass with them that they will not remain in the wholesome doctrine and the right service of God, but, as it is wont to happen with an evil, adulterous kind (as also Christ [Matth. 12, 39.] calls them), they will be corrupted, so that now they are no longer children, because of their shamefulness and their corrupt service of God, which they themselves invented, but bastards, yes, adversaries.

**V. 6. Do you then give thanks to the LORD your God, you foolish and foolish people? Is he not your Father and your Lord? Is it not he alone who made you and prepared you?**

Here he begins to reproach the ungrateful people, and see how fervent and exceedingly violent words he uses. For all this (he says) that GOD is just and pious, his works are blameless 2c., and that he is your father, which was highly to him that he obtained you; likewise that he made you when you were not a people, and made you a ready people, that is, prepared you and made you, that all might go forth well; for all these things (I say) you pervert and pervert all things, so that now you are no longer children of such a father, but a perverted kind, following after strange gods and after their own lusts.

**V. 7. Remember the former times until now, and consider what he did to the fathers of old. Ask your father, and he will tell you; your elders, and they will tell you.**

He begins to enumerate in order the benefits that have been poured out on the ungrateful people and have been lost on them. He used "your father" in the singular instead of the plural, as if he wanted to say: If you look at the ancient fathers, as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants, you will see how much good he did you in those, how much he cared for you.

**V. 8 When the Most High divided the nations and scattered the children of men, he set the boundaries of the nations according to the number of the children of Israel.**

The first blessing is that although he is God, and God of all nations, since he scattered them, Gen. 11, 8, and divided the whole earth among them, he gave to each nation its part and its border, as Paul teaches in the Acts of the Apostles, Cap. 17, 26, following this verse, yet he did not choose all of them to be the people whose God he was in particular by true and right worship, but he set boundaries so that only where the children of Israel were, his people would be; but where the children of Israel were, his people would be.

the border of the children of Israel ceased, then the people of God should cease, and the borders of the Gentiles should begin.

**V. 9: For the Lord's portion is His people, Jacob is the cord of His inheritance.**

That means, his people does not extend further than Jacob or Israel is. For by these words it is described how this people is specifically God's people.

**V. 10 He found him in the wilderness, in the arid desert, howling. He led him and gave him the law. He guarded him like the apple of his eye.**

That is, he made a covenant with him on Mount Sinai, where he found him and accepted him, after which he led him around in the wilderness and instructed and protected him so that he never lacked anything. This is the second glorious blessing.

**V. 11: As an eagle carries out its young and soars over them. He spread out his wings, and took him, and carried them on his wings.**

With these words he indicates how he took care of them in the wilderness, carried their customs, and tried them and did them good, so that they learned to fly, that is, to trust in him, as we saw in Cap. 8.

**V. 12. The Lord alone guided him, and no foreign god was with him.**

That is, under Moses, the true service of God went on in the wilderness. God Himself went before them both by word and by the outward guidance of the cloud and the fire.

**V.13. He made him come up on high on the earth, and fed him with the fruit of the field, and made him suck honey from the rocks, and oil from the hard stones.**

This is the third benefit that describes the wealth that was given to them in the land of Canaan. Canaan, namely, that they dwelt in a high and excellent land, and were abundantly fed by the fruits of the field, that is, he gave them to dwell in an

good and fertile land. Then he says in a poetic way and in figurative speech that honey is sucked from the rocks and oil from the stones, namely, the land is so good that where there is no field, but rock and stone, there is still oil and the bees carry honey, since the oil trees also like to grow in stony and barren places, and the bees carry honey everywhere, even where there is no field.

**V.14. Butter from the cows, and milk from the sheep, with the fat from the lambs, and fat rams and goats with fat kidneys, and wheat, and watered him with the blood of grapes.**

Here, too, he describes in a poetic way, as it is wont to happen in songs, the wealth, that they should be fed with butter and milk and fat lambs, and with fattened rams, and with rams with fat kidneys, that is, which were also well fed and fattened.

Another translation has translated thus: "And with rams of the children of Bashan", because the translator did not know the Hebrew way of speaking, that "child of Bashan", that is, a child of fatness, is the same as fat, as a child of the year, that is, a yearling; a child of peace, that is, a peaceable one; a child of death, that is, doomed to death. Thus he calls the wine "grape blood", because in those countries red wine grows in general.

**V. 15. But when he became fat and full, he became horny. He became fat and fat and strong, and let go the God who made him. He despised the rock of his salvation.**

That is, the one who made him and saved him from all evil, in whom he should have trusted, he, puffed up and satiated by wealth, neglected by devoting himself to other gods, as follows:

**V. 16: And hath provoked him to zeal by strangers, by abominations hath he provoked him to anger.**

Those who should have been grateful to him for this, turned and irritated him rather, by

1) Namely the Vulgate, which offers: Lt srietum Worum Lasan.

they forgave him evil for good, as we see in the histories, how they fornicated with foreign gods. A satiated belly does not endure godliness, because it stands in safety and does not care about God.

**V. 17. They sacrificed to the devils of the field and not to their God; to the gods they did not know, to the new ones that were not before, which your fathers did not honor.**

That is, the idols in the field, namely in groves, in valleys, on mountains, of which nothing was said to them in the Law, of which they had also heard nothing, but after their ears pricked; as soon as someone brought up some new worship, they flocked to it most strongly, and left God, whom they had learned from their fathers.

**V. 18. You have forgotten your rock that begat you, and you have forgotten God who made you.**

This is a bitter rebuke and reproach of ingratitude that they forgave so much evil for so much good. Therefore now follows with what punishment they should be beaten for such a great guilt.

**V.19. And when the Lord saw it, he was angry with his sons and daughters.**

The wrath is all the more terrifying because the sons and daughters offended such a great father with such and such great sins.

**V. 20. And he said: I will hide my face from them, I will see what shall befall them at the last, for it is a perverse way, they are unfaithful children.**

"That the face of God be hid" means that they become blind, that they neither recognize nor find him, however much they seek and call him. The meaning of this is known from the antithesis [Ps. 80:4], "Let thy face shine, and we shall recover." He calls them "unfaithful," that is, those who are not children in truth and in heart, but outwardly pretend with a fictitious appearance (hypocrisy) of works, and boast that they are children.

**V.21. They have provoked me against that which is not God; with their idolatry they have provoked me to anger. And I will provoke them again in that which is not a people; in a foolish people will I provoke them.**

That is, just as they have forsaken me and accepted another god, which was not to my liking, so I will again reject them and accept another people, which will also torment them greatly, as happened according to the testimony of the apostle Rom. 11:25, when the Gentiles were accepted through the gospel. Therefore, the Jews are angry to this day in an unforgiving way that we say they are not the people of God and claim that we are the people of God, according to this verse.

**V.22. For the fire is kindled by my wrath, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall devour the land with her increase, and shall set on fire the foundations of the mountains.**

"The fire" here does not mean fire alone, but under the fire [is meant] the whole desolation, as was the fire of the king in Babylon and of the Romans, where the land, though not the whole land, was burned and laid waste, as in Jerusalem and other places, where also not one stone was left upon another. This means that he says it will burn to hell, that is, there will be nothing left on earth, neither buildings nor vegetation, but also the ground itself and the mountains where the buildings stood will be burned, as if the fire wanted to burn from above through the earth into hell, as we see in the places that are devastated by fire.

**V. 23. I will heap all calamities upon them; I will shoot all my arrows into them.**

The arrows mean here the plagues and the omission of the divine wrath. And he himself now describes these arrows and evils in the following verse by saying:

**V. 24. They shall faint with hunger, and be consumed with fever and sudden death. I will send the teeth of beasts among them, and the poison of serpents.**

Here he mentions four or three arrows, famine, fever, pestilence, wild animals, after which he adds the sword in the following verse, and the prophets often repeat these plagues. Our translation (the Vulgate), which says: Cum furore trahentium super terram, has not taken into account that this is a poetic paraphrase, as it is used in songs, and that "those who drag themselves along in the dust" (trahentes in pulvere) are called the snakes.

**V. 25. The sword shall take them away outwardly, and inwardly terror; both young men and virgins, babes with manhood.**

That is, all protection is taken away from them, and everything they can trust.

**V. 26. I will say, Where are they? I will lift up their memory among men.**

That is, after everything they have is destroyed and made into nothing, they will be mocked: Where is your kingdom now? Where is your priesthood? Not as if nothing or no Jews were left, but that they will have no certain place, kingdom or priesthood, as all other nations have. And "that their remembrance may be abolished," that is, that nothing more may be praised of them, as before, that they were anything, or could be anything, after the manner of other nations, and as they were before.

**V.27. If I did not provoke the wrath of the enemies, lest their enemies should be proud, and say, Our power is great, and the Lord hath not done all these things.**

He says this because he has at times postponed this wrath and has also delivered the unworthy, and those who did not deserve it; but this he has done for the sake of his name, so that he would not be blasphemed by the idolaters. So in this verse he cancels the boasting of the Jews and preempts it, since they might want to say: We are not as wicked as Moses sings, nor does he sing of us, for, as experience testifies, God has often wonderfully delivered us. To these he answers: This has not happened by your merit, who always have kept everything that was said before.

Because I had accepted you as a people, I am forced to take care of my name for you, who are exceedingly unworthy of it. But I will not do this forever, nevertheless your deserved end will finally come.

**V.28. For there is a people where there is no counsel within, and there is no understanding in them.**

That is, they care for nothing, neither for anger nor for mercy, nor do they care how their cause stands before me; they presumptuously imagine that I am merciful to them, while I am angry. Therefore they are not anxious to get counsel for themselves and to mend their ways.

**V. 29. Oh that they would be wise, and hear these things, that they might understand what is to come upon them hereafter!**

All this is said because they do not consider their present condition and their future punishment, as if they were sure that they were good and hoped for the best, while by far the opposite is true and imminent.

**V. 30: How is it that one shall chase a thousand of them, and two shall make ten thousand to flee? Is it not so that she has sold her rock, and the Lord has delivered her up?**

That is, through the Babylonian as well as through the Roman captivity they were supposed to realize from experience that they were abandoned by God, since one Gentile put a thousand Jews to flight, while before the opposite happened, that one put a thousand Gentiles to flight, Deut. 26, 8.

**V. 31 For our rock is not like their rock, for our enemies themselves are judges.**

This is understood to say that the other gods and worshippers of the gods themselves admitted that the God of Israel was such a God that if he did not surrender it, no one could overcome his people Israel, but if he surrendered it, they could never stand, as Balaam therefore advised the king of Moab that he should cause the people to sin, and then he would be victorious. So here Balaam is one of the witnesses,

of which Moses says here, who said glorious things about God. Witnesses are also the Egyptians, who said, Ex. 14, 25: "Let us flee from Israel, the LORD fights for them." Witnesses are also the Philistines, 1 Sam. 5, 7, who were afraid of the Ark of God. Thus no gods have so assisted their peoples, so shown their power 2c. For there is no other nation so highly exalted, as is said above Cap. 2, 25. is said.

**V. 32 For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the field of Gomorrah; their grapes are gall, they have bitter berries.**

That is, instead of the sweet fruit, they bear the exceedingly bitter and evil fruit of idolatry, and are worthy to perish like Sodom and Gomorrah. For he says everything with fierce indignation against the godlessness and idolatry that rages under the name of God and among the people of God.

**V. 33. Their wine is the poison of dragons and the gall of fierce vipers.**

That is, its doctrine and life is so harmful and poisoned that it incurably poisons very many, because it is worked in vain by so many prophets 2c. It remains a poisoned vine.

**V. 34. Is not this hidden with me and sealed in my treasures?**

That is, I know all this wickedness and keep it hidden, even though I am outwardly forced to do good to these wicked because of my name. But they do not see what is decided about them with me, therefore they are safe. Therefore he frightens them with this serious threat, so that they may see, not how much good they have received as unworthy, but how much evil they have deserved, lest anyone think that he has a gracious God because of this, because he showers him with goods, but then be most afraid of what is hidden with him and sealed up in his treasures.

**V. 35. Vengeance is mine, I will repay. In his time shall her foot slide; for the time of her calamity is at hand, and her future hasteth on.**

This he says, because at last the larva of good deeds will cease, under which they are safe, but the punishment will come forth, which has so long been postponed for the sake of his name, namely, that they shall be made nothing at all among the Romans, which they have long and always well deserved. For so their foot slid, that their kingdom was no more. And so you see that Moses clearly prophesies that the end of this people will come one day, that is, of its kingdom.

**V. 36 For the LORD will judge his people, and have mercy on his servants. For he will see that their power is gone, and both the shut up and the forsaken are gone.**

That is, he will not spare even his people, so that they will not boast that they are his people. But he will be reconciled, regardless of the person, only with those who serve him, that is, with the survivors of the people who have been converted to Christ. Otherwise, their power will be gone from all of them, so that even the closed and abandoned will be gone, that is, nothing of the kingdom will be left in the land of Judah, because all of them will be scattered among the Gentiles.

**V. 37. And they will say, Where are their gods? their rock in which they trusted?**

Thus both the conscience and the persecutor scorn them. Then they will see what they have been and done under their security, who their God has been, and whom they have served, as follows:

**V. 38. Of which sacrifice they ate fat, and drank the wine of their libation. Let them arise and help you, and protect you.**

While they thought that at that time they were eating from the sacrifices of the Lord, but now they see too late their idolatry (vanitatem).

**V. 39. Do you see now that I am alone, and there is no God beside me? I can kill and I can bring to life, I can strike and I can heal, and there is no one to deliver out of my hand.**

Thus, experience teaches what they have not learned before under the security.

**V. 40. For I will lift up my hand to heaven, and will say, I live forever.**

This is said in the manner of a swearer, or one who boasts that apart from God no one (nihil) can boast either of his being (esse) or of his life (vivere), but he alone says, I am, I live; namely, so that he may be feared and our presumption destroyed.

**V. 41. When I shall sharpen the lightning of my sword, and my hand shall take hold to punish; then will I again avenge myself upon mine enemies, and recompense them that hate me.**

That is, terrible is my vengeance because it pierces through (and cannot be stopped, like lightning) by my enemies, whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

**V. 42. I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh, over the blood of the slain, and over the prison, and over the uncovered head of the enemy.**

This vengeance will I repay (says he), that my arrows shall be full of blood, and my sword shall not wound, but devour the bodies: so many shall be slain, so many shall be taken captive. Then also the

Head of the enemies will be bare, that is, they will be deprived of the kingdom, that they shall be scattered throughout the world without the glory of the kingdom.

**V. 43. Rejoice, all you who are his people.**

That is, the Gentiles will be united in faith with the believing remnant.

**For he will avenge the blood of his servants.**

Namely, those who kill the prophets and apostles.

**And will be gracious to the land of his people.**

Namely, [the people] who are left of Israel who have converted; to them he will prepare a new kingdom under Christ, amen.

**V. 48. And the LORD spoke to Moses 2c.**

Finally, he describes the commandment of the Lord from the death of Moses, how he showed him the whole land of Canaan, but did not allow him to go in because of the sin of unbelief he had committed (admissum) at the Haderwasser. The mountain Abarim is the same as the mountain of Arabia, on the top of which is the mountain Nebo, on the top of [the mountain] Pisgah [5Mos. 34, 1.], on which Moses went up and died.

## The Thirty-Third Chapter.

**This is the blessing that Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel before his death, saying, "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up to them from Seir; he came forth from the mountain thereof, and came with many thousands of saints.**

I understand this to mean the glorious and magnificent (insignificant) arrival of the Lord in the land of promise. For there he came, starting from Mount Sinai, where he gave the covenant of the Law, and rose from Seir, that is, he passed through the land of Seir to Canaan, and so he came like the rising sun to be with

a new kingdom to enlighten that land. It is the same that he came out from the mountain Paran, because he passed through there in the borders of Edom. He came with many thousands of saints, that is, with the people of Israel, of whom there were many thousands, though not every one was holy; yet there were baptizing saints, because many of them were holy.

**At his right hand is a fiery law to them.**

Whether thou wilt understand this indeed of the law of Moses, wherewith he ruleth them in his right hand, that it burn in the spirit



and loved, namely by the saints, or [whether you want to understand it] by the fire rot with which he led them, I do not argue about that, although the former understanding pleases me better, because it was an extraordinary boon that this people was entrusted with the law, the word of God.

**V. 3. How he loves the people!**

Namely, since he so dwells with them, wanders with them and has as it were intimate contact in this whole procession through the desert 2c.

**All his saints are in his hand.**

That is, "his saints," namely, of the people or in the people; "are in his hand," that is, you defend them, because that is how you love the people.

**They will sit at your feet and learn from your words.**

That is, this too is a pledge of his love, that he has instituted the ministry of the word in this people, where the hearers can sit at his feet and hear his word, as in the synagogue and in the temple or in the tabernacle.

**V. 4. 5. Moses commanded us the law, the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob 2c.**

Here Moses talks about himself, what kind of man he was after his ministry. First, that he himself brought the law, of which he has already spoken. Secondly [v. 5], that he was in the full power (plenitudine) of a king, when the princes of the people were assembled with the tribes of Israel. That is, he was among them instead of a king and by the power of God and in the place of God, so that, beyond the written law, he also governed them by utterances (oraculo) of the living voice from the mouth of God.

**V. 6. Let Reuben live and not die, and let his mob be few.**

The same blessing it is that Jacob gives Gen. 49:4 [Vulg.], "Thou shalt not grow," namely, that he should not perish altogether because of the sin he committed against his father.

**V. 7. This is the blessing of Judah: Lord, hear the voice of Judah.**

This is understood by the kings of Judah, who often achieved victory, more by faith and prayer than by the sword.

**And bring him to his people [Vulg.]**

That is, to rule over Israel and Judah.

**Let his power be great, and let him be helped against his enemies.**

That is, may he become strong in faith and be delivered from enemies; for this kingdom has suffered many enemies.

**V. 8 And unto Levi he said, Thy judgment and thy light abide with thy holy husband, whom thou temptedst in Massa, when ye disputed at the water of the Hader.**

He wants to say: The priesthood and your office be blessed, both with praying and teaching, as it was with Moses in the desert, whom you tempted. For "right and light" is what Moses put in the tabernacle (hosen), Ex. 28, 29. f., by which one received God's answer (oraculum) in things that one wanted to do.

**V. 9. 10. He that saith to his father and to his mother, I see him not; and to his brother, I know him not; and to his son, I know not; they keep thy speech, and keep thy covenant. They shall teach thy statutes unto Jacob, and thy law unto Israel: they shall put incense before thee, and whole sacrifices upon thine altar.**

That is, there will be many hypocrites, both in works and words, because their hearts are not righteous. But those who have first died to the world, and live and serve God alone, do and teach righteousness. Such people are required by the law, whose incense and sacrifice is acceptable. He thus indicates what the servants of the Word should be like, namely, dead to the world. This is what Moses desires, saying:

**V. 11. Bless his wealth, O Lord, and let the works of his hands be pleasing to you.**

That is, whatever he has to accomplish in the service of the word, let it go out blessedly, that it may please thee and bear fruit among the people.

**Break the backs of those who rebel against him and of those who hate him, that they may not get along.**

That is, let the false prophets and kings and princes and hypocrites who oppose his fortune with their idolatries (vanitatibus) not prosper.

**V. 12. Benjamin, the beloved of the Lord, will dwell safely with Him; at all times He will protect him, and he will dwell between his shoulders.**

Perhaps Moses says this because the tribe of Benjamin dwelt between the tribes of Judah and Ephraim, both of which were royal and powerful, and had the temple in its tribe.

**V.13. And to Joseph he said, His land is in the blessing of the LORD. There are noble fruits from heaven, from the dew, and from the deep that is below.**

This is that he has a gracious heaven, whereby everything grows abundantly to him, so that heaven, earth, seas and everything is salutary to him.

**V. 14. There are noble fruits of the sun, and noble ripe fruits of the moons.**

That is, the sun and moon are favorable for the fruits of the earth.

**V. 15. And from the high mountains toward the east, and from the hills for and for.**

That is, that both the first and the last mountains, which are in front and behind, all have abundance, although in my opinion this all seems to be figurative, so that you must understand that the kingdom of Israel is in bloom, since the sky is favorable, and the dew, and the deep, the sun, the moon, the ancient mountains, the hills of the world, that is, since God and men give it everything, kings, princes, the great, the rich, the peoples and the common people; namely these different estates he indicates by these different names. For of the fruits of the land he says immediately [v. 16.]: "And noble

Fruits of the earth and what is in it," that is, everything that the earth produces and that animals and men beget.

**V. 16: The grace of him that dwelt in the bush come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the crown of Nasir among his brethren.**

That is, the grace of Christ was upon them, that there might be an abundance of prophets. This also happened, because the kingdom of Israel had many prophets.

**V. 17. His glory is like a firstborn ox.**

That is, it is a handsome realm of power and men.

**And his horns are like unicorns' horns.**

That is, kings and princes and dukes who are exceedingly strong for war.

**With the same he will push the peoples to the house, to the end of the land.**

Namely, of the land of Israel by driving them out.

**V.18. These are the thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh. Zebulun, rejoice in your exodus; but Issachar, rejoice in your tents.**

He uses opposite allusions. For Zebulun has his name from living and staying, and from this he says that he rejoices in his going out. Again Isaschar has his name of the wage, which is increased by the going out, and from this he says that he is glad to remain at home. He wants to say: Blessed are you, Zebulun, if you go out; blessed are you, Issachar, if you do not go out but stay.

**V. 19. They will call the nations to the mountain and there offer sacrifices of righteousness.**

This seems to me to belong to the history of Deborah, where Barak, after an army had been gathered on Mount Thabor, carried off the victory over Sissera [Judges 4:4 ff].

**For they shall suck the multitude of the sea, and the sunk shooters in the sand.**

That is, they will have an abundance of goods supplied by the sea and metals of the land.

**V. 20. And to Gad he said, Blessed be Gad the space maker; he lieth as a lion, and taketh away the arm and the crown.**

This seems to me to have been fulfilled by King Jehu, who made room for the fear of God after the servants of Baal had been destroyed, and like a lion, after two kings had also been bravely slain, broke through, as it were, the arm and the crown [2 Kings, chap. 9 and 10].

**V. 21. And he saw that a head was given to him, a teacher who is hidden.**

I believe that this is said of the good prophets who were safe under Jehu in his kingdom, who were previously cast out among the servants of Baal, so that the singular ["one teacher"] stands for the plural. "One teacher" (portio doctoris) thus stands for many teachers (collectio doctorum).

**Who came with the rulers of the people, and established the righteousness of the LORD, and his judgments upon Israel.**

For he led the rulers and the people away from those idolatries, therefore he was also praised by GOD.

**V. 22. And to Dau he said, Dan a young lion.**

For they fought valiantly against Lais or Lesem [Richt. 18, 27.]

**It will flow from Basan.**

That is, they will be green from the city of Dan to Bashan.

**V.23. And to Naphtali he said, Naphtali shall have enough of what he desires, and shall be full of the blessings of the LORD.**

For the land of his tribe is fertile, as in Galilee.

**Towards evening and noon will be his possession.**

"Noon" namely of the Galilean Sea.

**V. 24. And to Asher he said, Asher be blessed with sons.**

Namely, he had many offspring.

**Let him be pleasant to his brothers.**

That is, he has a lot of favor.

**And dip his foot in oil.**

That is, it will have a lot of oil.

**V. 25. Let iron and brass be on his shoes.**

That is, 1) he has a lot of ore and iron.

**Let your age be like your youth.**

That is, he may excel through powers of the body.

You see that here the tribe of Simeon is left out and not blessed. For what cause, who can know? Because that the Jews pretend that it happened because of the selling of Joseph and because of the fornication with BaalPeor, I do not care about that. Jerome thinks that Judas Iscarioth, who would come from this tribe, deserved this; but let fables remain fables. But it is certain that Simeon did not have his own lot like the other tribes, but he had it in the tribe of Judah [Jos. 19, 1.]. Therefore he must be content with the general blessing that follows.

**V. 26. There is no God but the God of the righteous. He who sits in heaven is your help, and his glory is in the clouds.**

That is, the one who shows his majesty through thunder.

**V. 27. This is the dwelling place of God from the beginning, and down in the world are His arms.**

That is, though he dwells in heaven, yet his arms rule in the world, that he may deliver his own, as follows.

**He will cast out your enemy before you, saying, Be destroyed.**

Namely, by the word alone, he will cast him down.

**V. 28. Israel will surely dwell alone, and the eye of Jacob will be on the land where there is grain and must.**

1) Instead of iäso in the Erlanger is to be read with the Wittenberger and the Jenaer iä "st.

That is, he will feast in a fertile land.

**His sky will be dripping with dew.**

Namely, that he might make the land fertile.

**V. 29. Blessed are you, O Israel, who is like you?  
O people, you will be blessed through the Lord.**

Not by human power, like other peoples.

**Who is the shield of thy help, and the sword of  
thy victory. Thine enemies shall lack; but thou shalt  
tread upon their high places.**

As if to say: With your strength you would not be a match for your enemies, but he is mighty who is your sword.

Now compare the song of Moses with this blessing, and you will see opposite things. Because there he condemns the whole people, here he blesses every single one, but for the sake of the promise, which happened to the fathers. Thus, because of a few good people, the blessing is given to the whole nation, and yet, because of the wicked, the nation is finally destroyed with the kingdom, after the good have been separated from them.

# The Thirty-Fourth Chapter.

**V. 1. And Moses went from the plains of Moab  
unto mount Nebo 2c.**

Moses did not write this chapter, but Joshua or Eleazar, unless you want to say that he described his death in this way, since he knew it beforehand. But that no man was able to find his grave [v. 6], it is rightly said that it was done for this reason, so that the Jews would not make an idol out of it. But it means more that, since the light of the gospel has come, the office of the law is so taken away that the Jews can neither find it nor ever restore it.

But that it is written that Moses, when he died in the hundred and twenty years of his age, was so vigorous that [v. 7.] his eyes did not darken and his appearance (forma faciei) did not decay, this is told as a great miracle, since of the other fathers, as Isaac, Jacob, Eli and others it is written that they had dark eyes because of their old age, and still today those who are somewhat advanced in age decrease in eyes and appearance. Therefore i) it is a wonder that the form of his face was so flourishing that he lacked neither color nor beauty (species), since nature brings it with itself,

1) Instead of ictsM in the outputs, we have adopted iUeo.

that old men become shapeless through wrinkles and pale appearance. But this is even more of a miracle in Moses, since he was overwhelmed with so many hardships, dangers and business in his whole life, that it is to be wondered at that he was not exhausted and out of shape before others, or rather died. Our translation [the Vulgate] has: "and his teeth were not moved," namely, deceived by the similarity of the expression, since freshness (vigor [XX]) and jaws (maxilla [XXX]) are written in Hebrew almost with the same letters.

The perseverance (perseverantia) of the vision and power of Moses, according to the secret interpretation, means that the power of the law does not diminish by any length of time, by any amount of works, but always presses the guilty conscience and keeps it in turmoil until it dies, that is, until it is taken away by Christ, through the institution of the new office of grace. But when Christ arrived, the old law was also near its end, according to the words in the Epistle to the Hebrews [Cap. 8, 13.]: "But that which is old and past age is near its end."

Finally, Moses [vv. 10 ff.] is praised for his greatness, that after him there arose no prophet like him in such great signs, which by him were in

Egypt and in the wilderness, but especially that the Lord knew him face to face, that is, who was so familiar with God and talked. This is not said for all times, but as long as the ministry of Moses lasted. For all who came after him taught Mose's doctrine (Moses), as lesser ones who were under him and taught by him. But at the same time it is certain, what is said in Cap. 18, that after Moses another one should be raised up, the Mosiah.

Christ, to whom this great Moses should give way, since he is far greater in dignity and power, as we have seen there. This also means that nothing greater can be taught and presented, as far as laws are concerned, than the law of Moses. For everything is supreme in it, except that the great law should give way to the greater gospel.

End.

# B. D. Martin Luther's interpretation of some chapters [Cap. 1. 4-9] of the fifth book of Moses. \*)

Preached at Wittenberg in 1529.

## Preface about this book.

(1) We have now read four books of Moses the prophet, in which we have seen how he gave many beautiful laws to the ancient Jewish people, and how he divided them into two kingdoms, spiritual and corporal. After this we have also heard of many beautiful examples of faith and unbelief, obedience and disobedience of the old fathers and patriarchs, what and how it happened to those who transgressed such laws and ordinances; which then should be an example to us, according to which we should also judge ourselves, and follow their faith, and beware of unbelief, lest we also fall into the misfortune into which they came. For all these things are for us to

This is the example we are to follow, so that we do not fall into an ungodly way of life, as St. Paul admonishes the Corinthians [1 Ep. 10:6].

002 Now we would gladly recite unto you the fifth book of Moses also, that ye might have heard the whole of Moses. Now the fifth book of Moses is no other than a long sermon, so that before his death he blessed the people, and fasted everything in brief that had been taught by him before, and all kinds of stories that had happened, so that they might take it with them, described, into the land of Canaan, where they would go, and not forget such sermons and stories, but read them all their lives.

\*) As we can see from the first words of this paper, Luther preached continuously on all five books of Moses. On December 13, 1528, he stood at your 31st chapter of the fourth book of Moses (compare Col. 1362 of this volume), during the months of April and May 1529 Luther's sermons suffered an interruption because of his hoarseness (De Wette, Vol. III, p. X), after his return from the conversation at Marburg, in mid-October 1529, Luther was at the 7th chapter of the fifth book of Moses (cf. in this writing Cap. 6,? 103 and Cap. 7,? 9 ff.), and on the fourth Sunday of Advent, December 19, 1529, he had reached the conclusion of the 9th chapter (Eisleben edition, vol. I, p. 555). After that, the sermons on this book were no longer continued, "because (so Aurifaber says) the Diet of Augsburg followed it in 1530. Only after Luther's death was our writing, which contains the interpretation of Deut. 1-9. (with the exception of Cap. 2 and 3, which Luther passed over because they repeat what was said in the third and fourth book), in 1564 by Aurifaber from postscripts of ltl. Georg Röer, Ll. Anton Lauterbach, superintendent at Pirna, and Philipp Fabricius, former pastor at Ringleben. It is first found in the Eisleben edition, vol. I, p. 484; then in the "Altenburg", vol. IV, p. 707; in the Leidiger, vol. IV, p. 2VS and in the Erlanger, vol. 36, p. 164. We give the text according to the Eisleben edition.

But especially every seven years, at the feast of tabernacles, to read to all the people of Israel, as it is written in the 31st chapter [vv. 10, 11] of this book. For this reason he includes the best of the other books in this one, and at the same time makes an enchiridion or compendium, a short excerpt and summary of the four preceding books, and leaves the rest, so that one might well call Deuteronomy a lengthy sermon, in which he has abundantly deleted or interpreted the ten commandments, and among them especially the first commandment is abundantly traced. For this is the well and the main source of all commandments, laws and arts, and what flows out of this commandment and goes in again is right.

3. therefore, there must be no interpretation of the

ten commandments in the Old Testament, because Moses himself had done this with his own special book. So now we call the fifth book of Moses an extensive explanation of the ten commandments; and because you heard in the first four books a short, bad explanation of the ten commandments, and otherwise you also hear the ten commandments preached many times a year, we now want to take before us this extensive interpretation, so that you can see how far and wide their understanding extends. Let this now be the preface, that we take this book before us as an ample interpretation, especially of the first commandment. We cannot preach anything more useful than about God, whether it is about His laws and commandments, or about His gospel and promises.

# The first chapter.

**V. 1. 2. These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel beyond Jordan, in the wilderness, on the plains, toward the marsh, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth and Disahab, eleven days' journey from Horeb.**

1 Here he indicates the place where Moses preached this sermon, and it is said that this sermon or book was preached beyond the Jordan, because Moses did not cross the Jordan. The Jordan divides the land into two parts: Moses was there in the morning when he struck the two kings, Numbers 21:24, 35, Deut. 2:33, 3:3, and this was the place. First they were at Mount Sinai when they received the law, as it is written in the 20th chapter of the other book of Moses. From that place to Kadeshbarnea is eleven days' journey, or thirty miles, according to our reckoning, for they did not make a long day's journey, because they could not hasten with all their household, their goods and their cattle. Now this is nothing special for the simple, for we are not interested in it, only that one knows where this book was made. Above the eleventh day's journey, they drew four

umpteens years. But you have heard the reason why they wandered so long. They had eleven days to travel from Sinai to the Promised Land, and yet they had to spend forty years on it, because they had disobeyed God, disobeyed and disbelieved, and disobeyed God's words, would not follow God, and disobeyed Moses: Then they were all punished, and their purpose was turned back, so that eleven days became forty years, until all the fighting men died who had come out of Egypt, except Joshua and Caleb, who came into the promised land from the same whole multitude; the others, who had been begotten and brought up in the meantime, had to go astray and remain there in the wilderness.

(3) Now you have heard what this example means. Moses always points to it as a great example, that he had to deal with it for forty years, which could have been done in eleven days, as if he wanted to say: This should not be thrown to the wind and forgotten, but should always be kept in fresh memory, sung about and said, so that everyone may take offense at it and be pious. For it is a

terrible example against all who disobey God and murmur against Him, so that they may beware, lest they also be punished as the Israelites were punished.

**V.3 And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the first day of the eleventh month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel.**

4 These words indicate at what time Moses wrote this book, namely after forty years, when they came out of Egypt, not more than two months before Moses died; so that the book is like Moses' testament. These are his last words and sermons, so that he blesses the people and repropose God's law and commandment to them, which he has recently compiled here, and as if he had wound it onto a small book 1) or put it into a booklet; item, repeats and reproaches God's good deeds, which he proved to them, since he had saved and led them out of Egypt as a merciful father. He also tells them about all kinds of promises that will happen to those who keep God's commandments; in addition, he gives a serious warning about how God will punish the transgressors of his commandments. Especially in the 18th chapter [v. 15] he preaches about Christ, whom he portrays as a teacher and preacher, whom all the world should hear 2c.

**(vv. 5-8) On the other side of Jordan, in the land of Moab, Most began to interpret this law, saying, "The LORD our God spoke to us in Mount Horeb, saying: Ye have been long enough in this mountain, turn ye, and go, that ye may come unto the mountain of the Amorites, and unto all their neighbors in the plain, upon the mountains, and in the valleys, toward the south, and toward the fords of the sea, in the land of Canaan, and unto mount Lebanon, unto the great waters. 2c.**

(5) You see that this book is an interpretation of the Law and a narration of the previous history. Moses begins to gloss over the laws he had given, saying, "The LORD our God spoke to us at Mount Horeb (that is, Sinai) and said: You have now been long enough at this mountain."

This is the beginning of this sermon, as if to say: "Dear children, you know that we were at Mount Sinai and received the Law, and God commanded us to go straight to the land of Canaan, which He had promised to our fathers, and according to the command we should soon have entered the Promised Land. Moses does not indicate this in vain, but to remind them of what had delayed and prevented them from entering for so long, namely their own wickedness and guilt, that they had disobeyed God; otherwise they would have entered long ago. It has been a long time, but now it will be over; therefore I will tell you how far and wide is the land where you are to dwell. How he describes the land herewith.

7 Lebanon is a great mountain, greater than the Thuringian Forest. So far shall your land be, unto Phrat, unto Lebanon, and unto the ford of the sea. This was the first command. But they became transgressors, and sent in spies to see the land; and they frightened them, that they would not go away, saying, Who shall enter there? There dwell giants within, which have strong and strong cities; we saw giants within, against whom we are as grasshoppers to be looked upon; therefore we will not enter. [So they failed to keep the promise to themselves, so that they had to stay outside for forty years. This sin touches Moses here, and punishes the unbelief and distrust of the children of Israel.

**V. 9-12. Then I said to you at that time: I cannot bear you alone, for the LORD your God hath multiplied you, that ye are this day as the multitude of the stars of heaven. The LORD your God, the God of your fathers, make you many thousands more, and bless you as he has spoken to you. How can I alone bear such trouble, burden and strife from you?**

(8) We have seen how Moses begins a long narrative of the great sins for which they had to stay so long in the wilderness and wander about; and he sets forth the cause in many words, why they could not take the promised land, namely, because God had commanded them to go into the land, and they had not wanted to.

1) Kleuel--Kleuel.

After that he sets this text. We must look at it, because it is his teaching for the worldly authorities. So he says, "Before we went out, I had the people in a regiment. He does not speak of the spiritual regiment or of the priesthood, of which it is written in the fourth book, but of the temporal authority, that he took heads from the tribes, and set them over a thousand, over a hundred, over fifty, and over ten. And there also the old little words come from, dean, who set over ten to rule; as we also say: four-man, three-man, two-man, there ten-man, 1) hundred-man, thousand-man and fifty-man 2c.

10 Thus he ordered the people, which is a very fine order. Matth. 2, 6. is also taken from this text: "And you Bethlehem are by no means the least among the princes of Judah"; since Micheas speaks Cap. 5, 1.: Among the thousands of Judah, that is, among as many as may rule a thousand men 2). These words of the prophet are also drawn from this. So far 3) has this order gone down to a thousand; then out of every tribe a prince ruled over the thousand men; and over all the princes at last was Moses. It was a fine order beyond measure.

The first is a dean, that is, ten men carry it to one; for one man can well see ten; then the hundred 4) over a hundred. It is from the measure a beautiful way to govern, lovely and fine order. The government was not so difficult then as it is now, since everything is mixed and blended together. There is no such order in the world now, nor will there be again. It was not in the monasteries. If the fifty men could not settle something, the matter was brought before the hundred 5) men. Now one prince alone shall settle it all. This shows the text here, since Moses speaks: "I can you

1) In the editions: "ten men, a hundred men, a thousand men, and fifty men"; but we suppose from the context that ciseurio, ste. is meant. Compare the following paragraphs.

2) Erlanger: A Thousand Men.

3) In the original: has.

4) "Hundreds" here stands for: Hundredman.

5) In the original: "mach" instead of: Men.

not bear alone." Necessity drove him to it, and his brother-in-law Jethro instructed him, Ex. 18, 19. ff., that he said, "How can I alone bear such toil, burden and strife from you?"

(12) Take now the text, and let us take it to heart, and let us keep it against all proud and hopeful heads, which would gladly reign; for I would that God would give them enough to reign. It is a great thing for such a one who likes to rule, for he thinks: Moses is a prince, sitting on top; so also: A prince has a fine, splendid castle, wears precious stones, golden chains, velvet; and opens his mouth, holds such against his poverty, little house or thatched roof, and thinks that a prince has it much better than he. So a fool looks at the regiment.

013 But hear how Moses looks, who says here: "I cannot bear you alone; how can I alone bear such toil and burden and strife from you?" As if he should say, "The devil is a ruler!" There is nothing more than toil and labor in it. The more force, the more worry and sorrow. Now I am talking about the regiment itself. Moses says that it is toil and trouble and strife, and that he has nothing to gain from it, because he must be driven and plagued by everyone if he wants to get rid of them in any other way. But if a ruler sees through his fingers and lets evil and vice go unpunished, he is held dear. Therefore, they are great fools who only look at the great splendor and honor, beautiful clothes and golden chains of princes and lords.

014 And if they should consider what is written in the chains of care, and labor, and danger, and toil, they would say, And if they had vain gold, let us take our little hut or our little thatch for it, and let him keep his great castle, saying, God keep me from thy chains of gold and thy pearls. For they are so placed in authority that the tickle passes them by. For whoever wants to be a pious prince, if the world would give him as many gifts, his work is not paid for; a greater reward is due to him.

6) In the original: large.



to it. It is a big thing to govern, and no wise man desires it. Much a bigger thing is it about the spiritual regiment or about the pastoral care.

(15) The peasants do not regard this as such, but as said above [12], they close their eyes to the burden and toil that secular and ecclesiastical rulers have to endure, thinking badly that ruling is nothing else than carrying tame pigeons; but they do not see the burden and displeasure of the people and the devil, whom one must have as an enemy; item, God's judgments, which they must fear. That is why the peasants in the riot said, "We also want to carry marten pigeons and gold chains, and eat partridges. But it is finely made equal on earth. Tell me, how can one have and lead a better, calmer 1) and more peaceful life than that of a citizen or farmer?

16 Our Elector, Duke Frederick, who had also experienced the life of all classes, used to say shortly before his death that the bourgeois life or the peasant life was the best life, because kings and princes had only splendor and appearance, but the subjects had gold. How so? The burghers and peasants sit safely at home, behind the stove, with their fields, house and farm; theirs is well preserved in good peace. What do you think is a small treasure, to have a florin in one's pocket, item, to wear a gray skirt, or a sweaty shirt, or to live in a straw house with peace? It is much better than the prince's treasure, and his collected treasures or golden chains.

17 Duke John, Elector, no prince has a florin in his custody with peace; if there is a war in other countries, he must ensure that such a war does not also come to his principality. What good are his golden cups if he cannot use or enjoy them? You must not do that at all, but live as if you were lord of the land, and Duke John must be your servant and protect you, so that you may have peace and good quarters, and eat your bread in peace. Yes, he must (to speak with vacation) still

1) In the original: rügllicher.

wipe each one's butt. No one sees or recognizes this, but only one sees: "Oh, I have a house covered with straw, I have to wear a linen smock, I have to lie on hay, and yet I do not see that you are lying behind the stove, I am safe, and I have my quiet life in peace, which no prince has.

(18) Then you should consider that your gray skirt is more beautiful than his marten skirts and other such beautiful garments; so you can sit quietly and not let anyone trample you underfoot and oppress you. Here some other prince writes a useless letter to the Elector; there a courtier gives him a sting; there he may not otherwise eat a good morsel with peace. He has much care, yes, much more care and worry in his marten hood than you have gray threads in your skirt. You are at peace with your wife and children, and drink your coffee more safely than he drinks his malmsey: if you are not at peace, it is your own fault.

Therefore God also commanded that one should honor the authorities, princes and rulers, and pray for them, as St. Paul 1 Tim. 2, 1. 2. says: "I therefore exhort you that first of all one should make supplication, prayer, intercession and thanksgiving for all men, for kings and for all authorities, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty" 2c. And Jeremiah the prophet exhorts the Jews of Babylon in prison 2) to pray diligently for the king of Babylon; for if it were well with him, the Jews also would have it well, Jer. 29:7. Therefore do not murmur against them, reviling and blaspheming them; for we have more goods than they, though it seems not. For we have more peace in our poverty than they have in their riches. And choose here, whether thou wouldst not rather have one florin with peace, than a hundred with strife.

20. item, tell me if you would not rather have a cow, and eat a bowl full of milk behind the stove, or roast pears with

2) In the original: "the" instead of: "in which", which we have taken over from the old edition.

than nine and ninety cows that are not yours, and you would have to be in the same half of them all the time? Will you not say: I let them have a good year, I will rather enjoy with peace, which gives me a cow. In the prince's hood there are many a worry, many a hair on it, for he must have every evil thing wiped on it. He must fear that he does not have the prince as an enemy, or that he does not enrage him in any way; on the other hand, your gray skirt is a piece of gold for the sake of peace and tranquility. The three pieces are better than gold and all treasures. Therefore write about your house: The house of peace, in silence.

I am very angry with the peasants who want to rule themselves, and who do not recognize their wealth, that they sit in peace through the help and protection of the princes. You faint-hearted peasants and donkeys, will you not hear it? That thunder may smite you! You have the best, namely benefit, custom, juice from the grape, and leave the husks and grains to the princes. You have the marrow, and still you should be so ungrateful, and not pray for the princes, and only want to give them nothing? But those who are sensible peasants and citizens are fine people. I heard a farmer say that if he had two cows, he would give one so that he could keep and use the other in peace.

(22) For when there is war, you gladly give ten florins to a lord for peace; but now you grumble when you are to give a penny for interest and bullets. Therefore God will punish you for such ingratitude. Now the peasants in the marketplace rule and do as they please, not content that God lets them sit in peace and quiet. But once a misfortune comes upon you, it will teach you what peace is. Remember this. Now just confidently collect on the register. Old guilt does not rust. Remember this well.

23. the less one would be, the more cheerful he should be, because he has the best, he has the marrow and the juice of the goods, the for-

sten have only the sleeves. It is the same with a servant, maid, or other servant. The head of the household is always in a more dangerous and troublesome position than the servants, for he must be *famulus communi*. The master must be his own servant, if he wants to find justice in the house; the wife must be her own maid, if she wants to create counsel in the house. They must bear the care, and so on. The higher a man is, the greater his unwillingness. Moses saw this and said, "I cannot bear all this toil, burden and strife from you.

024 Moses ought not to speak thus, but to say, I am glad that I go forth, and that I wear chains of gold. But he says, "It is a toil, a burden and a trouble, and he complains greatly about it. Who has ever heard that such titles should be given to a regiment or kingdom? Who has made the book that one should put himself into all things and deal with them? Therefore it is a great and dangerous thing about authority, and God has commanded that one should serve the lords with all diligence, and be obedient and submissive to all authority or authority; as St. Paul says, Rom. 13, 1. 2. 4. For the authority that is everywhere is ordained by God," so that "he who opposes authority opposes God's order, for it is God's servant, an avenger of punishment on him who does evil. Item, St. Peter also gives the same in his epistle, that one should be obedient to all authorities, even the unrighteous and evil ones, 1 Petr. 2, 13. 18.

Load.

25 This "burden" has not pressed the pope. "Trouble" in the regiment is that one has a lot to do in a large community or group; there one has beaten another, one has violated his wife 2c. Above this is also "burden," that one must take upon himself all the care, labor, toil and hardship of the regiment, that the subjects may have judgment and justice, protection and protection. This does not come easily to the regents, nor is it sweet; they do not sit there on a collective cushion or pillow; they do not walk on roses, but must leave many a sweat over it.

1) Here the postscripts seem to be deficient. "The three pieces" are probably (816) "a guilder in a bag, a gray skirt, a straw house" with peace.

26 Meanwhile you turn behind the stove, and turn the devil a rotten meat; you do not think of the care of your authorities; you live as if you were a squire; you go to your field and to your garden; but Moses and other authorities must take care, and advise how to protect you and become your servant. Otherwise you should have ten guards to watch over you and your house, and keep your sheep, and yet you should not keep any of them; indeed, you should give a hundred guilders for a good escort over the land. But the prince must provide for all this. Behold, thus "toil" and "burden" are with one another; not only is there toil in ordering the things, but there is also burden in carrying them out.

27 Thirdly, there are the troublemakers. These are vain dragons; there is no pleasure among them, but heartache and hell. All rulers and pious fathers of the house feel this well, what a great thing it is to serve or govern others. I would give you an example, and explain to you what the three things, "burden," "trouble," and "strife," mean; then you would see into a prince as into hell, as Moses also does here.

(28) This is why I have acted and interpreted it, so that I may draw you away from the unpleasant ingratitude toward the rulers and overlords, and that you may not only see the benefit and the good in them, but also consider the danger of ruling. Turn the page and look at the good you have and the misfortune a ruler has, then you will lift up your hands and thank God for it, and gladly be satisfied with your happiness and status, and pay no attention to the slate roof against your straw house. Great saints we are, who become impatient over a small boil or swelling in our body, and do not think that our whole body, on the other hand, is strong and healthy. Yes, it should be ordered to you, God will make it according to your will.

29. God has made it so that each class shall bear its own adversity; and not the unpleasantness, but also the good, shall be borne.

1) Rotten -- lazy. (Dietz.)

in our ranks. And notice this: The lower an office or rank is, the better and better is the same rank. That is why Sophocles the pagan says: "If all the people's misfortunes were gathered together in one heap, so that the judge came and distributed them at the same time, each one would say: Give me back my misfortune; I would rather bear my own than have it distributed at once. It is divided equally enough; the only thing that is lacking is that it be recognized on the right. But because [it] does not happen, the holy scripture tells us that even if the authorities, princes and lords would give their necks and bellies for the subjects, the unreasonable, ungrateful ass, the common man, would soon forget it. So they do: The peasant looks at the small things, that he must give interest 2c., and does not consider the great peace, so he has, and the heavy burden and trouble, so the authorities carry for his interest and bullet. The rebellious peasants wanted to make it so that no peasant should have no trouble; but if the trouble had gone out of one place, it would have been caused again in a thousand places.

(30) Thus Moses lamented that he alone could not bear the burden and trouble of governing the people. From this we learn what a great, difficult and dangerous office it is when one man is to govern another, whether in the spiritual or in the temporal government, that it is the prince's, father's and mother's office, or mine, the preacher's office, in whatever office it may be. Therefore, God also wants to honor the authorities and not to insult or revile them, but to be obedient and subject to them.

**V. 13. Create wise, knowledgeable, experienced men among your tribes, and I will set them over you as heads.**

(31) These are all the prefaces to the interpretation of the Ten Commandments, as we will hear in the third and fourth chapters, which divide the people into two kingdoms. Now,

2) In the original and in the Erlanger: "not" instead of "right": ,right".  
"3) Here "man" is of the neuter gender; in the Erlanger incorrectly: "the other".

there is the text: "Pray to me wise, understanding and experienced men" 2c. Where do you take them? Where will they be found, as he requires people for the regiment here? He sets three pieces that belong to the regent. Such regents and chiefs shall be among them.

32 This text is a pattern and rule for all those who are to be appointed to offices. But where men are born to office, and the government is inherited, as it is with princes and lords, and as father and mother leave to their children a household and a government, care must be taken that they are brought up rightly and well; there is the greatest art in this, that a young ruler may be well brought up. In this place, however, he speaks of those who are chosen and elected to be princes, heads, and thus henceforth rulers. They are to be wise, understanding and experienced people. And afterwards [v. 17] he will set a rule for them, that they judge without respect of person, and that they judge rightly. Cause, for the judgment is God's, 2 Chron. 19, 6. 7.

33 Therefore, the first thing that belongs to a minister is that he be "wise," that is, God-fearing, godly. For the 111th Psalm, v. 10, says: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And after that, that he also knows what concerns his office, and has the rights and laws that belong to it, so that he does not have to learn it first, and does not preside over his office, so that he sits there as a stick or block. For fools should not be set over eggs, they break them. That is why wise and prudent people belong to the princely and governmental state. That is decided right away, who shall rule the world. Force and power will not do it, but wisdom.

No empire has ever existed by force, but it must protect itself with wisdom. If the Roman empire is ruled by force, it will be like the wild forest among the unreasonable animals, where one animal eats another; the fox eats the hare, the wolf eats the fox, and the wolf is torn to pieces by the bear. In the same way it would happen with violent government among men. For he who would be stronger would rise up with his power.

The prince is a single person, and has a great, great crowd, in which there is greater power than in the prince, his kingdom or regiment. The prince is a single person, and he has a great, great multitude, with whom there is greater power than with the prince, his kingdom, or regiment. Therefore the regiment should not be where the greatest power is, as the rebellious peasants thought. So Moses says here: "Provide me with people who are wise, understanding and experienced; not those who have strong fists, not those who are in a mob and want to wield the sword alone, but wise people who rule according to the laws and order that are presented to them.

35 In the same way, Antonius Teucher, Lord of Nuremberg, Emperor Maximilian's high noble memory, answered when he had ridden in there once and a large world of people had rushed to see the Emperor's entry, and the Emperor had asked later: How could this large people be kept in obedience? Then Antonius Teucher, as a wise man, said: Most gracious emperor, by good words and severe punishment. And he spoke wisely, for one must govern with words, with laws and wisdom. Therefore also in the spiritual regime Christ rules through the word, as it is said in the 110th Psalm, v. 2: "The scepter of your kingdom will go out from Sion", that is, the gospel is to be planted and preached from Sion into the world. So the word must also be used in the worldly regime, for there everything proceeds better through wisdom than through force; wisdom is empress in the regime, so that she knows her rights and laws, and judges and passes judgment according to them.

(36) Then they shall also be "prudent," which in Hebrew is Nabon, that is, a diligent man who takes heed that it go according to his wisdom. For so it is in the government, that a man may be hurried by his affections, as, with wrath, envy, jealousy, favor, and go after his own head; and when the blood so rages, it often happens, that one of the laws and rights

Forgets, rules according to his head, and then says he judges according to the laws, as angry, grim and vengeful judges do, with whom flesh and blood float above. In our spiritual regime, we also feel it finely, since the sects and the spirits of the mobs also preach just as we do; but they preach according to their heads and affects, and yet hide and conceal their affects with some sayings of the holy scriptures. To this then belongs a mind that does not let wisdom be taken from it by hope, envy, favor, and the like, but abides by wisdom, and by the same right judges it.

(37) I distinguish wisdom from understanding thus: Wisdom is a common knowledge of what is right, how one should govern. Prudence, however, or understanding, is its own guardian of wisdom, so that one does not allow oneself to be taken in by affectations, by which one is often deceived. For if a wise ruler is also careful about this, and pays close attention to the affairs, so many pleas, cases, complaints, petitions 2c. are not so careful, and a word never enters a magistrate's ear, if he does not pay the most diligent attention to it, and with his wisdom looks keenly on it. Because everyone who comes before the judge adorns his case as best he can, and each party wants to be right, and so can easily deceive the judge. Therefore it is decreed that a ruler should diligently interrogate the parties, as it is said in the proverb: One man's speech is half a speech. For this reason, they should both be interrogated, because each party would like to capture the judge and bring him over to his side.

38 For this reason, a wise man must have a good mind, so that he can protect himself through prudence. I have often encountered this, and it certainly also happens to those who are ordered to interrogate cases, that the parties deceive the judge. We are most lacking in prudence, wit and sharpness, lest one let his wisdom be turned into foolishness by his own enemies and evil mouths. That is why it is finely written in the Old Testament: One man's word alone shall not be heard. And a man has but one mouth and two ears, that a ruler may hear with one ear the plaintiff, and with the other the defendant; as the mighty king Alexander Magnus heard with one ear the plaintiff, and with the other the defendant.

The court has always listened to the plaintiff, and the other ear has been closed to hear the defendant's excuses and responsibilities.

39 For the world is so desperately wicked and evil. If a man has a cause, he usually comes to the judge with both ears covered, and justifies himself and his cause; but if the opposite comes, it is much different. But it happens much more when a man deceives himself by his wisdom. Therefore it is necessary for him to be prudent, and not to be sure in his wisdom; no one believes and relies too much on his wisdom, but examine all circumstances. Now prudence is a valiant wisdom that looks on the redoubt.

**Who are known among your tribes.**

40 "Known people" are those who have a good reputation in the city, and are fine respectable people, of a good walk; for he does not want to have bad boys. And this point is as good as the previous two. It would be good for such a rule to be in the whole world, so that no one would suffer in the kingdom, nor be accepted into the same 1) community, unless he had a good testimony. For that is where all the trouble comes from, that this rule is not followed; that, especially under the papacy, all strangers and unknown persons are admitted into the cities as mayors and councilors. No one has thought of the word that Moses uses here, "to be known. No one should suffer in a city if he were known in the city and had a good report from his neighbors; and if he already had all that, it may still be God's and his grace that it will turn out well.

One must not seek misfortune and choose an unknown person as a ruler; one should take the smartest and best-known for this purpose; it should nevertheless become as God wills, and may nevertheless be happy. One should not paint the devil on the wall or ask him to be one's godfather, he comes from himself. Governing is such an office that concerns God; therefore, a ruler should be known and have a good testimony. For the devil is the father of lies [Jn 8:44], and where he can call a ruler, he can call a man a ruler.

Il any - some, any.

If he is the smartest, he will only do it gladly. Let every man who is in the regiment reach into his bosom and feel whether he has not often been made a fool of.

42. he shall have a good testimony, that men may testify of him that he is a wise and prudent man, 1 Tim. 3:7. but thou mayest say, where are such now? Where do you take them? Moses and the prophets are now dead, Peter and Paul also dead. What has happened to those whom Moses himself chose to govern? Are they not all hanged on the gallows afterward, Numbers 25:5, who were wise men, men of understanding and acquaintances? Therefore I say that ruling and being in authority is a difficult thing, and I would like one who likes to rule to have enough of ruling. With fear and trembling one should attack ruling. God wants those who are prudent, wise and learned. But where will they be taken from? Do they have to be so wise, intelligent and knowledgeable? They will not be found who are so completely righteous.

(43) Ambitious people make themselves believe that they have great experience and that they are the wisest of all, but they bankrupt others, disgrace and blaspheme them, and want to do everything and master everyone. We do not want to go there yet. God protect us from preachers who please everyone and who have a good report from everyone. If all people thought I was a good preacher, I would never want to be a preacher. The reason is that those who are the smartest can beat the others and reform them. But if you look at them rightly, there is not a grain of wisdom in them; yet they bear witness to great wisdom.

(44) In a city there must also be such people who judge and master all the others, and yet they themselves are the most foolish, or real fools in their skin. Whoever wants to be a preacher must have judges who have nothing else to do but to judge us and to know what to say; but if they should try it for half an hour, they would be like the piper who spoiled the dance. So there were not many of them who thought anything of Moses, but they grumbled against him, thinking him a madman, and sat down to judge him.

against him at all times, even to stone and slay him and Aaron, Numbers sixteenth chapter, vv. 1. 2.

(45) Therefore, choose for offices in a city people who are pious, skilled, experienced, honorable, married, who raise their children honestly, and who are also peace-loving. Whether they are not as prudent and wise as Solomon and Moses, there is no power in it. It is enough that they have a prominent reputation among sensible people. For others, who want to be wise, are glorious, proud donkeys; and when it comes to choosing a ruler, take the one whom you consider pious, and let the donkey go. You will not find the likes of Solomon, David, Moses and Aaron, but if you have a pious, honest man, whether in the village or in the city, take that same honest, sensible man, who has lived his life well, and put him in charge; God will prosper and bless his government. If such men are not wiser than Solomon, they do not have Venice to govern. What they lack and are lacking, then, let them command our Lord God; and if there are others among them who have no pleasure in it, let them go.

(46) Choose wise men to rule in your village or town. You will soon see which is a pious citizen; you can sense it from his outward appearance, just as a schoolmaster can soon recognize and distinguish a discipuli ingenium. I will soon see what a preacher is up to. The play is set for this reason, so that God will have prevented people from choosing rulers according to wealth, money, goods, friendship, favor or force. If we do not choose according to this rule in spiritual and secular government, God will not give grace to rule.

But so the world does not gravel and choose now. Let God say that he is a heretic, unwise, adulterer, or whatever else he wants 2c., but if he otherwise has great friendship, favor, wealth, he will get through. Where is wisdom then? Oh, no one asks. It is right. In the papacy, no one paid attention to whether a bishop was learned, but only whether he had great wisdom.

Let him be noble, powerful, and of noble lineage. If now in the worldly kingdom wise people are to be chosen for the government, how much more should one not choose in the spiritual kingdom according to nobility, good, friendship, favor and the like! One should primarily see whether he is a God-fearing, reasonable, sincere and honest man. For even a craftsman would rather accept a journeyman who is honest in his trade than one who is rich, the child of great men, and yet a knave 2c. Such a ruler is to be honored and promoted, who is wise, understanding and well-known, even if he is poor; not for the sake of favor. Well, that is this piece.

**V. 16. 17. And commanded your judges at the same time [saying:] Interrogate your brethren, and judge rightly between every man, and his brother, and the stranger. Ye shall not regard persons in judgment, but ye shall hear the small as well as the great, and shun no man's person: for the office of judgment is the LORD's.**

The Lord Christ has the inherent grace not to be afraid of anyone or to pretend. He has come to this, as the servants of the Pharisees confessed, Matth. 22, 16, that he was a teacher who came from God and taught the way of God rightly, and did not inquire of anyone, nor did he pay attention to the appearance of people. We humans, however, all have the defect of judging according to the reputation of persons, or of judging according to favor and fear. Therefore, God commands the rulers here not to look at any person, great or small, and not to be afraid of anyone. These are choice, exquisite words, a golden text; [for] this reason, not a rich or powerful man, but a wise and understanding man belongs to the regiment.

49 So the pagans also said, when, the wise man Bias: When one comes into the regiment, there one sees what kind of man he is. Magistratus ostendit virum. One does not find out what a man is like until he enters the regiment. Before that he is

1) "und sprach" is missing in the Eisleben and Erlangen editions.

wise and prudent, yea, wiser than a hundred Solomon, in his mind; yea, he hath in one finger thirty Solomon sitting, knoweth and can govern a whole city; but when he is called, he is neither fit to boil nor to fry, in one thing he cannot find a hair's breadth that would be honest and serviceable.

(50) This text is necessary for a ruler to prepare himself and walk along the road, not looking in fear or love or at anyone's person, but walking straight through, putting all circumstances out of sight, putting fear and love aside, and thinking as if no man lived on earth who could harm or serve you. As the matter is, so judge. But there must be a man's heart that stands firm and stiff, just as a stone cliff or rock in the sea stands immovable, where all the bulges, waves and water waves strike and squeeze against the rock. Otherwise, if one lies in hatred, he soon bends justice; and if one judges by love, he lets another enjoy favor and friendship 2c. And there the right must win a waxen nose, there one then also takes a handful of favor, and leaves one a sackful of art or right. So now a man belongs to it, who can stand in the middle, and can let creep there favor, hatred, clamor, harm, and sit free 2) and not respect any of them. But there must be a man's heart. That is why it is necessary for him to have helpers who sit with him in the government and also keep faithfully.

51 But who will help? Moses says: "The office of judgment is the Lord's"; and in the 32nd chapter, v. 35, God also says: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay. This shall be your comfort. In every council house this text should be written, that the Lord says: "I take care of it; the office that one holds is God's office, and those who sit in office sit in God's place, and their judgment is even as that which God Himself judges from heaven; as St. Paul also says to Romans Cap. 13, 2: "All authority is from God, and whoever resists it resists God Himself." And Daniel speaks Cap. 2, 21. , 4, 22.:

2) In Walch's old edition and in the Erlanger: Schaden und Freisitzen, and 2c.

God orders and changes the regiments, and gives them to whom He wills. And where there is no comfort, what should one do? That is the wall, the rampart and the defense, which holds the regiment, whether spiritual or physical; otherwise it would be against the devil and the world, who storm and rage against it, unruly. How could a mayor stand against so many people's hatred and anger without this word? Therefore they do not hold the reign, but the text that is written here: "The office of judge is the Lord's." God is the foundation of all courts and authorities.

This text should be dearer to me than four thousand satellites, for it is first of all a wall and defense of the regiments; a regiment should also groan and rely on it. The devil may oppose it, as has often happened, and would like to throw it all over, but it will return to its former state. This sentence, that the judgment is of the Lord, has protected kings, emperors, princes and lords until now, otherwise they would all have been slain long ago. This should now frighten the subjects and urge them 1) to be heartily obedient to their overlords and to remember: If you disobey them, you interfere with God and sin, not against the mayor or your ordinary authorities, but against God. Therefore the pagans have called disobedience against the authorities *crimen laesae majestatis*, that [it] is a sin against 2) the majesty, and have not unjustly pretended it, and have also snatched away the heads of the rebels and wanton boys who have set themselves against the authorities.

(53) Secondly, the text is also set for the comfort of princes and all pious authorities, that they may know where their comfort is. If I were a prince, I would rather have this text than four hundred thousand soldiers in armor, which we must have, but we should trust and rely on this text, because God has taken the reins and said, "It is his. And if anyone hears this, he should drop his hands and feet.

and do no wrong in the reign. Therefore the princes have no other protection than the Lord, otherwise they must perish; when through the peasants' rebellion the devil intended to overthrow and kill them from their offices.

(54) Therefore let him who is a ruler know that his office is the office of God. Therefore let every man rule in such a way that he looks at no one, and does not judge out of love or hatred, fearing no one, being afraid of no one, but saying, "He who commanded me to rule is greater than all men. Ye are indeed kings, mighty, rich 2c. but there is another that saith, "The judgment is mine." He will be strong enough for me. All authority comfort, defiance, terror and admonition is in this text. It is short, but it reaches out and reaches far. And whoever is to rule or wants to rule in the world, may well rejoice in this text, which tells him that he leads a divine state, office and profession, is God's servant, and performs divine works. In sum, not one alone, but all rulers everywhere are in a blessed state. This is the text which Moses spoke of the authorities, and which precedes the interpretation of the Ten Commandments, that he might have fasted the people in spiritual and bodily government, that they might have good rulers and overlords before all things, and afterward be more skillful to hear the Ten Commandments.

55 Thus far we have heard from his own words what kind of man Moses is, how he begins this book, in which he will explain the Ten Commandments, and before this, how he considers the need of both regiments; namely, that first, before he gives the Ten Commandments, he appoints the persons, princes, mayors, councillors or judges, who are to receive justice, and gives them this rule, that they should be wise, prudent [people] and known among the people. And when they take up the office afterwards, that they close their eyes, and do not look at any person, be he equally mighty, rich, of great standing, 2c., and go through with the judgment straightway; as he also shall not judge anyone to love, sorrow, friendship or disadvantage, but know that rights and judgments are not his, but commanded him by God, for it is said: "The office of judgment is the Lord's."

56. so he has taught and taught how to

1) Erlanger: stopped.  
2) Erlanger: in.



The leaders who are to act and administer such laws and order must be skilled. For this must also be in the regiment, that the persons or heads be so composed, that is, wise, prudent and known; after that, that they also have good laws and rights. Neither of these can be lacking in a regiment, and where one is lacking, it does not go right. If I have pious judges and wise lords, and on the other hand unjust laws and ordinances, it is no good at all; and again, where there are good laws, and there is no one to enforce them and keep them, that there is a lack of judges and diligent authorities, there again it is lost.

57 Because Moses is sure of the first thing, that he has given the best laws, he is most anxious that he should appoint men who would be diligent to keep the laws; therefore he appoints rulers before he repeats and interprets the laws. And it is a fine, fine order that one should seek first of all for people and good persons to do it. For what does it help that a house is finely arranged, and a brewer comes in after it and says, "Oh, it is an old house? If it does not have a householder to keep it structurally sound, it will soon fall apart; but a good householder can fix it up in a year and rebuild it.

So it is up to people, also in the secular regime, who do it. It must be the law, and then also the *executio juris*. And that is the complaint of the whole world, that there are not enough skilled people for the regiments. In this life there will never be a lack of money, good things, cities, laws, but of people who will enforce the laws. The same will happen in the spiritual office. What is the use of having the gospel and all the books full, if one does not have Christian, good, learned and proven preachers beside them? There must truly be a bishop who is well taught, and who therefore also diligently stands and holds above the correct doctrine, because it does not remain unchallenged.

(59) Therefore, it depends on having good laws, and then pious rulers who enforce them; then a city and good police will be formed. Where there are no wise people, laws do not work. For one must first

After you have the man, you must put the sword at his side. You must first have the head of the house before you set up the house. Moses also appointed wise judges and leaders for the people before he 1) gave them the law.

**V. 20. 21. Then I said to you: You have come to the mountain of the Amorites, which the LORD our GOD will give us. Behold, the land before thee, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, go up, and possess it, as the LORD thy fathers' God hath spoken unto thee. Fear not, neither be dismayed.**

(60) When the children of Israel came to the borders of the land of Carwan, Moses showed them the land and told them to take it. Remind them also of God's word, or of the divine promise they had of the land, by which their faith should have been strengthened, so that they would have taken the land the more confidently. But the children of Israel fall into sorrowful unbelief, forsaking God's promise and His previous help and benefits. The devil snatches the word and promise of God from their hearts, so that they do not want to believe, but rather feel and see; for this reason he sends spies into the land, who inquire about the way and investigate the land and the people's opportunities. When they returned and made them afraid, they did not want to leave, but were afraid that they would be too weak for the Gentiles, and they angered God so that they had to go back and wander in the desert for eight and thirty years and perish there.

61 This damage was done by unbelief, because human reason and wisdom do not want to be guided and led by God's word, but go on their bridle, want to know and do everything better than God; want to calculate everything, whether it is possible or impossible; are then in the midst of fear, and yet do not hit it, but bridle the horse in the wrong place. For reason, human wisdom and advice, or trust in human powers must be lacking, if they want to take hold of God's regiment.

1) Erlanger: because ehe.

the punishments as in this place. The children of Israel do not have to be brought to the Promised Land this time. They fall into God's wrath and disgrace, who withdraws his promise; they become water, as it is said in the 95th Psalm, v. 11: He swore to them in his wrath that they should not come into his rest, soon after they fall into despair and blasphemy, that they say [v. 27]: "The Lord is angry with us" 2c., know nothing more of the miraculous deeds of God, shown to them before. Moses must also repay such unbelief of the Israelites and not enter the promised land, because he, as the commander and captain of this people, also fell into unbelief at the Haderwasser, because of their, the Israelites, grumbling, manifold temptation of God, impatience and unbelief.

62. And lastly, God is also after the Israelites with corporal punishment. Because there

When the children of Israel recognized their sin of unbelief, repented and lamented it, and were heartily sorry for it, they took up their weapons and arms, and now wanted to attack and strike the enemies, the Amorites, against God's commandment, out of unseasonable boldness, they were chased by the Amorites and shamefully beaten. This was the reward and drink of unbelief, which we may be told as a warning to beware of unbelief, and to believe and follow God's word. For faith and godliness by God's power turns all adversity, as Moses says here: "Do not be afraid, do not be dismayed. But again, unbelief leads to all misfortune.

The other and third chapters of this fifth book of Moses are to be left as they are only repetitions of what has been said in the two preceding books.

## The fourth chapter.

**V. 1. 2. And now, O Israel, hear the commandments and the statutes which I teach you, that ye do them, that ye may live, and come in, and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not do any thing that I command you, neither shall ye do any thing that I command you, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you.**

In the fourth chapter of this book, Moses gives a beautiful, glorious preface to the Ten Commandments. As if I said to you, I will make a preface or give a rule that will serve as an admonition to you. Moses also says here, "Take care that you do not add to it or take from it. Moses has such a care, and it is well worth the care. For it is certain that when it comes to God's word or worldly law, even the best of ordinances, it is not kept by all means. Soon people come over it, who outsmart and master it. Therefore these words would be worthy to be written with golden letters on all walls. For

Moses wants to say: I would like to teach you something good, but you will not stay with it; see that you do not let yourselves be turned away from it.

2. the devil is our Lord God's monkey; he always has his logging roads and footpaths beside the paved way and the highway of the divine word, by which he deceives the people. This is what is happening now. Since one hears and knows what the gospel is, what Christ is, one still puts on and puts off as one pleases, as the fanatics and the sectarians do. So does the pope in Christendom; he carries his Decreta and Decretales to the preaching chair, and wants to master everyone, yes, God Himself. This is not to be; for nothing is to be added to the holy Scriptures, nor is anything to be taken from them.

3. listen, Israel, put your ears here, listen to what I am teaching you. Do not look at another; notice 1) what I teach you. This is an excellent preface, that he may bring the people

1) "merke" is missing in the Erlanger.

and keep on the right way. All words shall be written with large letters. This is his opinion recently, and this much he wants to say: No one teaches himself, nor another, but first hear me what I teach him.

4. "customs" and "rights", *praecepta et judicia*. I have it 1) gladly verdeutscht: *praecepta*, its "way", which is a common custom in the country. In Hebrew it is called *chūkka*, which is now called ceremonies, in German: *Weise*, as an example, that one does not turn off the gate in some cities before seven o'clock. It is not a right, but a ceremony, a way. On the other hand, it is unwise if it is done without order, that is, not at the right time. So Moses divides his teaching into two parts, "ways" and "judgments," saying, "I will teach you, first, "ways," how to live; second, "judgments," how to judge.

5. "Wise" I refer to how one should live in worship, or how one should conduct oneself against God. Therefore, in the other Psalm, v. 7-, it is written: *Praedicans praeceptum* [id est],<sup>2</sup>) *narrabo ceremoniam*, "I will preach of such a way" how to live, that is, to believe in Christ. Summa, Moses wants to teach his audience a way how to live against GOD. After that "judgment", how to behave against man. "Law" is the secular regiment, the land law, city law, according to which the mayors and princes are to rule in external things, as it concerns house, court 2c. There "right" belongs to, as you Saxons have the *Sachsenspiegel*. Therefore one speaks: House right, woman right, daughter right. What more does a man want and need for this worldly life, than that he knows the art, how he should hold himself before God and men, that he knows to execute "wisdom" and "right"?

These two things Moses teaches abundantly. Hereby he draws the people to himself, but does not keep them in his person; he directs them away from him to Christ, that they may hear him, and look upon his dear and holy mouth. So shall we also do, and follow Mosiah in this, according to this.

let the pope and the priests, as well as all kinds of spirits and teachers, speak what they want and cannot refrain from. For we are to be bound by the divine word, that is what we are to hear, and no one is to teach anything without God's word from his own head. So Moses binds them all to his mouth, and thus sets before all teachers his ways and examples. Again he condemns and contradicts all other pretensions, and says that he wants to teach alone, because he has good appearances and right. God has commanded him. Now, these two pieces are necessary, namely "wise" and "right". In the papacy they called it church pomp, and wanted to interpret it that way; but this word has been wronged.

7. "That ye should do them." This also belongs to it. For justice and wisdom are not presented to us for this reason, as if they were only secrets of wisdom, which one must speculate from the words of Moses, and then speak to the wind and speak in vain, or have glory and honor from them; as many before this time thought of them, and there are still a great many of them who make them dream of such things. But God does not want it to be so here, but that one should do it and live according to it; as in the first Corinthians [Cap. 4, 20] Paul also says: "The kingdom of God does not stand in words, but in power. Therefore this is how it should be done [Matth. 7, 21.]. We all boast of the gospel, but it is the doing that makes a Christian. So Moses says much with few words. This is also the right art to preach and to teach the people, so that they listen with benefit and get something out of it.

### That you may live.

(8) Here he adds to it prophecy and promise. Promise that you will live and inherit the land if you keep the law. But forbiddance to the transgressors, as will be said below. He wants to say this much: I do not teach you only that you know it, but that you do it and live by it. If you do it, you will have land and people, happiness and prosperity; if not, you will be expelled from the land, as follows [v. 27]: If you do not obey, he will blow you up, as if you had not obeyed.

1) namely in other places, e.g. Ps. 2, 7.

2) Added by us.

the wind blows away the dust or the chaff. These words are great and have the power to drive people away and cheer them up.

### **That you may come in and possess the land.**

009 That is, that ye may have house, and estate, and wife, and child, and all manner of enjoyment. Again, if ye shall not obey, ye shall not only be cast out of the land, and driven out of house and home, wife and child, into misery, but ye shall also be miserably stabbed and slain. This is a strong admonition that makes the listeners diligent and cheerful, so that they do not hear God's word with sleeping ears, and never again remember that it is God's word, and they should do according to it. For this is how preaching should be approached and practiced, so that people listen diligently. But now they listen to the Ten Commandments and other sermons as if they were not obliged to listen, much less to do so; as was the case in the papacy of old, and still is, since it is thought to be only the word of men or the work of priests. But Moses wants to say here: Therefore it is preached that you should do it and keep it in all your life.

### **V. 2. You shall do nothing to it 2c.**

010 See that ye keep the commandments which I give, and make them neither less nor greater. This is a big, strong word, which should be written with big letters, and is a thunderclap, so that it fends off all red spirits and false prophets, who are whimsical and have their own heads. For this text condemns all the doctrines of men, brings down heretics to the ground, and prophesies of their heart's recklessness that they reproach everything. But let no one follow them. Yes, if ten thousand prophets came and did not bring the law and the word of Moses, then conclude for certain that they are heretics.

With this text, Moses condemned all kinds of enthusiasts. And again, the text has made many prophets martyrs. For the prophets have punished Israel for idolatry from this text of the kings, and are

were all slain because of this punishment [Matt. 23:37, 1 Kings 22:24, Jer. 20:2]. For this was the way among the same people at that time: One preached this way, another that way, and then each pretended that they were not wrong, saying: Who art thou then? thinkest thou that thou hast the Holy Ghost alone with thee? From this text, I have set down many falsifiers, and Moses has put a pin in them here, over which they cannot.

This day this text is also hewing and thrusting about, and striking down all sects, all kinds of righteousnesses and pieties. Under the pope there are various ways, such as the preaching monks, Carthusians, Minorites, lay brothers, 2c., each has his own special way: one fasts to the saint, another to another, one runs to St. Jacob, another to the Grimmethal. He has forbidden all these ways here, and has given us only this one, namely: Believe in Jesus Christ and love him.

(13) They do not want to leave it at that, but [they] want us to accept the ways of the popes; if not, then one is burned over it as a heretic. But with these words we reject all our own devotion and human works, and should be slain over them as much as possible. Therefore this text is the shrine of all the godly who are unjustly slain. Abel was slain because he did not lead a way like Cain. This happened long before Moses preached these words, as it happens to us now. I will let Caesar do "right" as he pleases, but not a "way" shall he present to me in the things of God; for the Father in heaven has bound us to Christ's mouth, saying Matt. 17:5: "Him shall ye hear." So Moses also says here: "Do not add to it," that is, you should remain with the text of the divine word alone.

014 But if any man ask, What shall I do? Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets also had each his spirit, and wrote many books, which are not like one another, and Christ added and took much from them? To this therefore answer, That is not to add, if I cut out Mosiah's words, and explain them; if I keep only to his mind and opinion, then may

1) Here we have erased "not". In the issues: do not follow.

I can explain it with many words. Isaiah sticks to the ten commandments and the words of Moses; even if he has other people to whom he speaks and needs other words, that is not important. Isaiah, however, cannot speak of Pharaoh in Egypt, as Moses did; but he also had the very things he had to punish, but at a different time. Therefore, you will not find anything else in the prophets that rhymes with the Ten Commandments.

15 But this is what it means when someone wants to teach something different through reason. For example, we teach of Christ that he alone was made for us by the Father for righteousness, sanctification, redemption and reconciliation, 1 Cor. 1:30, but the papists come here and add to righteousness their piety, holiness and merit, as if one had to run to St. James. This will not compare together. To "put it" means to put something else and to extract it, as the devotees of the sacraments do; they let these words, "this is my body," remain in themselves according to the letter, but nevertheless take away the understanding, and interpret it differently; as that in the Lord's Supper there is not the true body and blood of Christ, but only the sign and meaning of the same. This is to drink away the true understanding, and instead to add another understanding to the words, for they would otherwise read. Otherwise there is no harm in using a hundred words; only that one and the true understanding remain. In short, one should bring no other understanding, but that one opinion and faith remain; without this it does not hinder at all, although other words are used. So the teachings of Moses and the prophets are the same, even though they did not use the same words. For the prophets also spoke, driven by the Holy Spirit [2 Petr. 1, 21].

16 This is the preface that belongs to such a salutary sermon, when he says: "Keep the commandments of your God that I command you. He says this so often that it is almost annoying for a carnal man to read. Moses uses these words many times, but he knows very well that it is not too much if he says it a thousand or more times, because it is very necessary. And he does

it is also because [it] happens in the world in such a way that always come who want to make it better. Thus the devil does not leave mastering, cleverness and overconfidence; it is his trade, which he started in paradise with Adam and Eve [Gen. 3, 4. 5.] and practiced until now, namely, to patch another mind to the word and commandment of God, and to want to make it better. Therefore, one must not be negligent, but courageous, and daily admonish against it.

That ye may keep 2c.

17 A strange appendix and warning is this. Who would have looked for it there? St. Paul, of course, also saw here, when he speaks to Tito in chapter 1, v. 10, 11: "There are many unruly and useless talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped; who turn whole houses, and teach that which is not fit, for shameful gain. And soon after he says, v. 13, 14: "For the sake of the cause, punish them severely, that they may be sound in the faith, and pay no attention to the Judean fables and commandments of men, which turn aside from the truth" 2c.

For this is the way of the doctrine of men, that it leads away from the faith and the commandments of God. 1) As St. Paul also says: "I exhort you to look out for those who cause division and offence, beside the doctrine which you have learned, and depart from them; for such do not serve your Lord Christ, but their own belly, and by sweet preaching and fine words they deceive the innocent heart. Which we have experienced so far under your papacy. As soon as an addition is made to God's commandment, man turns away from the ten commandments, and departs from the right word of truth and the ten commandments and the same understanding, and falls into seduction and error. In the past, people preached about faith, but they did not stick to it, but fell into works. Then came the holy Antonites and hermits, who fasted and did other things, and led the people away from Christ and faith in him to good works.

1) Erlanger: to lead away.

2c. This has come about because they have devoted themselves to monasticism alone and have even strayed from the teachings of faith to the statutes of men and life. This is a great departure from God.

19 And so it goes, if one does not pay attention to the difference between the spiritual and the physical kingdom; then "to add" means that people are turned away from the truth. Moses freely confesses this in this text: Where you add or subtract from it, you subtract. But if you want to keep it, beware of adding and subtracting, and beware of the wrong ways and byways, lest you be led on a monkey's tail. Daily experience shows that whoever wants to walk safely should stay on the road, or he will not get along. This Moses diligently admonishes, therefore one should also keep it seriously, that one does nothing to God's word, nor takes anything from it. Therefore, we should avoid the teachings of men and adhere to Christ's teachings alone.

20 Now you understand how far one should keep the commandments of men, namely, that one keeps them voluntarily, only in this life. For they do not belong in the other commandment, for the sanctification of God's name. Summa Summarum, God's commandments are not to be kept, unless one remains in what they teach. For as soon as one wants to add something else, one gets away with it. And that this is true, Moses speaks further of those who follow BaalPeor:

**V. 3. 4. Your eyes have seen what the LORD has done against BaalPeor; for all who followed BaalPeor the LORD your God has destroyed from among you. But ye that follow the LORD your God, all ye shall live this day.**

21 As if Moses wanted to say: Be wise in this, and take care that you neither add to nor subtract from the divine word, commandment and order. And that you may be most faithfully warned against this addition or subtraction, set before your eyes this example of how God destroyed those who forsook Him and adhered to the idol BaalPeor.

1) "eurem" is missing in the original and in the Erlanger.

(22) We have just heard how Moses exhorted the people in his preface, so that he would begin to interpret the Ten Commandments. Therefore here, in the following text, he takes special care to act on the first commandment, for from it flow as from one source, and the other commandments all follow and are directed by the first commandment. And [we] hear first of all that he says: "Do not make for yourselves an image" s2 Mos. 20, 4. 5 Mos. 5, 8]. There he wants us to make no image or idol, but to keep strictly to the word and voice of God, and to know that we are to hear it without idolatry and images. That is why he rejects idols so severely and wants us to cling to the word of God alone.

But what do our enthusiasts of the present time have to do? They only look at the outward images; and from the word, "not having images," they base themselves, and make a point of storming the images. But after the other, namely, to keep the word of God, they ask nothing at all, and leave the word of God behind.

(24) Then follows how he exhorted them that they should not make them any graven image, neither should they set up, honor, or worship any creature. This is the summa of the following text as Moses speaks:

**V. 15-19 Keep your souls safe, for you did not see any likeness the day the Lord spoke to you out of the fire in Horeb, lest you corrupt yourselves and make for yourselves any likeness of man or woman, or of cattle on the earth, or of birds in the sky, or of creeping things on the land, or of fish in the water under the earth. Neither lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and behold the sun, and the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, and fall down, and worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath ordained for all nations under the whole heaven.**

(25) This is the first, Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. Then the other, to observe, and never to think that any creature that is made is a god, except the sun, which is one of the most excellent creatures.

or the moon, or the stars, or else the host of heaven; that is, the whole host of the heavenly bodies gathered together. For all these are God's work, God created them, they are the work of His hands. Know, then, that all these creatures are far too few that they should be your comfort, and that you should serve them; let alone that they should be your gods. For what are the sun and the moon to be counted against God, their Creator?

He does not condemn these creatures of God, but rather confirms that the sun and the moon are creatures of God, created and ordered by God for the service of the whole world, to shine for men, to serve the times and years. Therefore, it is not the fault of the godly sun and moon or the stars in the sky if something happens to them or signs appear, but it is all due to God, the heavenly one, their regent and the regent of the whole creature. Therefore you must not worship and honor them as one God, nor serve them as our Lord God. The text is true enough, and speaks of our wickedness, and not of the 1) dear creatures. And [we] have often said that if one wants to tear away that which gives cause for sins, then one would have to leave nothing at all; one cannot throw away the creatures for the sake of abuse, *Propter abusum non tollitur substantia*. One would have to take away the sun and stars, yes, otherwise many innumerable creatures.

(27) The devotees think they have done the right thing when they have taken away the idols, because they have been worshipped by men; but they will not do it. Take away the sun and the moon also, for they are also worshipped. So no creature should be left, if a thing should be put away, because men abuse it; but look first into the heart, and teach first how to break and tear down the idols in the heart, or to cast them out, that they be not worshipped. He is talking about worship; there is sin inside, that you do not look at them and fall away and worship them. Not that I would that such idols should be set up as we have worshipped hitherto.

I do not want to court such idols, but that one should preach on worship, and that the trust in creatures should remain. For the serving and worshipping must cease; otherwise the creatures must not be thrown away for the sake of our abuse.

28. gold is fine and good in itself, nor is it called a mammon; not because of its guilt, for what has it done? The pious guilders hath not spoken unto thee: I am thy god; yea, he would rather say unto thee, if he could speak: I am thy servant. It is the fault of the false heart, that it loves gold, goods and money so much, that it courts them and clings to them, and serves them and makes a god out of them; which it is not, nor can be, nor wants to be. So the pious sun has not preached once, it has not been heard from it that it said: Worship me and make a god out of me. So also the moon has not said; nor have there been people who have worshipped her. So the pious gold florins say not unto thee, Worship me, put thy hope and trust in me; but let it be laid, and cast, and spent, as thou wilt. And if they could speak, they would say: I am thy poor servant, where thou givest me, there will I go, there must I be. If one now puts the trust in him that he is God, he has never desired that. So all creatures say.

(29) This is to be preached diligently, that men may be led out of this thing which is called worshipping and serving, and so drive the idol out of the heart. For what are otherwise externa will soon pass away. But our enthusiasts and false spirits do not do that. Therefore, a true teacher should see to it that he first takes hold of the word, teaches and instructs the people. For it is most important not to worship the images, nor to take them for God; as Moses says here: "Otherwise, let everything else be, let the sun and moon be, money and goods be, but do not worship them and do not take them for your God.

(30) It is not of the substance or essence of creatures that the sun, moon and other creatures have essence, but of the use and abuse. We do not preach what the essence of it is.

1) Erlanger: "the".

itself, but from the abuse of an evil heart. We do not want things changed, but the wicked heart. For money is money, the sun is sun. This is to be preached, not what to change in the creatures; but how to turn the abuse of the wicked heart; for this is sought, that thou shouldst be made different, and not that the creatures should be made different. For thou shalt not put thy hope in anything else, but thou shalt trust in God alone; for if thou doest not, the matter is not helped.

31. You can break images and idols and tear down churches, but only pride comes out of it, because stones can be broken easily, but the heart is not broken because of that. The poor things, as gold, silver, wood and stones, are only broken; but the heart is not moved, nor taught to serve God alone. I would also easily storm images, if one would let the storm of the heart precede, so that the hearts would be stormed and broken. The creatures were created to serve us, but God did not make them gods for us.

(32) And Moses himself confesses here that in ancient times the sun, the moon and the stars were considered gods and worshipped by the wisest men, and the heathen were condemned because they worshipped creatures. The Egyptians first worshipped cows and horses and other earthly creatures. But after that they rejected this earthly worship and established worship of heavenly creatures, taking the sun and moon for gods, so that they could run so fast and make such a great journey in one day.

(33) Notice from the chapter that Moses so diligently warns and directs that they should not worship the sun and moon. For, as I have said, they were not rude peasants, but wise men, who believed that the sun and moon were gods. They were not like our godless, devilish sorcerers and old Breckin 1) are, who worship the elder bush, yes, the dragon and with it

Have alliance and company. Let the creatures remain as great and high as they are, even the sun and the moon.

(34) It is true that the sun is a noble creature and a glorious work of God next to man, among all creatures; gold and silver are nothing compared to the sun. For if we did not have the sun, we could see nothing, it would be night forever and all would be dark, as if we lived in a dark cellar. If the sun were not there, the other creatures would not be able to live in virtue and truth; they would despise gold and silver, women and children, and everything else, and one would be more under the earth than alive. Therefore the sun is the noblest work and creature of all, with the exception of us humans. If the sun did not shine, nothing would stand, neither house, nor castle, nor court, nor kingdom on earth.

35 Since the sun, being the noblest creature, cannot be God, nor be worshipped, when all things are lighted to stand, and rule mightily, and have their effect in the lowest bodies, how much less shall the impotent mammon, and other creatures, be worshipped? Therefore the high wise men have thought: What is money? What is field? If there is no light, if the sun does not shine, it would remain night forever. If it does not shine for two or three days, everything is sad.

The wise and sensible people, such as Pliny and others, saw this and therefore said that the sun was God and worshipped it. And truly, if the sun were still outside for three days, we would also worship it. Therefore it is preached here to the wise men to beware, and not to worship the sun, the noble and glorious creature. And yet it is worshipped by many very wise men; for Pliny was very wise, and yet he took the sun for a god.

**V. 20-24. But the Lord has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace of Egypt to be His people of inheritance, as it is in this day. Take heed therefore that you do not forget the covenant of the Lord, which He has made with you, and that you do not forget the covenant of the Lord.**

4) Breckin (Bräckin)--bitch (from Bracke, dog); swear word against the witches.



**Do not make images of the same likeness, as the LORD your God has commanded. For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, and a fierce God.**

37. He says, "Watch, do not forget your God." The word "forget" has all the power to make people think that he is our God. Moses does this with great diligence. This text, however, has also been applied to the monastic vows, and the most necessary things have been completely forgotten, even left on a bundle; namely, what God has vowed and sworn to us; and again, we have sworn and vowed to Him; hence many vows have come. But the word "vow" should refer especially to the first commandment, that we have vowed and sworn to God that He should be our God, and we His people. This vow means and entails that I will trust in no creature but God alone, and accept nothing else that I fear, love, trust in and honor. For he alone will be our God.

(38) Moses is a fine doctor and teacher, who knows how to speak well of things; he says, "Take heed that ye forget not the covenant. As if to say, "It will come about that God will be forgotten, that many false prophets and false teachers will arise who will say: If you want to go to heaven, do this and that. But see thou, and remember what covenant thou hast made with God, and keep it, for the Lord thy God is a consuming fire.

For God is such a God, or, as he says here, such a fire that does not celebrate, but eats and consumes, and a God who is zealous, Ex 20:5. This saying is well to remember, which concerns those who fall away from the faith; it belongs to the mammals and apostates. But it is not believed that God is a consuming fire and a zealous God. Therefore it is said to the unrighteous, hardened, hardened-minded and unbelievers, who do not keep the right faith, and consider these words to be mere fables and mock them; to them he is called a fire that consumes. This is said so much:

1) Erlanger: "ours".

He that believeth not his word, and receiveth it not, is corrupt unto the ground. Therefore believe and hold on to God; if not, you are already gone.

(40) If God wanted the world to believe this and take this word for truth, God would be a consuming fire. That is why they live so wildly and desolately in the world, and do every man contrary to God's commandment, and let God reproach and rage as he wills. For God is not considered by them to be a consuming fire; rather, the world considers Him to be stubble, a straw and a drop of cold water. That is why they go through each other like this. This one steals and robs, that one cheats and lies; that one hates, that one hates; another one is stingy 2c. There it does not seem that such a being must be consumed and perish, but it can be seen as if they have a gracious God; as the prophet Jeremiah Cap. 12, 1. also complains: Quare prosperatur via impiorum? "Why is it so well with the wicked?" And experience also testifies to it, as it is said in Proverbs, "The worse rogue, the better fortune. It goes out to them in such a way for a time.

41 The holy men and the prophets were also very angry at this, that the antitype shines in the world, and the sinners have abundance of all things, and exercise the greatest courage, and yet everything goes out to them. So St. Paul has seen the. Paul also saw the contradiction. These thoughts come to mind: If God were a consuming, devouring fire, zealous and angry, truly he would not suffer it. Now he suffers it? Yes, in the eyes of the world it seems as if God were a loud yawning mouth that only opens, or a cuckold and a good man who lets another sleep with the woman, and pretends not to see it.

42) Against these thoughts Moses said this: Beware, you have a god who is a consuming fire, that is, such a god who consumes you and cleans you up if you are wicked, zealous, devouring and turning you into ashes and dust. He gorges you, and takes such delight in it, 2) that out of his zeal and wrath he is driven to destroy the wicked.

2) That is: He has such pleasure in ungodliness that re.

consume. Once this starts, it does not stop. Such a thing cannot persuade the people, they also do not believe it rather, until the experience comes; so it is then too long waited. So the Jews could not believe that they would be cast out to Babylon, even though the prophets had prophesied this, until 1) the devouring fire came and destroyed them.

43 So when Christ also came and prophesied of the last destruction of Jerusalem, it was of no avail, they would not believe it, until after that faith came into their hand, and then they knew it by deed. If now and then a hundred thousand tongues said to our tyrants: "God is a consuming fire," they only make a mockery of it, do not listen, and also consider our Lord God only as a straw mockery, which is put in the hemp to the birds for abhorrence. But when he comes in his time and turns everything into powder and ashes, then they will realize it. It is the same for us today. If we preach and prophesy for a long time, or hear ourselves that God is fire, we do not ask about it, we do not believe it, until pestilence, death, war and other hardships and plagues come; then it begins to become true, and to be found in retreat.

(44) Wherefore Moses herewith terrifieth us, and putteth a fear in us; lest we make nor accept another god. For he cannot suffer it, or you will be consumed by it and perish. This is what he makes us believe as a good speaker, if it would help otherwise. No cobbler's servant says it, but the high prophet Moses, and says: "God is a devouring fire," that is, nothing will remain unsmelled nor unpunished. Even though it may seem or appear as if you are fortunate and progressing in your wickedness, you will finally be justified in believing that God is a consuming fire. The godly believe it, and therefore they do not experience it. Again, the wicked do not believe it, therefore they must experience it; as experience and deed testify that it is

1) In the original and in the Erlanger: "als" instead of: bis.  
2) walking (yawning) death ---- rapid, sudden death, the same as? 48: abrupt (yawning) death.

and they will soon perish and perish to the ground (Ps. 37:20). Therefore beware of this fire.

**V. 25, 26: If ye therefore beget children, and children's children, and dwell in the land, and corrupt yourselves, and make you images like unto yourselves, to do evil in the sight of the LORD your God, and to provoke him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye perish quickly from off the land.**

45 Then he interprets what was said before, "When you raise up children in the land, (and) beget children's children," saying, "Now, in my time, you may keep God's commandment and be a little pious; but after our death, when we have laid the head, then you will see the idolatry of the Gentiles, that they will worship the creatures and follow such idolatry. Then it will certainly come about that the word of God will be extinguished, and you will be destroyed, and soon you will also be destroyed and scattered among the Gentiles. This is what Moses means by the devouring fire, that God will come and consume you.

**V. 26, 27: Ye shall not long abide therein, but shall be driven out; and the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left a little multitude among the heathen, whither the LORD shall drive you.**

46 That is, a devouring, devouring fire, which the Lord brings, and punishes the land with pestilence, famine, war, and destruction; and, what is worse, when he sends false doctrine and idolatry, then ye have it even with one another. For he says [v. 28], "Among the heathen, whither the Lord shall drive thee, there shalt thou serve gods that are the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell." 3) So he ruins them in body and goods; that is what will happen to the ungrateful people. I mean, that may be called rubbed out, and that would like to be a fire. If the Turk comes among us once (which we will not experience, as I hope), he will also destroy the two 4)

3) In the original and in the Erlanger: drink.  
4) "the two", namely God's word and bodily good. Cf. 50 to the end.

and bring false faith with us. Then we will learn how God is a consuming fire that burns all and fires on both sides. For he will not let it be good, and will also inflict such punishments on us through the Turk or others who are closer to us.

Here Moses, as a faithful preacher, warns us not to fall away from God and His word, lest we be consumed. As if to say: Summa Summarum, desist from your idolatry, you must change and mend your ways, you cannot and may not pass by, you must desist from idolatry and all ungodly intentions, for God does not desist from His zeal. I know of no harsher saying or text in the Bible than this, that God is a consuming fire.

48) Whether he pretends for a time that he is not, and sees through his fingers; but he will be in his time, 1) and at last he will punish the ungrateful horribly. But we do not want to believe it. In Welschland one has seen it, how large hunger was, and the people of the sudden death died, that there is frightening to say. As they were warned, they neither believed nor respected it. Now Germany is also admonished for her ingratitude, but they beat us a clip for it; but those who will repent and be affected, that will be them. The consuming fire of dermaleins will rise and start, make of it what you will. He who will not believe and hear, let him feel it; there is no other way to do it.

The world also would not believe in Noah's time, but it felt the flood. Sodoma and Gomorrah would not believe either, but the devouring fire came. God is a zealous God, who will not joke, nor let his contempt go unsmelled, he punishes it immediately. Let this be said to the stiff-necked, hard-hearted; to the pious, God will also be different, that is, merciful and gracious.

**V. 28. There you will serve the gods that are the work of human hands.**

50. This is the greatest plague, when God takes away the word. It is indeed a great misery when God deprives us of our bodily bread, but it is a much greater torment when He deprives us of the Word [Amos 8:11], although the common ruffians do not respect it and consider it much more important if they only keep the bread and do not lack it. For they think thus: If the bread is taken from us, then we die of hunger. But they are slow to consider that if the word be taken from us, we go to hell, and are eternally lost in body and soul. Truly, one is easier and more tolerable than the other, and it would be better to die of hunger than to go to hell. But here Moses prophesies and says: "If you do not trust in God, then both the word of God and the bodily bread shall be taken away from you.

51 And soon after he describes very finely such gods, saying they are gods who neither see nor hear, eat nor drink anything [Isa. 44, 9. Ps. 115, 4. ff]. Is it not so? Look at the old pagan idols, which were gold, silver, wood and stones; and the idols of the Papists in our time: the one went to St. Jacob, the other went on pilgrimages; one has given righteousness to the monk's cap, the other to the hairy ropes. Verily, the cap does not see, the vowed chastity does not eat, and other works do not go nor hear. What is it, then, that one trusts in his works, another insists on his wisdom and righteousness? all of which neither see, hear, eat nor drink.

(52) Works and all human ability are not God's, yet you trust in them. The work is not yours, but God's, who works it in you. So the mammon and the belly is also such a god [Phil. 3, 19.]; he does not do any of the things, neither eats nor drinks, neither sees nor hears, nor tastes; there he lies in the box. A florin has neither eyes nor ears. But fie on you, that a man should rejoice when he looks at gold, and should consider his God and Creator about it! What is it then with gold and goods? It has neither ears nor eyes, no senses nor feelings; nor does one trust in it. Fie and but fie of the

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shameful God! Surely a man is much better, who sees, hears and understands; yet shall a man be so wicked, and rely upon uncertain mammon?

(53) Truly, says Moses, if you lose the first commandment and do not keep God's word, you will end up worshipping gold, silver and money, even a penny so light that a fly could carry it away, for God, and trusting in it even if it neither sees nor hears. One can become so blind, foolish and foolish. This will also happen to us when we fall away from the word of God. Behold, what a diligent preacher Moses was, that he should keep the people to the first commandment, that the heart might learn to believe the word of God, and that all creatures should be put away. It is a common preaching, which the holy prophets also practiced, and more than we do, that one should cling to God and His word alone; and, although it is a common preaching, the common people do not pay attention to it.

The fifth book of Moses is not to be taken otherwise than as an interpretation of the ten commandments, in which Moses explains himself abundantly and superfluously, and makes a great space as to what he wants to be understood by the ten commandments; and especially he drives very much on the first commandment, in which all power lies. With the other lesser commandments, he does not make so much of a fuss; he who sticks to the first commandment, that is, in the faith that he rightly knows the true God, soon learns to honor his name, and in the others it may also be signified. That is why he goes about with many words, and preaches such remarkable sermons, and uses all arts, entices, stimulates, drives, urges, promises, admonishes, and seeks all kinds of words and arguments, so that he may make his listeners believe it. As you have heard enough, he also has power over how to grasp the first commandment correctly and stick to it.

55 For as you read in the Old Testament, all trouble and distress came to the Jewish people because of idolatry alone. That is why so many people have often been slain; all warfare, theurge,

Lamentations and bloodshed have arisen because of the transgression of the first commandment. And all the prophets were also killed because they disputed about the first commandment; for if that is gone and lost, then all is gone and lost. Just as we Christians also say: If we do not have the main doctrine and purpose or goal, that Christ is our Savior and Lord, that we are justified by grace through faith alone in him, without all merit, then it is done.

Whoever falls out of the ship will perish and be drowned, whether for a long time or a short time, even if he has been saved from shipwreck three or four times before. Therefore he wants the first commandment to be believed and obeyed, that we let God be our God, and trust in him, and build on him alone, and not take away his divinity and appropriate it to others. But this is the greatest plague and worst torture, that we cannot leave idolatry. This word is still in our marrow and legs, which the devil spoke to Eve and Adam [Gen. 3:5]: "You will be like the gods." It is also planted in our nature and inborn in us that we trust in idols and seek help from others. The devil is in our skin, the evil seed does not want to come out, that we did not leave God his divinity.

57. but as long as the first commandment stands, the devil has no access; but when we are in the flesh, the devil has an advantage and an access, that the flesh applauds him. Therefore this commandment is to be regarded as the main thing, and Moses is so diligent about it for the sake of it, because all the wisdom and art that can be brought forward is nothing against the commandment; what can be spoken is all included in this commandment.

**V. 24. I the LORD, your God.**

(58) They are three words, but difficult to understand. Therefore, one must not blame Moses, for he does not form and preach them to us in vain with so many words. Although we at this time, praise God, are not lacking in our diligence, it still helps what it may, such constant chewing the cud, blowing the cud and stroking the cud

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I am a zealous GOD.

59. These are frightening words, that he is zealous. He corrupts, and is not to be resisted. He called God a devouring fire from which there is no salvation; here he gives him another title, and calls him zealous, as the one who does it and wants to do it, because he is a zealot.

V. 25. Now when you beget children 2c.

(60) I could not speak and do it more vehemently, for if I say: If you fall away from God and do not remain with Him, there is no more counsel. What a consuming fire and zealous God is, he declares here, calling heaven and earth, and all that is there, to witness. He does not protest with a notary before the court, but heaven, earth, and everything that stands and walks shall be his witnesses and notaries. The testimony cannot be greater than this, so that he only deeply imagines the high article: that this alone is God, to whom all good and grace should be provided; and if one falls away from this, then there will be no more counsel.

(61) So we also preach that our support and trust should be in God's grace alone, and not in our works. We also call heaven and earth as witnesses against unbelief against God, against all persecutors, blasphemers and enemies. Now we do not want to suffer any article less than this one, which is the most necessary; we do not want to go there. We do not want to have the article, no one wants to trust God's promise alone. One has invented an order, another has become a Carthusian, another a monk. All this has been a delicious thing. But to trust in God alone, and to provide oneself with good things for Him, is not to be trusted. If I were rich, and wanted to give a servant or a maid house and farm, fields and grounds and other hereditary goods out of grace, which I would not otherwise owe him, and he said: I do not want to have it out of grace and mercy, but want to pay it to you, want to earn it, so that he would have a legal ruling on it: would it not be nonsensical? So if a man had a daughter, and gave her to me by grace, and I brought her, and said, I like not that way; I will make it better; I will give her to thee.

I deserve to have them, not by grace, but by right; and I wanted to refuse this grace.

This is also the way he is expected to go. The world rightfully wants to claim heaven from our Lord God, to earn it and to buy it from him, since he lets the whole world cry out that he wants to give it to us for free, and says: "I will be your God, by grace I will give it to you, by grace and for free I will make you blessed, as St. Paul says in Eph. 2:5; I will not let it be claimed for me. So do not make other gods, do not invent such things that you yourselves do. This is also what this sermon does here and says: Do not exalt your good works, let me have mercy on you. It is a disgrace that we should be reproached for this, that we do not want to accept it for nothing, but still want to earn it, and still think of giving to God, the one who wants to give us everything abundantly. We are such fools that we want to give when we should take. The beggar comes here to the mighty king, and begs in such a way that he does not want to take the alms from him for free, but gives him some four pennies or lice for it.

The world is also mad and foolish; it wants to give to the one who has given everything and from whom it should receive everything; and when it should give something to its neighbor, it wants to give nothing, but only to take from him. This is what one feels: If one has a beautiful house, the other thinks, I would like to have it; his fields and cattle he also desires 2c. That is why the prophet Moses says here: "You will do it, the Lord is eager. He will not give it to you, on my soul; as we Germans say. These words we may also let be said to us. For if we lose Christ, it will not be well with us. We live safely, as if Christ were a fool, but God will not be mocked, Gal. 6, 7. We will experience this. He will not sit still forever, as we think.

V.27. And the LORD will scatter you among the nations, and you shall be left a small multitude.

64 This is also true of our time. For if we forsake this commandment, it shall be unto us as it was unto the Jews;

The devouring fire will come and destroy us who despise such things as they have done until now; but this fire will surely devour them also. Under the papacy we were scattered and chased, one there, the other there; not only physically, just as the Jews were scattered among the Gentiles in Egypt, Persia, Medes, until he destroyed them to the ground through the Romans. While they were there among the Gentiles, they nevertheless abandoned the true God and worshipped the gods of the Gentiles, until God finally came after them and put an end to them. Thus, God feeds around him.

The same will happen to us. We will be scattered by God through all kinds of human statutes and countless false teachings and sects. Now such things are ready to happen. There come the Anabaptists and the sacramentalists and desecrators, the rebellious spirits who abandon wife and children; item, who deny the divinity of Christ. This then is the consuming, devouring fire; for you have not heeded God's word, nor believed Him that He would gladly and heartily keep us by the first commandment. But we do not want to accept the mercy of God, offered to us in Jesus Christ; each one of us wants to do something special. That is why it will happen to us, just as it happened to the Jews. See how Moses wanted to keep his people in the faith of the first commandment. As we still diligently do, but we are mocked and laughed at for preaching so vehemently about faith, when we have heard clearly and distinctly from the mouth of the man of God, Moses, how he so surely sees it, and directs all his teaching, preaching and exhortation to faith, which is also required of all people, especially in this first commandment.

**When they come to the Gentiles and are scattered, they will lose the kingdom and become servants.**

(66) This is also what happened to the Jews; since they were masters before, afterward they became servants to all the world, and had to lie under the feet of others. So it also happened to us before this time, we were

right servants under your Roman chair. Any knave, who was only called an official, or a lay brother, and their like, could force the kings and princes with a piece of paper. When one of them came to the pulpit, everything had to flee, to give way, and the princes and lords had to be afraid of them; one had to be obedient to them. Now, praise God, we are delivered from them again, and do not consider them worthy to be our servants, since they ruled over us that time. But how this is recognized by the greater part and God is thanked for it, everyone can see well. This disgraceful, unpleasant ingratitude will still break our necks today. For it has always been like this: If one loses Christ and goes astray from the faith, one must ultimately suffer horrible bondage as a reward. This is also what Moses is forewarning his Jews here. So it will come to pass, I say, with us also, that we shall be ruled and tribulated by their own pleasure, wicked men, who are not worthy to wipe our shoes.

Just look at the position of the Protestant princes now. If one should give a village priest his tithes and other income, also keep the people to give earned wages, or add thirty guilders to the salary, they say, we are stingy, no one can fulfill the priests. They also say gloriously: The papists have deceived us, they will seduce us. That is why they do not want to give preachers their entertainment. If they are to be fed, they should count the morsels of bread in their mouths. But it will come that they will have to give their seducers heaps, as before, and again be forced under the officials and the pope.

(68) And if I could, I myself would restore the papal power, and exalt the pope supremely over such knaves. But that time will come again, for this text will not lie: "God is a devouring fire, and a zealous God." Spiritual oppressors and world robbers shall come upon them again, and shall suck them dry with their oppression, and yet teach them nothing good. Well, they laugh at us now, as in the days of Moses, because they do not want to believe, but to learn that God is a consuming fire.

## V. 28. There you will serve gods that are the work of human hands.

The people read Moses and the prophets diligently, so they knew very well that it was said to them, "This is what will happen to you; you will serve gods called the work of human hands, wood and stone. With these words he describes *praemium impietatis* [the wages of ungodliness], meaning: This is what you shall have as a reward; if you fall away from this faith and trust in other things than in God, who offers you his grace and mercy, then you will have a God who will be nothing but stone and wood, who will not be able to do or prove divine works, nor will he be able to help you. For the one God you will get countless gods.

(70) But this will not happen, think our scholars, that the devil should command us in this way; they say: God did not want that, I will be careful that the devil does not lead me there anymore. Awe yes, it will become sour for him, you are sure that he should not end it. Moses says here that it shall happen to you. For whoever falls away from this highest article has no other article to keep and learn. How is it possible? they say. Look behind you! If we did not have our own experience, we would not let ourselves be persuaded.

Was it not the work of the hands to worship, that we relied on the intercession of the dear saints, and the monks relied on a gray skirt? So we have kept for worship and holy things chasubles, monstrances, chalices, altars, altar cloths, vestments, and whatever else is given in churches and monasteries, so that one might partake of their good works and merits. Is this not wood and stone worshipped? Ask your conscience about it; who has not wanted to build a church of his own?

Yes, ask them: Is the altar God the Lord, or the work that you do? Truly, God's grace and mercy must be something else than a work and merit that a man does in a religious order or otherwise! You must truly say: This is

(before we were born) stood in God's grace and mercy, and yet willingly forsook that mercy, and trusted in our vain works and merits of the dead saints. This is not to be suffered, for it means, "You will serve other gods, which are the work of men's hands." This is to be avoided. Well, you cannot avoid it if you do not keep the first commandment. But he who lacks the article and does not keep it, must fall into it, and falls into it, he cannot preserve himself.

Therefore Moses exhorts us with so many words to the first commandment, and terrifies us, saying, "God is a fierce God, a consuming fire," and attaches to it prophecy and promise. As if he should say: Do you want mercy? There you will find it, God will be gracious to you; but if you do not like grace, then you will have disgrace, God's wrath and eternal damnation, which you shall obtain with your sour work; as hell becomes more sour for some than heaven for others; and some earn God's wrath with great toil and heavy, sour worship and great unrest. This is ever meagerly and clearly enough spoken. The works of men are, because we trust in a thing, which is nothing, but the work of men, and not the grace of God.

(74) Behold, what do our new mobs and zealots do differently, item, even the iconoclasts, but to lead the people to works? This is not a Christian who trusts in God's mercy (they say), but who confidently storms the images. Hereby they reject the righteousness of faith. Item, the Anabaptists, what do they do, what do they teach? They say that baptism is nothing; they take away from baptism pure grace, that there is no grace and mercy of God, no forgiveness of sins in it, but only a sign that you are pious, and you must be pious before you are baptized 2c., or that baptism is a sign that you have the same piety. They take grace away from baptism, and leave me there a mere outward sign; there is not a speck of grace, but it is cut out altogether. So when the grace of Christ is gone from baptism, there remains a mere work.

75 Thus, in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the rejecters take away the promise that is offered to us, saying, "It is bread and wine if you eat it or drink it. The grace offered to us in it is cut off and denied. For so they teach: You do a good work by confessing Christ alone; and if you only eat and drink the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, there must be no grace.

This is how it is: If a man turns away from the first commandment, he soon sets up an idol and a work in which he trusts. Therefore Moses says: "Dear children, be careful, stay with God, follow him, otherwise idolatry is inevitable for you, you must fall into idolatry, you cannot help it; for grace is always contested by the devil, no heresy can suffer the grace of God.

77.<sup>1</sup>) Idolum is what we Germans call a heretic, an idol; the first ones called it idol; the high Germans call it heretic, that is, whoever falls away from the first commandment and faith and from the right God, and denies the right faith. And Moses shows us that it is impossible to remain without idolatry. When we depart from the first commandment, we become idols and idolaters.

(78) The scribblers of this day also all practice the first commandment, saying, We also preach grace and mercy through Christ, and do not reject the article of the first commandment; and say, I, Luther, lie to them. But behold, they confess that Christ died, hung on the cross, and saved us, which is true; but they deny that by which we receive him, that is, the means, the way, the bridge and the path, which they break down.

The Jews also believe that there is a God, but the way to get to God,

1) The postscripts seem to us to be insufficient here again. We would assume about the following: Who serves a Idolum is, as we Germans call it, a heretic, an Abgötzer fd. i. Abgöttischer<sup>^</sup>; the first fGermansf called it: Götzer, the High Germans call it Ketzer 2c. - At the end of the paragraph, instead of: "Götzen" and Götzer, it will read: Götzern and Ketzer.

2) Erlanger: the.

namely, through Christ, through Christ's humanity, they deny. The Turk also confesses God; but he denies the way, the means, the bridge by which one comes to God, that is, the grace of God. They do not want Christ, nor do they want the sacraments through which one comes to grace.

80 It is the same and goes with them as if I preached to someone, "I have a treasure, and yet I do not hold the treasure up to his nose, nor do I give him the keys to it; what good would this treasure do him? They lock up the treasure they should put in front of us and lead me on a monkey's tail; the access and the handing over, the custom and possession of the treasure is denied and taken away from me.

(81) That is why the fanatics say much about God, about the forgiveness of sins and the grace of God, even that Christ died; but how I obtain Christ, and how grace comes to me, so that I get it, so that we come together, they say: The Spirit alone must do it; they lead me on the monkey's tail; they say that the outward, oral word, baptism and sacrament, is of no use, and yet they preach grace. That is, proclaiming the treasure to me, and saying fine of it, but taking away the key and the bridge by which I should come to the treasure.

Now God has ordained that this treasure be given and presented to us through baptism, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the outward word. For these are the means and instruments by which we come to God's grace. This they deny. I say this because the devil is so quick to confess these words, but he denies the means by which we come to it; that is, they do not deny the treasure, but the use and benefit of the treasure, they take away and deprive us of the manner, means, and ways by which we come to it and enjoy the treasure, and how we should and may come to grace.

They say that you must have the spirit, but they will not let me know how I can have the spirit. Well, how can I get the spirit and believe, if they do not preach the word of God to me and give me the sacraments? I must have the means, because faith comes from the ear, the ear from the heart.



But by the oral word, Rom. 10, 17. Summa Summarum: No mob can arise, it must run against the first commandment, and must reject Christ, and in this article all heretics are collected in one summa.

(84) Therefore let us keep the article, "Thou shalt not have other gods," and be diligently mindful of this purpose and scopum. For, if we let it slip out of our sight, then the gate and the door are open to all the red-blooded spirits. God has never wanted to have his worship in the world without external means. In the Old Testament, He gave the Jews a way to find Him; there was a certain place of the tabernacle or tabernacle of the congregation, the altar, the lampstands, the Levites, and He did not allow Himself to be found without external means and ways. He proposed to them every way an outward means, that they might find him; he would not let them go astray without a way and an outward means.

But, just as our enthusiasts are now running away from this way that God gave us in the New Testament, so the Jews also left the same way and sought other ways. God cannot be our God if He gives us something external to find Him in, such as the oral word and the two sacraments. If I do not meet God through external things, how can I meet Him?

Therefore all heretics have been against the first commandment, and have transgressed it in all manner of works of men, and have cut off the promise and grace of God which is put therein; yea, denying God Himself, rejecting the benefit and custom, that one may not come to grace.

**V. 29-31. But when thou shalt seek the Lord thy God there, thou shalt find him, where thou shalt seek him with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. When thou shalt be troubled, and all these things shall befall thee in the last days, then shalt thou turn unto the LORD thy God, and obey his voice. For the LORD thy God is a merciful God: he will not leave thee, nor destroy thee, neither forget the covenant which he sware unto thy fathers.**

I would like to see the one who is so learned, who could take this text away from the Jews, except for the apostles. It is a very powerful text for the Jews. But it contains this: "In all the troubles that will befall you, when you have fallen away from God, you will cry out and seek God, and the Lord will remember His covenant. A Jew says from this text: If we have sinned and fallen away from God, now we seek the Lord with all our heart. Therefore he will not forsake us, but will have mercy on us again, and remember his covenant which he made with us. And this text seems to be strongly against the New Testament.

88. But it is a common text that God will not forsake them that are heartily converted, and believe on Him again: though they have fallen, yet will He receive them again into grace. As you see, it also happens to us. Although we deserve punishment, yet if we turn back to God after the transgression, mercy comes to us again; as the prophet Joel Cap. 2, 12. 13. also says: "Turn to the Lord your God, for He is gracious, merciful, patient, and of great kindness, and soon repents of punishment." But that it is said above [v. 24] that God is zealous and a consuming fire is because of this, that one may not be sure nor presumptuous if God does not punish; it will certainly happen in the end. Therefore, one should not trust in the fact that God is merciful, as the text says here, and go and sin; for you will find out that he is also a consuming fire, and if you sin, he will devour you. Again, if you have fallen and cannot help yourself, God will not abandon you, but will help you again to keep His commandments.

He is a merciful God, and does not punish in such a way as to exterminate and destroy, as the devil usually does, so that there is no help or counsel left. He strikes with pestilence, famine, time and war, devastates countries and cities, destroys livestock and people; but God still preserves one or two who begin to build a city again. When, in the flood, He kept eight people in the box Noäh

[Gen. 8, 18], so he received Lot and his daughters at Sodoma [Gen. 19, 30]. But this sermon is told to those who are under punishment and want to convert and believe; for them such a comforting promise belongs. But to the others, who live godless, reckless, and without all care or consideration of future punishments, something is to be said of the devil and hell; they only get worse from such preaching. So it is a common saying that God punishes with moderation, so that he does not destroy everything, lest one despair; for the punishment belongs to those who are wicked and do not want to stop sinning.

90. but that the Jews use this text for their salvation, after God has destroyed Jerusalem, and they still hope that their kingdom shall be established again, tell them again that it is also written here: "If you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul, God will be a merciful God to you. St. Paul deals with this saying in the epistle to the Romans Cap. 11, 31. f. tremendously. Who else could solve this riddle if St. Paul had not solved it?

91. "When you will be afraid." In the same place, he does not say that God will leave the boys unpunished, as the Jews think, but that he will take them all. This is also not his opinion that he will take them all by grace and place them in his kingdom, but, although he has punished them, he has nevertheless accepted many of them as members of the Christian church, namely, who have been restored; just as some are still being converted today.

So the papists of today could also say that God does not abandon his church, Christ truly remains with his church until the end of the world, he does not leave it; who would want to take that away from them? For Christ himself promised this in Matthew, chapter 28, v. 20: "I am with you until the end of the world." And in John chapter 14, 18: "I will not leave you orphans." That is why the pope and the bishops hurry: "We will remain and not perish, because we are the Christian church. Yes, you answer: if one converts with all his heart and soul.

For this reason Moses does not say, "Those who desire to go down to the ground in sins, like a sow in dung, and set themselves against God, he will raise up," but rather, "Those who seek the Lord with all their heart and with all their soul: Those who seek the Lord with all their heart and with all their soul. He will not be gracious to any people, whether Jews or Gentiles, unless they are converted through fear and hardship, that is, unless they believe in God with all their heart. Therefore, you cannot say that he promised mercy to any papist or other impenitent, but only to those who turn to the Lord with all their heart, whether Jew or Gentile, papist or evil Christian, pope or bishop. To all who sigh and cry out to him from the heart, and fall away from idolatry and the work of their hands and other sins, he promises mercy. Therefore, the Jews must not pride themselves that they will bring God back, for they do not call upon God's mercy, but still boast of their works, fleshly birth and arrival, that they are Abraham's seed, John 8:33.

Therefore, this saying is strong for the Jews and the Papists; God will not abandon His people and His Church. But say you who are his people and church, namely, those who seek the Lord with all their heart and soul. Let us describe the Church in this way, that it is those who trust in nothing but God's mercy alone, and recognize the first commandment; who renounce their false faith. That is, God's people and the Christian Church, who rely on nothing but God's grace and mercy. The others may boast of the church, or even call themselves angels, but they are not. The devil may disguise himself as an angel of light, 2 Cor. 11, 14, but he is not. Therefore they may well convert and leave off the false confidence of their works, for it is nothing at all. I have said this for the sake of the Jews and our papists, who always have this in their mouths, and yet do not see what is meant by righteous conversion and renunciation of ungodly intentions.

95. So far, we have heard how Moses so earnestly requested that the children of Israel

God and His commandments, or make idols and images for them, whatever they may be, for God is a consuming fire. Moses gives such a serious, great, excellent admonition before he begins the Ten Commandments, so that he may awaken them and encourage them to be serious, so that they will not think that they are hearing a fable, but that it is a real seriousness, because he calls God a consuming fire, a fire that eats, and in addition, a zealous one who does not let up. As if to say, He who does not keep the Ten Commandments must be devoured and consumed and laid waste.

The "fire" is the most powerful and fierce element among all. What cannot be conquered, swept, broken or changed, one attacks with fire, thus it is made pliable and forced. It can force silver, gold, iron and all metals. That is why God compares himself to this element. As if he wanted to say: You cannot escape from me, if I start a search, no one can resist me. If someone sins against my commandments, I will find him and know how to punish him.

97 Then he calls him "zealous" who will not cease, he must keep his word. There is both power and will, strength and might, that he can and will punish. If we believed this to be true, we would not despise his commandments; but no one believes him to be so until we know.

(98) Neither did the people of Jerusalem believe that they were doing evil against God and that they should be punished by Him, until the Romans came and destroyed the city, so that not one stone was left upon another, Luc. 19:44. Thus, a wicked man who harms his neighbor, steals and robs, does not believe until the executioner comes and hangs him on the gallows. Likewise, all other vices, dishonors and sins that go against the Ten Commandments, such as contempt of God, cursing, murder, adultery; they already have the judgment over their necks, that this zeal, wrath and fire will come upon them and destroy them. Unless they repent, no one in the world will be able to escape and do what he wants.

If he wants to avoid the punishment with true repentance, God will keep and spare the punishment, as Jeremiah is told in the 18th chapter, v. 7: When an ungodly kingdom, which I have threatened to destroy, shall turn from its ungodly ways, then I also will repent of the calamity that I thought against them, and I will build and establish that kingdom.

(99) Therefore, from his youth, one should learn and practice the Ten Commandments, so that he may know what to do and what not to do, and what good works belong to each one in his tribe. For if one lives ungodly, he will not escape punishment. But if a man escape here, that he may be spared the punishment, he shall receive his judgment elsewhere. Therefore, if he escapes the whisk in one place, he will get a rope against it elsewhere. Summa Summarum: Finally, he does not escape this fire, for God says, "I am a consuming fire." As if he wanted to say: Do not take it for granted, whoever you want, you shall not escape from my power; even if you leave the world, you shall not escape from me, Ps. 139, 7. ff.

We see this also in experience. It is quite strange that a murderer, adulterer or thief is punished. For God has ordained and appointed the authorities to punish such sins, and it often happens that such boys are punished before one looks around. Therefore, learn even more to fear God from your youth and to keep His commandments. For you cannot escape punishment. If you escape punishment in this life, you will still go to hell and die an eternal death, and thus still receive your deserved reward.

But godless hearts despise it, and do not believe that God is so near, and do not use fire at all; they do not see the lightning before the thunder, that is, they receive the punishment only after the sin is committed. But in truth it is not a joke, the Lord comes before those who do not fear God. However, he looks through his fingers and pretends that he does not want to punish them, and they also respond honestly, just as if God did not see it and did not know about it.

drum [Is. 42, 14. Ps. 50, 21.]. Well, you hear here that God does not let it go unpunished, they shall not carry it away like this, the fire shall come upon them. This I have had to repeat for the sake of this way of speaking, so that you may know what it is when the Scripture says, "A consuming fire"; item, "to be zealous". Therefore he also said above [vv. 25, 26], "If ye therefore beget children, and dwell in the land, and make unto you idols, and do evil in the sight of the Lord your God, and provoke him to anger, ye shall not dwell therein long."

For this cause (as he says here), because the fire will come upon you, and you will be destroyed badly; as soon as you make idols, the fire will strike you. And he himself interprets what the fire is; not that it always falls from heaven and consumes the idolaters, murderers, thieves and scoundrels, but so that you are sure of the punishments, which you certainly have before you. And he says, "I call heaven and earth to witness against you, that ye shall soon perish from off the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not long abide therein, but shall be destroyed." As if to say, "If you are ever certain that you will soon perish, know that it will not go unpunished, for God is a fire that consumes, devours and devours; that is, He will destroy you as fire consumes a house, turning it to ashes and dust."

(103) There you see that he is most concerned about the first commandment. He is serious and only about the images and idolatry of the heart, and he especially indicates and says: "If you now bring up children," that is, if you grow and increase, and if it comes about with you that you take the land, and forget God who brought you out of Egypt, and establish idolatry, and judge yourselves according to the manner of the countries in which you dwell, then the punishment will not remain outside for long.

Among us Germans there is a saying that goes like this: Some condemn their souls for the sake of their wives and children, or for the sake of their misery; and it is all too true. Moses also indicates this here. When God gives a man a wife and a child in his house,

and other food more, which should be a cause for him to trust God the more, he abuses them, and trusts and believes God less than before, when he had nothing. Now, because he has them, he falls into the belly care, how he will raise them high; works so that they may have a higher status than he himself, or each one may have as much as he has; does not think that he who has given him body and life will also give food and cover, clothing and food (Matth. 6, 31.). Immediately one falls into disbelief of God, and falls into cursed avarice [1 Tim. 6, 9. 10.].

This is very wicked in the world; for everyone wants to provide for his children, so that he is not satisfied with the poor food that God gives him, but he wants to go even higher than God gives him; therefore idolatry of avarice must follow, Eph. 5, 5. For, where care of food is concerned, then soon a scratching and scraping follows, and mammon stirs up viciously; then God is lost. I could give many examples of this from the histories, but we are up to our ears in it ourselves.

Therefore Moses says: God will bless you, he will give you children, that you raise them, and keep them in his service, honor and fear, and he will give you food and nourishment [Ps. 128, 3], only that you also keep God for your Lord God. But we do not think otherwise, for God has forgotten us, and so the children are a cause and occasion for unbelief, which God has given us, that they should provoke us to faith; then also the tiresome mammon comes, and is worshipped in all corners.

(107) So now Mose is to do everything only for the first commandment. Do the same, then you have the others all easily kept, because against the first commandment it goes all. Therefore, if one forgets God, despises Him, and does not fear Him, seeking something else to trust in, it is soon done. This is the most noble infirmity. One relies on his prince, another on a rich friend, another on his field: each one seeks a God on whom he thinks he can rely to feed himself and his own, as if there were no God in heaven who could do it, who could not do it.

There would be children and create bodies, and also provide food and entertainment.

The true idolatry is in the heart, not fearing God nor trusting Him, but setting one's sights on other things. The outward images are not the true idolatry; the outward idolatry is a gross thing. Now, as a warning, he says, "Know that the fire will consume you, and then your care and your mammon will not help you, but you will be cut off from the land where you live; I call heaven and earth to witness. He would gladly put it into their hearts; he is hard on them, so that he may make the people fear God and put it into their hearts.

109] And it is especially good that it should happen to us according to our unbelief; for what we fear befalls us, Prov. 10:24. We have the Jews as an example of this; they feared that where they left Christ alive, the Romans would come and destroy their lands, Jn. 11:48. And when they had strangled Christ, it happened to them that they and their children became beggars. 1) And those who still scratch and scrape, and fear that if they relied on God alone they would lack nourishment, want to help their children to great honors and goods, to bring them up to riches and high, and to provide for them: but their goods often wear out and disappear, so that no one knows where they go, and they ultimately prosper, so that they become beggars with their children. We see that many of them gather treasures, but when they come into the hands of the heirs, they are lost and little is improved. How is this? From this text it is clear and evident. God wants to send a fire, and kill such children, yes, also burn such badly won property, as otherwise also Solomon says: *Erosio in domo impii*. The word is there, the experience is before our eyes, they shall not escape the fire. The proverb must come true: Badly won, shamefully lost. Item: *De male quaesitis non gaudet tertius heres*.

110. again, where religious people trust god, and work according to the opportunity of their

The rich, who are well fed by God, get further than others who are rich. Truly, the rich do not reign on earth, but those whom the LORD brings forth as poor Cinderellas are the ones who rise the highest; they reign in the world. That is why David sings in the 113th Psalm, v. 7. 8: "He who lifts the wretched out of the dust, and sets him beside the princes of his people." Mary also sings it in her hymn of praise, Luc. 1, 52, "that God exalts the lowly." And St. Peter in his epistle [1 Petr. 5, 5.] says that he gives grace to the humble, as the examples of the Holy Scriptures clearly show. As, Saul, who was taken from the asses to the kingdom [1 Sam. 10:1]. And David, found behind the sheep, had to be anointed king over Israel [1 Sam. 16, 11-13.]. This is all because God says, "Let me provide for you, I will give you children and food; if you do not want to, remain a beggar. For he that will not believe my word, I am a fire, let him know it. It may seem that other people with wealth and friendship can do and help much, but it is nothing. Believe me alone, and fear me, says God, and you will have enough; otherwise it is no wonder that you will remain a beggar, perish, be consumed and killed. Whoever does not want to believe it, let him feel it.

**Don't get the picture.**

That is, trust me and no other creature. Do not mistrust me; set your heart on nothing but me. If thou hast not superfluous, there is nothing in it. If thou hast not it with bushels, yet hast thou it with spoons. If you are not a mayor or a nobleman, it does you no harm; remain a citizen and a farmer for a while. If thou trustest in God, thou shalt have enough; but if thou seekest any other god than Mammon, I will eat thee up, and destroy thee to the ground with thy unholy idol and caste god. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" [Matth. 11, 15].

**V. 27, 28: And the Lord will scatter you among the nations 2c. And ye shall serve strange gods, which are the work of men's hands.**

1) In the original: been.

This will also happen to us, and we will not have it any better. Only the life that was under the papacy will be started again and again. We will get preachers again, who wear caps, shave plates, put on hard shirts, walk on wooden shoes, and boast of their lousy, stinking works for a church service 2c. For we will not hear of the good works commanded in the ten commandments; therefore let us only be tortured and blasphemed with the good works of the pope and the monks, who are called gods that are the work of men's hands. Is it not true that we do not understand the words, but we have the experience? Imagine the eyes of the Pope, the Turks and the Jews, see what kind of god they have and whom they serve.

The Turks fast for a whole month in summer, bathe every day, do not drink wine, do not live in a binge of eating and drinking, as we Germans do. But whom do they serve with such mortification and devotion, and that they thus constantly war, risk life and limb, and shed their blood? To their Mahomet, who has seduced them, they toil and torture themselves. And this is not in honor of God, but of your devil Mahomet, who has taught them this false, imaginary idolatry, such as fasting, not drinking wine, war 2c. In these works they practice and toil, and get nothing out of it but toil and labor. Their faith is not in God, but in the presumption of their own works, by which they want to be saved. This then is not trusting in God, but it is the works of men's hands, that is, a being and life, or work, devised by men; they are called the works of men.

(114) So the Jews do works which they have invented and devised according to their own devotion; they do not eat blood or swine's flesh. Such are actually the work of men, there they serve their idols.

The papists with their monks and other very many friars and followers keep their rules, commandments and statutes, invented by men; it becomes sour for them day and night. This must be, and cannot be otherwise. For he who falls away from the first commandment falls into one being,

which is conceived by men, he gets into human works. For between God's grace and glory and the works of men there is no remedy. If you do not trust in God, you fall into a work or state that you choose.

(116) So the spirits of the wicked fall from the first commandment and do not cling to God's grace; therefore they have fallen down and have an idol, that is, that they have made the sacrament bread and wine. There they blaspheme with it, and that is their idol.

Therefore, either one must serve God, or trust in an idol, or fall away from God altogether and rely on works and other things. For it is impossible for there to be a middle ground between trust and works. One must either trust in God or in good works. This is what Moses is saying here: If you will not serve God, you will serve the heathen or pagan idols and works of men, for one must serve God or become idolatrous and fall on works; there is no remedy.

This change is made here by Moses. He who only believed this would be a great and very useful thing; and yet he must either have believed, or fallen on a work and become a hypocrite. Now those who deal in works are also idolaters. Now I am not speaking of gross, external abuses: 1) but of those who want to be godly. This is why all this is repeated so widely, so that you may see how Mosi is all about the first commandment.

### **V. 29. But if you will seek the Lord there.**

But so that they do not completely despair, he adds this comfort to them. He does not leave it alone with the terror and dread that God is a fire to the wicked, that is, who kills the disobedient who despise his commandments and do not fear him. For if he let it remain so, the hearts would despair; therefore he shreds it both. For the sake of those who are hardened, who take God's commandments and teachings to the wind and despise them; they think that they can only sin freely, so they will soon not be punished. Again

1) Mißbrauchn -- one who abuses.

Also a promise to those who are punished and are afflicted by misfortune that when the fire attacks their bodies and possessions, they will not despair. It is of great need to comfort those whose hearts are in contempt of God, but who now recognize themselves and desire mercy.

A human heart is vain iron steel, a rock and adamant when it is godless. Again, when it is frightened, broken, crushed, and fleeting, there is nothing softer, more fearful, nor more stupid. A lion and a horse are the most joyful animals when they are courageous; again, when they become timid and frightened, there is no more stupid animal among them all than they are; they cannot be held. The greater the courage, the more despondent when the heart sinks. So also the heart of man is unequally disposed. If it goes well and does not eat the fire, it is proud and clumsy; again, if the fire starts and attacks it, it becomes quite despondent, so that it is not easy to keep it up; it cannot be raised again if it sinks to the ground. Therefore it is necessary to do both: to frighten the hardened, so that they do not become proud and stubborn; again, to comfort the frightened, and to preach sweet words to them, so that they do not despair, but hold fast. Moses does the same here, saying:

**V. 30. Now when all these things shall come upon thee 2c.**

God gave His commandments to comfort the foolish and to terrify the stiff-necked. We have heard so far how he has spoken in many ways in order to drive the first commandment, and to provoke and entice us to keep it. With the other commandments he has not so much concern; but here he has especially set before him the children and the custom of the country. This is also a thing that hinders and detracts from the first commandment, and yet in another place they are commanded to keep their house. But here, as it pertains to the first commandment, God says: "Child, child, you shall not make for yourself an idol for the sake of your wife or children, and worship him, that is, seek comfort elsewhere than from me, nor despise me. Higher you shall

Thou shalt keep me, as thy children; they shall not turn thee away from me, that thou despise my word for their sakes. The Lord Christ also teaches and commands this [Matth. 19, 29], that one should leave house, farm, land, wife and children and everything for his own sake, because he who does not do this is not worthy of it [Matth. 10, 37]. And here he saith, But if thou do not, and serve mammon, the fire shall come and devour thee: but if thou trust in me, thou shalt have enough.

He meets us, and knows well how things are in the world. Therefore, if you have children and the customs of the land before you, and are mingled with the heathen, and have their customs and deeds in view, and they say to you, as the German proverb says, Do as the others do, and you err or do not err, it will soon be done with you that you will fall away from the first commandment.

The world is full of trouble. No one turns his heart to God. All people on earth worship mammon, and very few serve God according to the first commandment. That is why it is said: Where my neighbor goes, I go also; as he goes, so go I; I see no one who does him any harm. He that is among the wolves, saith the world, must howl with them. Item: Si fueris Romae, Romano vivito more; one must temporize, and be guided by the people. Item, one says in the papacy: I remain with the religion of my ancestors; if they have not gone to the devil, then I will not go to hell. And some pretend that they want to stay with the big bunch, like the popes, cardinals, bishops, great potentates, princes and lords; if they go to hell, they have good companions, and they want to follow them. So then the country in which we are, with its adversities, brings us to the point that we also behave according to the country's example, and forget God above it.

124] Moses says, "When you come to your land, you will strike God on the grass. When one man does this, three of them do it, and after that ten, twenty, even a hundred, until it becomes a habit. Thus one becomes accustomed to the people and the being on

Earth, that one thinks it must not be different. Say then: I see that these and those do so, and draw their children thereon; item, I see that they pray on this mountain, or in that thicket or meadow, and it pleases the people well, therefore we will also do it.

Now it is a common saying that one also says, "How can I do it? if I want to be among the people, I must do what is the custom of the country, of this lord and of the world. I cannot do anything special, I must do it for my own benefit or for the sake of my children; otherwise how can I remain among the people and abstain? But it is said: Do not do as the world and people will, but as God wills. That is why he says here: Your own children, the world's customs, traditions and habits will move you and deceive you; resist them, attach and hang your heart on my commandment, and say: I will observe nothing but God's commandment. But the devil, the courtiers and the worldlings with their examples, wife and children, good friends and neighbors snatch us away and make us forget the word of God.

126. these are causes and warning ge

nug of God through Moses. But they say here: Trust in God, you have more than ten years to become righteous and fear God; in the meantime I will do as my neighbor does. But think, God is speaking here: Beware that you do not despise me, or the fire will consume you. But if you do so, and seek me earnestly, I will be your God, and will honor you again, and do you all good. And if thou fall, and remember me again with all my heart, I will not leave thee. As high as I have rejected thee and brought thee low, so high will I raise thee up again, and set thee in thy former worthiness.

(127) Moses speaks all this so that one should not forget God, nor despair. For against the presumptuous he says, God is a fire; but to the terrified he says, The LORD your God is a merciful God. Therefore one should walk on the middle road, which means to trust in God, and one will be preserved. Thus Moses is a true master and teacher in interpreting the first commandment; no one has ever done it like him before, nor will anyone ever come after him.

## The fifth chapter.

### **V. 1. And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them 2c.**

(1) Hitherto we have heard in the fourth chapter the beginning, or preface, which Moses set before the preaching which he would do of the ten commandments. For this is a book wherein is preached the right understanding, use and custom of the ten commandments. Now, in this fifth chapter, he tells the text of the Ten Commandments, and then he passes them through the following chapters, taking them one by one before him. Therefore, let us hear the text.

### **Hear, Israel, the commandments and the statutes 2c.**

2 This is the text, followed by the gloss. For Moses says further that the Jews asked

have asked for an interpreter of this text, because they themselves were not able to hear, when God spoke to them out of the fire and gave the ten commandments to Mosiah; then they asked for Moses as a mediator, that he should interpret it to them [Ex. 20, 19]. This is what he is telling them here, that they asked him to be their mediator, interpreter or interpreter. Therefore Moses adds here [v. 5]: "At the same time I stood between the Lord and you." First, he says:

### **V. 6. I am the LORD your God 2c.**

3 Then our Lord God binds them, saying, "I am the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt," so that you may not choose another god for yourself besides me. For this alone is the true God, who is



here so called. This I have often told you and admonished you; let him who desires to walk in certainty take care to keep the word of God, to cling to the same, and not make him another image, thought or dream of another God under God's name. Moses knew beforehand what would happen to this people; when they came to the land of Canaan, they would find such a great worship and religion of the spiritual state, so beautifully prepared that it would shine as beautifully as the children of Israel; these Gentiles would want to serve God as much as the children of Israel; as the worship of the wicked is commonly apparent and shining.

(4) In Ammon, Moab, Egypt, and Damascus, they worshipped as much as the Israelites; as even to this day the Pabstry glitters more beautifully than ours, the true Christians. Since the Cananites would boast that they served God, who is the creator of heaven and earth, as well as they did; besides, many false prophets would arise from the Jews, who taught a false worship, as happened afterwards with the celebration and service of Ashtaroth, Baal, and others, that so many gods grew up in Israel as there were many cities in it; as the prophets severely punished this, and they sacrificed in the meadows, mountains, and forests 2c. (Jer. 3:13), so that at last it came to pass that every fool would have his own worship; wherefore Moses here preempts idolatry, and comprehends the Jews so narrowly, and speaks to every one in particular (for so his speech goeth to the great multitude of the people, as if it were but one person): See that you do not establish your own worship, but keep that which I set before you and prescribe [Deut. 4:23].

(5) Under the papacy, and now, when the enthusiasts get into the Scriptures, they think that one doctrine is like another. This is not true. Now, if one has read the New Testament and preached some sermon, he immediately boasts of the Spirit. That is why Pelagians and Arians came in the past, and now our enthusiasts, the Sacramentans and Anabaptists, and others like them; they lead the way.

all the names of God, and their error has a good appearance, like the idolatry of the Jews in the past.

The same thing happened with the fraud in the papacy. First came the Benedictines, then the Order of Preachers, the Barefoots, the Augustinians, and from the Barefoots sect came seven other sects. All this had the name that it was a service of God; to this was added the Pabst's idolatry with invocation of the saints, pilgrimages to the Grimmethal, to the oak, to the pear tree, 1) and elsewhere to the gallows. All this had to be called a service of God. There one wanted to serve God. This name, God's service, does it; if it is smeared on a false doctrine and error, that one hears God's name and word, such a thing moves the common rabble, which then bursts. With these heron birds or decoys, the devil, the birdcatcher, sows the people on his flock of finches, and delights them with whole legs. 2)

(7) Moses knows that the people will open their eyes and follow the worship of the heathen, so he warns them seriously. In addition, the same idolaters are always happier and better off than those who are of right faith and godly life. The Christians sit in danger of body, property and honor, and are like the slaughter sheep [Ps. 44, 23], as the 73rd Psalm complains after the length that he is tormented daily, and his punishment is there every morning 2c. But the idolaters are safe, trampling kings and princes underfoot, greening and gloating like a laurel tree, as the 37th Psalm, v. 35, says. This is what the devil does, that he gives such happiness to heretics, so that the true worship of God may perish. This is what drives the common man astray, who opens his mouth and eyes and says, "There is danger and shame, and there is honor and freedom."

1) The pilgrimage sites of Maria zur Eiche (Mary to the Oak) and Unser lieben Frauen zum Birnbaum (Our Lady to the Pear Tree) were near Leipzig (Seidemann, Reformation, p. 118); Grimmethal is in Saxony-Meiningen-Hildburghausen in the Meiningen lowlands.

2) "With whole legs" may well be understood from the bones of the saints. Otherwise, a birdcatcher must first carve pipes from the legs to catch birds. Cf. the proverb: "Who wants to see titmice" 2c. at the. End of the eighth volume of our edition.

not the error among them. Then the common man goes and says: I will keep it with them, and let them have all misfortune.

(8) This is what happened to the Jews. People still say today: "The monks sang, prayed a lot, fasted, and did all this to praise and honor God. This pleases the common man well; he cannot cross over, he cannot maintain himself, but falls away.

9 But what does our Lord God say to this? I do not want worship at all, for it is idolatry: it has the way of leading people on their own trust. Every self-chosen worship has its own nature and characteristic, whether or not it adorns itself under the divine name, that man wants to be saved by his own work. Chosen worship leads man to himself; if this name could be torn from it, it would not be idolatry.

The Minorites think: Through this order I want to become blessed, and also help others to blessedness beside me. If this addition were not there, there would be no monk. Thus every fictitious service has the addition of filth and dung attached to it, so that a man trusts in it; therefore they are all contrary to the first commandment, which teaches to fear God alone, to love him and to trust in him. Everything that strives against it is idolatry. Thus are all Pharisees; because they boast of their status, they do not fear God, for they think they are not allowed to fear God. Thus, among the barefoot monks, fear and faith in God is also gone. Therefore, the Lord calls Himself here and says: "You shall honor, love, fear and worship the God who brought you out of Egypt. So he sets himself apart and gives a commandment that another God, who did not lead them out of Egypt, is not to be worshipped; if there is another, you are not to honor or fear him.

(11) Preach to the Christians, "You have a Savior, Christ, who died for you and rose again from death, delivering you from your misery. Now if you find another who has not died for you, nor done this for you, in whom you have died, you will be saved.

Do not believe him. Truly, St. Francis, Benedictus, Bernard, nor Augustine did not die for you; why will you abandon the one who died for you and shed his blood for you, and trust those who did not die for you? If then we do not seek Him alone, but put our trust in something else, we will be lost. For, as St. Paul tells the Corinthians, he alone is given to us by the Father for sanctification, righteousness and reconciliation [1 Cor. 1:30].

012 Therefore Moses saith, Mark the gods thereby, and ask them whether they brought you out of the land of Egypt? This shall be your mark; but there is none beside me. But this is very difficult to keep; for there is the appearance, which is called worship. The Rule of St. Francis glitters so beautifully that the same monks deny Christ over it and follow St. Francisco. The apparent life of the Baal monkeys, that they pricked themselves with awls and scratched themselves with little knives [1 Kings 18:28], had much more of an appearance of holiness than the teaching of the prophet Elijah.

(13) Then the raging of the devil and the world against Christians, the persecution and the cross that our doctrine brings with it, also deters from the right worship. Whoever clings to Christ, the whole world is hostile to him; he is no different than an owl among birds. And so at that time all the surrounding nations were also hostile to the Jews; they dwelt no differently among the Gentiles than as a little sheep in the midst of wolves [Matth. 10, 16]. The Gentiles were hostile to them because they served the God who had brought them out of Egypt.

14 Therefore, Moses says here, be careful to stay with the pure and sure word of God. Where you do not have the pure word of God, do not accept God or worship, Isa. 8, 20. but say: I have a certain, firm word [2 Petr. 1, 19.], namely that Christ is my Savior and Mediator [1 Tim. 2, 5.] and the Lamb of God, who bears the sin of the world [Joh. 1, 29.]. But that St. Francis' rule is true, and that he is in heaven, asking God for me, I have no certain word from God, therefore I do not want to cling to him. See a

715 that each one may be found in the worship and state that is set forth in God's word, and remain in the same worship. For, truly, no other worship is concluded with God's Word, except believing in Christ. This service is imposed on us in the New Testament, although it is also seriously commanded in the Old Testament.

(15) For the first commandment is the chief thing of all our Christianity; it is the fountain of faith, of all understanding, wisdom, knowledge, and laws; and all that is good is in the first commandment. The first commandment wants everything bound to itself, and drives out trust in creatures. The reason is this: If you fear and trust in God from the heart, you cannot fear mammon, princes, or your own righteousness, piety and the like. For these words take away everything: "I am the LORD your GOD"; I, and not another. What should I be afraid of the devil, of princes, pope, emperor? they are not all called "I" yet. With this little word he draws everything to himself, since he expressly says: I, the Lord. Faith draws everything to itself.

(16) From this commandment flow, as from a fountain and spring, all the teaching of the prophets and psalms; item, all curses, urges, even all promises. Jeremiah in the 17th, v. 5, says: "Cursed be he that trusteth in man, and that holdeth flesh for his arm." Item, that the 118th Psalm, v. 8. 9. says: "It is not good to rely on princes"; as then the same whole Psalm shows everything completely to itself; wants to say: What can harm or help you, without this God? All the prophets, and all the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, come from the first commandment; for he attaches it all to himself, saying: If I am your God, why do you not trust in my goodness, and fear or trust others more than me?

17 And Christ is also included here, as afterwards in chapter 18, v. 15, Moses clearly instructs and reassures them to wait for the future Savior Christ, when he says: "God will raise up another prophet for you from among your brethren, and you shall hear him"; he introduces Christ so that they may believe in him.

believe in him alone, and hope in him and rely on him completely. Such a great thing is the first commandment: "I am the Lord your God"; therein everything is understood, and all laws, teachings and regiments must be directed and guided by it.

(18) First of all, you have heard why God calls himself a Lord, who brought them out of Egypt, and binds himself to this deed; thus he will be called, saying not only, "I am your God," but also, "The Lord who brought you out of Egypt," so that he may reject all idolatry that is not called, "I"; item, which did not bring you out of Egypt, or which does not have the certain word of God for itself. If anyone does not have this for himself, it is idolatry, let it shine and shine, however glorious and bright it may be. If it does not have the certain word of God for itself, it is to be thrown away as idolatry.

The Rule of St. Benedict and St. Francis has a good appearance and beautiful form of spirituality and holiness, it also has happiness and prosperity; the devil is the patron, and does them no harm. But it does not have God's word, it does not teach to fear God and believe in him; but it [the rule] only instigates and makes idolatry, and teaches to trust in men. It is the same in all other services. But let all successum, even all glittering appearances, with all splendid ceremonies, be forsaken, if they do not have God's word with them, for it does not help.

(20) But if we accept the right God, then it will come to a head. It seems among us that we do not do good works, and that we do not want to leave; but let God rule, He will bring it through, even if it does not have the appearance. What appearance is it that a householder raises children and teaches and instructs them in the Word of God? What appearance is it that a preacher goes into the pulpit and does not wear a robe? That is why he is reviled and blasphemed. There is no happiness or profit in preaching; rather, one is still persecuted by the world for it, and must suffer all kinds of things because of it.

21. idolatry, however, has much more glorious glosses and appearances, is also considered greater holiness, above the right services.

Yes, our God must be a fool, weak and powerless; as St. Paul [1 Cor. 1, 23] says. In his worship nothing is seen but foolishness and weakness, for it does not have a glittering form, nor great happiness, like that. God presents himself as if he were sick. But the other gods are called gods of wisdom, of strength, and what they do is pure wisdom, happiness and good deeds; they also shine beautifully and are not considered foolish. So one goes there, and with that one deceives the world.

(22) Therefore this warning has been very necessary to the Jews, that God admonishes all here, saying, "Beware, I will be considered a fool, I will appear to be an unskillful god, weak and unwise; but the other gods will be considered strong, wise and praised, and it will be well with them. Therefore beware, and see that you are not offended by it; do not depart from me because of it, for their good fortune and wisdom may well draw you away from me; but look only at this, whether it is the God who brought you out of Egypt. Although they are now most faithfully rebuked here, yet afterwards there have been few of them who have remained and persevered with God, who brought them out of Egypt, and believed His word; for many of them have departed. But devout hearts, when they have seen that one has run now and then, seeking God, have said: I will remain with the God who brought us out of Egypt.

023 But if any man say, What is this to us, seeing we are not brought out of Egypt? and why should we now believe in the God that brought Israel out of Egypt? To this you answer: that these are not true Christians, who do not want to boast about this God; for it is not fitting that we should interpret it allegorically; "out of Egypt", that is, out of sin. This God also concerns us. For this part, "he who brought you out of Egypt," belongs to the Jews; but he no longer put it forward and wanted it to be valid, for they were to hear it until the prophet Christ, of whom it is written in the eighteenth chapter of this book, v. 15.

024 Then he gave the ten commandments until Christ, whom they should receive and believe in. For Christ is included in the first commandment; he is the God who brought them out of Egypt, who gave them the bread of heaven; he was also the rock from which they drank in the wilderness, the pillar of cloud and fire that went before them day and night. But there they stayed with the name "out of Egypt", and would not hear this prophet. Now we have come to hear no more Moses, as they, the Jews, did, who brought them out of Egypt, but our Lord and Savior, Christ. Also Moses does not give God's name any further than the future of the prophet Christ. He has now come, and the Scriptures have been fulfilled, and God has received another name from His dear Son Christ, who led us out of sin, death, the devil and hell, and redeemed us, bringing us to righteousness and eternal life.

(25) Thus Christ is also included in the first commandment, as God is his Father. Because he says that he will send a prophet to be heard, it follows that we must believe the words he will preach in God's name, and fear him and fall to him. Therefore it is not necessary that we believe and fear God in the name that he brought them out of Egypt, which was his name only for a time; but now he has another name, namely, that Christ, true God, died for us, of which the prophets also said many things. Jeremiah: I swear by the living God, the time will come when it will no longer be said: God, who brought us out of Egypt; but the name will be taken up and it will be said: God, who gathered us out of all lands [Jer. 32, 37]. Item [Jer. 31, 33.]: "I will write my law in their hearts" 2c.

026 All this I say, that ye be not deceived concerning the name, which brought thee out of Egypt. For at that time it was necessary to say so and to call God [so], to express [him so], and to bind him to this miracle, for the sake of the other gods in the land of Canaan, which they themselves might invent. Therefore he will keep them from idolatry.

749 They say, "Do not worship Baal or Ashtaroth or Moloch; do not ask whether they are called gods of heaven and earth, but accept the one who brought you out of Egypt. But where is this God found who brought them out of Egypt? In the tabernacle at Jerusalem. Now, God wants to have the service which he himself has done; he does not want to be called by us, but wants to be found under his word with faith, as Moses writes in this book. This is how it should remain.

(27) Thus all heretics and seducers creep along under the appearance of the divine name. For so the papists also say: they recognize Christ, and worship him, and honor God in him. But how can this be true, since the true Christ is not recognized by them, and they dream Christ as they please, and model Him differently than He has modeled Himself? Therefore they only misuse his name. For I am to remain under the name which he himself has revealed to me; so he is also found. Now this is Jesus Christ, whom God sent into the world [John 3:17], and he also came, preached, did miracles, and died for our sins.

This right worship is done through His word. 1) If God's name were not smeared on our works, no one could be deceived, and we would remain undeceived. One does not have to rely on works. If I lived to please St. Augustine and wore a black cap of my own free will, as I would otherwise do for the sake of good fellows, that would have to be let pass. But if you say: It is worship, who lives like this, he is on the right track; that is idolatry. For one accepts the order that God is served thereby; thereby Christ's suffering and death are forgotten, set aside, yes, denied.

29 "From the House of Service" 2c. He often repeats the ancient miraculous sign and the prison they had borne in Egypt, and brings it to their remembrance, that they should not forget it; wants them to

Look back at the previous works and the servitude suffered. Why is this written there, that Pharaoh afflicted them? Therefore, as it is written of Pilate in the Creed, so they should remember the redemption from Egypt. In the same way we should praise the good deeds of the Lord Christ. For before we have known Christ, we are in sins, death and error. We should remember these errors and our servitude, just as the Jews should not forget Egypt. Therefore, the house of service and Egypt must be at the top of the first commandment, for the sake of the cause, as the devil, Judas, Pilate, Herod and Caiphas are in the Gospel.

(30) I cannot praise salvation, nor praise and thank God for it, unless I remember the devil, my enemies, error, fear and distress. So now he has redeemed us from the power of the pope, which was not a kingdom, but a house of service and a tyranny of poor consciences; so that we may diligently remember the good deed and the evil in which we have been. In this way, the redemption from Egypt was a sign to the Jews of plague, torture, fear and the devil's rule, as when the young children were thrown into the water, and the old were burdened with joyful services. This was a joke and a pleasure to the Egyptians, but a fear, sorrow and great concern to the Jews. Therefore, this commandment is given to them as a reminder that they should never forget the enemies they were then facing and how weak they were in faith, so that they may now call upon God for comfort and strength.

**V. 7. You shall have no other gods beside me 2c.**

In this fifth chapter, the text of the Ten Commandments is told from word to word, which God gave to Moses. Now Moses takes up the text in the following chapters and wants to interpret it and explain how it should be understood. Among other things, he will indicate various causes that would cause them to forsake the true God and seek false gods or become idolaters. Therefore, Moses is very diligent to keep us with the one God, who is

1) spent = accomplished.

says: "I am the Lord, your God" 2c. Now, let us also take this before us and act on it with God's help, for here lies all that is called wisdom and is on earth. Therefore, let us speak of it diligently.

I have said many times, and I repeat it again and again, but not without good reason, that in spiritual matters and matters of faith no one should refrain from dealing with God through his thoughts. He should stick to the word, otherwise he will not be able to use his reason.

Reason must confess against its will that it is too high for it. Because it is too high for her [she must leave it at the word]; 1) for if she seeks it with her strength, she becomes a fool about it. She will have to let it remain unattained and with the word; therefore she must say that there is foolishness in her eyes and senses, which she also thinks about. It is the same to her as if I wanted to reach to heaven with my finger, or darken and eclipse the sun with my hand; that would be impossible and a foolish undertaking. Therefore, let us not be like God, or even outdo Him, but submit ourselves far, far to Him.

For this reason, they are great fools who seek to know God by their reason. One should cling to the word and wrap oneself in it, as a child is wrapped in its swaddling clothes, otherwise so many sects, orders, superstitions and idolatries will arise in the world, that each one will spread out his thoughts as something special, and without God's word, speculate and invent God out of his own strength and reason. It is enough trouble and work if one remains pure in the word that one exists; what will become of one who flutters about with his thoughts and reason? For if we had been able to meet it with our reason, it would not have been necessary for him to have let himself be heard from heaven, and to have let the word sound, and to have put and bound everything in the word.

God has given no other means than His divine Word, in which alone Christ is to be heard. And no one knows that

The devil is such an artificial master and spirit, who is wont to disguise himself in the divine majesty, and thus skilfully pretends to reason, so that he deceives it. And if we follow him, it happens to reason that it thinks it is all gold that glitters, and all divine wisdom; but there is nothing behind it, and no one exists with it. So take the reason captive and say: I do not want to see or hear anything, because what is the word of God, I stick to it. And the ten commandments are also taught and enforced because they are words to which we should cling and adhere.

## V. 9. I am the LORD your God.

(36) What God is is easily learned from the opposite, when one considers what an idol or a false god is; from this one can recognize the right and true God, as Paul indicates to the Romans Cap. 1, 18. All the world is called one God, in whom man trusts in trouble and temptation, in whom he comforts and relies, since all good things are to be had from Him, and He is able to help.

37 Thus have the heathen done, first making Jovem their helper and god, that he should rule well; and Martem, to help in wars; wherefore they worshipped him. Then they made many idols out of reason. The Romans raised up many gods for the sake of various concerns and help that they needed; that one might help the people in war; that this power might be given to another; that this might be attributed to the one who should make grain grow; that one might help at sea in a shipwreck. As many hardships, goods and uses were on earth, as many gods were chosen, until they also made plants and garlic gods. Augustine writes much about this in the book de civitate Dei.

(38) Thus reason describes God as being that which helps a man, benefits him and is good for him. From this one senses that reason knows only so much about God as Paul says to the Romans in Chapter 1, v. 19, 20: "That it is known that God is, it is made known to them, so that God's invisible nature may be seen in the works that he does in the world that he has created. "That God is" means that God is useful and helps in times of need.

723 So we have also made gods under the papacy. Every illness or need had its own helper and god. Pregnant women, when they were in distress, called on St. Margaret, who was their goddess, as she could come to their aid and give them a physical fruit, turn the danger and pain of childbirth to the best, and help them.

40 The miser also have a special god called Mammon. Their own hearts testify to this, because they have such thoughts: There lies my money or cash; if I have not food and drink, Mammon will give it to me; he will help me and save me from hunger. Therefore they put their comfort in it.

41 But the true God is called in the Scriptures [Ps. 9, 10; Jac. 1, 17] a helper in need and a giver of all good. And here lies the power to whom these divine powers and names are legally due, and are to be given by us men.

The children of Adam decided that we should call upon God to help us in our needs and to give us good things. St. Paul also says this, as indicated above. But when the end approaches and the right strong forces begin to be found, reason wavers and wavers in minore, and says: Jupiter, Mars, Venus will do it; and there it divides. Reason thinks that he or she should do it. Hence come all kinds of divisions and schisms, as they are now in the papacy. One says: I know that God will help. But if one should name the same God, then this and the like will result. One says, St. Margaret will help the pregnant women; the other says, St. Erasmus will be the helper of the rich. There were fourteen helpers in one place. St. Christoffel has to help those who are in the last stages. So each one gives the name of God to the one who will do the most good, then faith, defiance, confidence and trust will be given to another, and not to the true God.

43 Therefore I say again that reason knows to some extent that God can and should help, but it cannot know the right God.

meet. She may speak of him, but who he is, where he is, and how he helps, she does not know. The Jews had the text before, which the Gentiles did not know: nevertheless they made altars in the field and in the forest, on mountains and heights, burned incense, built churches, called upon God there and said: Here is God, there is God. This is called groping after God, like a blind man groping after the wall. So we also went back and forth in the papacy, to St. Jacob, to Rome, to the Holy Land, to Jerusalem, and to other countless places. People were looking for God. Reason does nothing else when it does not have God's word; it knows how to say about him and testifies that there is a God, but it cannot really know, because it does not know who he is.

For the sake of this uncertainty, God's word must come to our aid, and God must give himself out in the open, and circumscribe himself in an outward word and sign, so that he may be heard, seen, grasped, grasped and recognized; otherwise it is not advisable for us. You see this also in this text: "I am the Lord, your God, who brought you out of Egypt. There he tells what God is, what His nature and attribute are, namely, that He is good, delivers from dangers, and helps from hardships and all kinds of adversities, because He rescued the Israelites from their troubles and led them out of Egypt, did them good, and gave them the land which He had promised to their fathers. [In this way, hac definitione, or with these words, he depicts works and benefits that they had seen with their eyes and experienced in their bodies and persons when he helped them out of Egypt. Therefore, Moses set forth the knowledge of God in the first commandment, that God is He who always and forever does good and helps, so that whoever needs help may run to this place, where he will receive help. For this God is gracious, merciful, and does good to those who fear him, to the third and fourth generation. This we have from experience.

The Scripture also takes the name of God and shares it with the godly, the pious and all children of God, the authorities, the princes and judges, and calls them gods [Ex 22:28, Ps 82:1]. Sol-

This is because they serve others in their state, and are the ones through whom God helps and benefits. So David and the other princes were gods, because they did good to their countries and helped their subjects when they were in need. That is why they were worshipped, and divine honor was shown to them, because of the divine work that they did for the people and helped them; just as people still bow the knee to the authorities today. For their office is to settle the cause of the poor and needy, to judge rightly and to make peace, so that they can serve the right God and feed themselves.

Thus preachers, parents and disciplinarians are gods, to be counted against their listeners, children, servants and disciples. For they do works that actually belong to God, instruct them in the best, teach and defend, help and advise, as the need requires; they give and do well or good. But this word has now become unrecognizable, it is not properly understood, and in this it is mistaken that, because God does good through authorities, lords and creatures, the people are bursting, attached to the creatures and not to the Creator; they do not go through them to the Creator. Hence it came about that the heathen made gods out of kings, and the Jews also wanted to make Moses a god. That is where all idolatry came from. For one cannot and will not notice how the work or the good deed comes from God, and not badly from the crea

Whether this is a means by which God works, helps us and gives us.

(47) It was because of this misfortune and misunderstanding that the pagans initially worshipped the sun, for it gives light and nourishment. Some have worshipped the moon and stars. Just as sorceresses still adhere to the devil to this day, have dealings and alliances with him. They also accept help from him, that is, what he brings and gives them, and in return they court and serve the wicked evil-doer, and not the creator and helper through the creature, to whom one should be devoted.

(48) Thus you see the origin of all idolatries and heresies, that because man is so blind and falls on creatures, clings and hangs on to them that they will help him, yet God lets himself be heard in this commandment that he is the one true God. But we cannot understand this unless we abide by His word. Therefore, we should walk along the highway and let ourselves be found in the divine word.

49 You have now heard, first, what God is. Secondly, that he cannot be struck, except by his word, which marks him. Now Moses will explain even better who the same God is, and who those are who fight against him, and what prevents, or how it opposes, 1) that the people do not stay with him.

1) "resists" = opposes, causes obstacle.

## The sixth chapter.

**V. 1-5. Now these are the commandments, that you fear the LORD, one God 2c. Hear, Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD 2c.**

1. there we see that mozes begins to strike out the first commandment masterfully and diligently. So he said: "I am the Lord, your God" 2c. What does this mean? To this he answers: that you trust in God and the Lord,

And fear him, that thou do that which is good in his sight, that thou go not elsewhere, that thou transgress not his commandments and his statutes: but thou shalt take heed to him, that he will do thee all good, and it shall be well with thee. This is how we have interpreted it.

2. "Not to have other gods" means to love, fear, and trust in God. "To fear" is to remain with the one GOtt, to fear



I will not seek another God or take hold of another, but will put my trust in this one. For he that trusteth in another despiseth the former, feareth him not, and is so bold as to look for another God, and putteth his trust in him; neither trusteth he in him. And there faith is gone with the first commandment.

3. take an example from the papacy. (I would not like people to forget the abomination for the sake of ingratitude]. Whoever puts his trust, hope and comfort in St. Margaret, or another helper in need and saint, beats God into the entrenchment and despises Him to the utmost; thinks: Who knows what God is doing? He cannot help me; but the holy virgin St. Margaret will help me, because she deserves it. And that is to despise God and to rely on the creature called St. Margaret or St. Barbara, since one trusts and believes her more than God in childish and mortal need, when our trust should be in God alone, that he would help. But most of the people consider him to be a block, therefore they do not call upon him [Ps. 53, 2].

4 An idolatrous warrior calls on St. Barbara not to let him die without the Sacrament; or fast St. Marco to help them. He knows nothing about God. Doesn't that mean to despise God? It is not considered that he could come to the aid of the warriors, since he says: "I am the Lord, your God." Yes, the brave hero David confesses in the 144th Psalm, v. 1, that God trains his hands and fists for war. And you do not consider GOD to be the one who could help you; but in contrast, St. Margaret. St. Barbara and St. Marcus, they can help you?

5. Mary, the dear holy Virgin and Mother of God, has also become the most shameful idol, who should also be merciful to us and help us out in the greatest needs. We have all been so skillful that we have fallen from God, and she should be our gracious queen; Christ has been nothing; that all temples and altars have been commonly founded and built in Mary's honor. Does this not mean to despise God? Does God help, what may I do for Mary's help, or

of other saints? But if I set my heart on the Virgin Mary to help me and to do good, what may I do to God? He only sits idly in the smoke hole.

(6) Yes, they say, you should honor the dear saints, because they deserve it. Where is this written? Here you hear Moses saying, "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD." May you what? Call upon him. There is no need for you to run to another; for he says to you, "I am your God"; he does not say, "I will be your God, I will become your God," but: I am ready; only remember and believe me, I will help you.

(7) It is the same with the monks and nuns. When they come into high idolatry, they think: We have taken three vows, poverty, chastity and obedience, and have their order, rule and statute. These works of theirs, which they do therein, are their idolatry. For they depart from God, do not fear Him, are not allowed His graces and gifts, such as the forgiveness of sins, but come trolled and want to be blessed by their order, caps and plates, and thereby obtain forgiveness of sins. And thereby they become faithless, falling away from his grace and mercy, which should justify them and forgive their sins by grace. But they are not allowed to do it; their status, cap and idolatry can do it. That is to despise God, not to fear Him, and to set up another god. For, because their order helps them, they may not trust God. So they never trusted God nor feared Him, and despair had to follow.

(8) Therefore, this is the true essence and meaning of the first commandment: "Fear God," that you seek no other, and trust in him who will give you all good things. "Fear" serves to keep us with Him, so that we do not choose another God. "Trust" brings with it all help, that you alone look into his hands in all your needs, and be sure that he will do the best for you, provide you with counsel and help, because he has promised it and does not lie, and because of that you do not depend on anyone else.

9. his words are: "I am your

God", that is, a helper in trouble, who gives all good things. He cannot speak more clearly than to say, "I will do you all good and help you out of every trouble. He who meets the right God has this, namely, to do all good, and to help you out of all tribulation and distress, and to deliver you. This is easily said, but hardly believed. But we have said that God exists through the creature; therefore kings, princes, preachers, parents and Christians are also called gods.

010 But if any man say, Do I not wrong in worshipping kings, and do honor to a prince, and reverence to priests, by bowing the knee, or taking off the hat? Why then do you say that I do wrong in calling on the saints, in worshipping Mariam? To this I answer: If you honor a prince in such a way that you see God giving you all good things through him, then it is right for you to do well. For you do not receive peace and protection here in this land from Duke John, Elector, nor do I rely on him, but God gives you peace through this man; so that you do not remain attached to the one through whom it happens to you, but come to the one who gives it to you through the prince. For peace is a work that belongs to God alone, and is not the work of a prince or other authority.

So you also receive the sacrament from the priest, and hear the preaching of the divine word; but not as from him, he cannot give it to you, but God gives it through him, he is the means and instrument through which God gives it to you. Think, then, that the prince and the priest are not your God, and that they do not give you the sacrament, the word and the worldly protection as their own, but God gives it through them. Therefore I also honor the authorities for the sake of GOD, who gives me these things through these means, Rom. 13, 1. Otherwise they may have a good year, [which] the princes fear and put their trust in them; for they must go to failure and be accursed. It is a true word that one is wont to say: Princes' grace is like April weather; it does not last long. Therefore the 146th Psalm, v. 3. says: "Do not rely on princes"; and Jer. 17, 5.: "Cursed be he who relies on princes." Psalm 146, 3: "Princes are men,

they cannot help. The Holy Scripture testifies to this everywhere, that whoever relies on men will go down.

(12) Now it is another thing to receive benefit through a man, and to trust or rely on a man. From princes, preachers, and parents I shall receive it as from creatures, though God the Lord gives it to me through them; but to fear them and trust in them, as if there were no other God, is not to be done. I shall not fear them nor trust them; for fear and trust all belong up to God. Then shall I say, What is right, that will I keep; God grant, be it lord, master, father, or mother.

(13) But there are too many of them who knowingly act against God's commandment, fear the princes, and do for their sake things that they can never answer for, and that otherwise would leave them well off. They do not fear God, but the prince. Therefore, when they have a gracious prince, they are proud, and no one can agree with them. Yes, to our Lord GOD himself they do not sing of the hauberk. A ruler and an authority must do good by virtue of their office and command, and help their subjects; therefore one should not trust in them, nor fear them, nor do anything against God for their sake; but one should receive good from them as from God, and honor God through them. Therefore, do not rely on men.

(14) Now that some say, What shall we do with the dead saints? Should they not be honored as parents and princes are honored? Answer: You do not see that the saints, such as Mary, St. Margaret and St. Barbara, help you, as you know that your prince and father help you; therefore you must not worship the dead saints. The prince protects you, handles you justly, as the authorities are ordered; God wants to let you see his divinity through them, and gives you peace of the country through them, so that they represent you. This you do not have from the dead saints, who have no command, order, nor even an established status; therefore you should not call on the saints, nor fear them, nor trust in them. Moreover, the greatest thing is that God has not told you to do so. Because you

not to fear them, nor to trust them, whom God Himself has ordained for your benefit and prosperity, and that through them He is your God, much less will He have you prefer the saints and hope in them.

(15) Through your parents he gives you life and limb, feeds you and provides for you; yet you should not trust them. You may use them according to God's order, but do not respect them above God; for they are only to be a means by which He creates you in this world and sustains you for a time. But the dead saints are not in this state, nor do they do anything to you; they are taken out of the world; we can enjoy nothing of them, as otherwise of the living according to God's appointment.

Therefore, when I say that the Holy One has the office in heaven, I am making it up out of my own head, without God's word, and the devil is deceiving me with his seduction and false pretenses. And yet this is where the greatest trust is directed, that we have chosen for ourselves special and own gods, whom we feared much more than our Lord God Himself. So we feared St. Valentine, Anthony and Sebastian. Because it was invented by us, we like it. So they said: Yes, St. Margaret has helped me. How, if the devil had done it? because he can also help you. But you can see that, and here you have God's certain commandment, that he has thus ordered these estates, that your pastor, prince and parents preside over you, and they are ordained by God to help you through them; therefore he also gives that they should be honored.

(17) Therefore, it is pure superstition and idolatry if I seek help and counsel elsewhere than from God. I shall not have recourse to them, since God has not ordained help for me, nor shall I honor them. For after this follows contempt and distrust of God, that God is so hard to believe, and the devil is so easy to believe; for what God shows up for a time, the devil soon gives. But we will speak of this at another time.

(18) For this time let us keep in mind that God is the one who does all that is good, and helps out of trouble; not always by Himself, but by all His means, as well.

through his angels, princes, rulers, parents, preachers, Christians, 2c. but above all through Christ. Now it is right that I should know the means by which good things come to me from God; but I should not build upon them, nor exalt them above God, nor do wrong for the sake of kings, princes, and lords, nor for the sake of their disfavor and wrath leave justice; but in God the Creator alone should I put my trust.

19 For this reason David was worshipped, that is, honored, because he had his hands full of good deeds; through his hands went the government, protection and protection of this great nation of Israel. Therefore David was called God; not that he was an essential God, but that he did God's work, and God helped through him out of troubles, did good and redeemed the people. and redeemed the people from their enemies. Therefore, he was not to be relied upon any further, for only if he remained God's servant and instrument, holding fast to His word and command.

We have heard in the fifth chapter the text of the ten commandments, and in the beginning of the sixth chapter it will follow how Moses begins to explain it, namely: "Hear, Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord" 2c. There we hear that the interpretation of the first commandment is this: "You shall love God, your Lord, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might." But what this is, we have often heard preached in the Gospel, since it has always been held up to us that this commandment is not so easy and small as it seems, but it is a summa and conclusion of all wisdom and understanding.

(21) For "to love with all the heart" is in the highest affections, and is not an evil, cold work, based only on outward conduct or transgression, as the Jews and Papists understand it; as, not bowing the knee to images and idols, or lifting up the hands against them. If they have not done so, they think they have the right God, and have not committed idolatry. Item, if they fast, wear long clothes, pray their times, keep themselves outwardly in all kinds of gestures after their manner, then they think: We are holy people, and have lived well; as nowadays there are still many of them to be found who

Let outward things seem holy. But here Moses says: "If you want to keep the first commandment and know what is there, do not have other gods? Listen: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart", that is, that nothing is dearer to you than God, his word and will; in sum, that we love nothing above him in heaven or earth.

(22) We have heard two Sundays in a row that God cannot be grasped except through the Word, without which He cannot be seen or felt [John 14:23]. If one puts oneself rightly to the word that one loves it, and means it from the heart, then God is also loved. Now, one cannot see, feel or experience this love in us, so that we fear and love God, because if one sees how we place ourselves at the word of God, or how we obediently hold ourselves against the sermon. If you prefer this word, boughs and order to everything from earth, then the matter is bad; then it is a sign that one loves God, and so you will honor your parents, love your neighbor also, not kill, commit adultery, steal 2c. Therefore, if the word is dear to you above your body, life, and what else you have, the matter is just; then you will not harm your neighbor in any of his things, but will keep all the other commandments and works. Therefore, if the ten commandments are dear to me, I will live by them; I will not lie or deceive, but rather leave life, limb and all above. [2 Macc. 7, 30. 7, 2. ff.]

But where do you find them? If they were to be counted, they would be very few. The devil, the world and our flesh teach us much differently. For the sake of a loose penny, we may well throw all God's commandments, His word and neighbor into the redoubt. For does it mean to love and keep God's commandment and word, if you speak evil of your neighbor, defile his wife, or violate him in the marketplace, or anywhere else you can? You may well love the devil; yes, you love a penny more than your God. But you should bite your finger rather than do anything against God and his word.

(24) Thus it should be, if you have love for the word of God: Before you have your

If you betray your neighbor for a penny, or speak a word against him, you will give up your body, your honor, your possessions and everything, and put them first. For a godly man puts the word of God before all things, as the noblest treasure. But if you began to count such, you would not find one of them who loves God with all his heart. For the wicked, for the sake of a word and (as they say) a dove's foot, are wont to put God and their neighbor in the background, to blaspheme. Thus, the miserly take Mammon for their God.

25 Now this is the first commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods," that is, thou shalt love God thy Lord, hear his divine word and let it be acceptable to thee; what his word means and means, let it be told thee, and keep thyself according to it. Yea, this word of his shall be unto thee the most precious jewel of the earth. Thou shalt no longer have thy body, life, honor, goods, and all that thou hast. But we run over the commandments of God, like a pig over the sanctuary, for the sake of our own lusts and manifold desires, as if no law had ever been given by God. Continue in Moses:

**V. 6, 7, 8: And the words which I command thee this day thou shalt take to heart, and shalt hone them unto thy children, and shalt speak them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, or when thou standest out; and thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be a memorial unto thee before thine eyes; and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house, and upon the door.**

(26) Behold, how vehemently he urges the first commandment, that in our hearts and inward affections there may burn and reign one faith and one love toward God and toward our neighbor. And says: "You shall sharpen these commandments." This is a master with preaching and interpreting the law. He knows that the most power and strength lies in the first commandment, that is why he acts it so diligently. Let these commandments, and especially the first, be commanded to thee with all faithfulness, that thou write them not only on paper, or put them in a book, but that thou write them in the corner of the book.

1) In the original and in the Erlanger: denen.

Do not let them lie there, or let them resound in your ears alone, or be painted before your eyes, but grasp them and write them in your heart, so that you remember them day and night, speak and act gladly about them, work, stand or walk wherever you want. Summa: These words shall be your highest, dearest treasure, for where your treasure is, there your heart is also [Matth. 6, 21.]. You shall at all times let them be most dear to you.

27 But why did Moses speak thus? Because he knows that there are so many people on earth who, when they hear and learn the Ten Commandments and enter into life, already know them by heart and know them all too well beforehand. Therefore, when they hear them recited and told, it is as if they were hearing a fable or a fairy tale, or a new newspaper from the Turk or the king of France; they do not pay attention to it, nor do they think that the Ten Commandments are of any concern to them, much less do they think that they should take them to heart, do them, and keep them. They think it is enough if they hear it once in a while, and they know how to talk about it, as if someone heard something else strange, and they can repeat it. And so the majority of the world is of such a mind that they either seek glory in it and wash their hands of it, or do something for the sake of appearances alone, which they do not care about. This is very annoying, when people soon become wise and tired of the word of God, as if it were only a matter of hearing it from time to time and then leaving it alone; although many of them also despise listening and let it stand. They, as soon as they hear it and it is said, think of another, and when the other comes, they look for another, and so on and on; forgetting the first and most necessary thing.

(28) I have often said, and I still say, whoever knows the Ten Commandments, and especially the first commandment, I will gladly sit at his feet and let him be my doctor. I consider myself more learned than the enthusiasts are, for they cannot do the Ten Commandments. But I can, praise God! I know, however, that the ten commandments are not

I still have to remain a student in this, even though I have often read the Bible. But the prudent and the wise, if they only know a sermon, they think they know it all, and they are doing their hopefulness with intemperate washing; but they know the devil on their head.

029 It is a hostile people that are so soon taught. For they do not think otherwise than that they hear the ten commandments as common things, and can wash, chatter, and prate of them as of anything else. But, dear fellow, it is not a matter of chattering, but of bringing them into life and into action, and publicly proving to everyone that you are thus minded, before you would act against some commandment of God, you would rather let everything on earth pass over it. Now be a master and prove yourself honestly.

Therefore, we conclude that no man on earth keeps and fulfills the commandments of God. Yes, even such spirits and washers do not attack it with a letter or the smallest work. Therefore this is their way: In one day they learn the law and the gospel, so that they can do a lot of washing, but in the meeting, in the deed and the proof there is no one at home. They are only feathers and hairs.

(31) Against these evil spirits and vile talkers Moses set these words, saying, Thou shalt take them to heart. That is, do not become wise to me too soon; do not think that you have eaten it all up, devoured it, and have long since gotten rid of it, or that it is learned as soon as it is heard. No; I will not be content if you take it on the tongue and in the ears, and then let it rush and float over. You shall take it and put it into your heart; therein it shall be and remain your comfort, defiance and support. Strive for it, come to it.

After these things sharpen and sharpen them unto thy children. First of all, remember for yourself that you learn them well, not only in the book, in your ears, and on your tongue, but that you put them into your heart, so that it pleases you from the heart to live by them. After that, when you have these commandments in your heart, continue that

you also teach them to your children. And says actually of sharpening and sharpening; does not say, thou shalt teach them alone and recite to them; but with this word "sharpening" he shows what kind of fellows we are. It does not want to be done with bad instruction and admonition, but to be driven, practiced, urged, and persevered in. For our heart is dull, obdurate, and rusty, that it will not cleave to it; it very soon falls from words, therefore it must always be acted upon. Otherwise it disgusts this food, soon gets tired of it; yes, it always wants to be master before it has become a disciple. That is why it is always necessary for those who are commanded to us preachers to stop, so that they may learn it all the better.

(33) I myself know some who think that we should not have preachers or pastors, and that we should tolerate the priests because of custom and old tradition; the salary and expenses that they incur annually could well be used in other and better ways. As if they were (as he says) a necessarium malum. Especially the nobility and some of the clever ones say: "We have books from which we can read it just as well as if we heard it in church from the priest. You read the devil on your head, who then possessed you. If our Lord God had known that the ministry of preaching was not necessary, he would have been so wise and prudent that he would not have had Moses preach it to you, and would have had no need for your ungodly, devilish, foolish thoughts and speeches, so that he would have ordered the Levitical priesthood later on, and would have sent out prophets all the time, as he himself says [Matth. 23, 34]. He would have remained at home as a preacher and pastor during this time. So he would not have been allowed to bind the parents that they were so serious about it and did not let them hang. He knows very well where we are lacking.

This follows by nature: If you get to the point where you think you know the gospel, the ten commandments and the words of God, you are lost, and the devil has won the game. Therefore, when we get tired of this teaching, and it tastes to us like the dregs of a fast, our heart wants something new; it is tired and fed up with the former [2 Tim. 4:3]. Then one commonly says

So I say: Oh, I heard that a long time ago, tell me something else. Thus one always wants to have a different teaching, and people's noses stink of innovation. So when the heart is tired of God's word and no longer considers it its best treasure, then the door is open behind and in front, so that the devil has free access and can introduce all kinds of error [Luc. 11, 26].

(35) So it happened with the enthusiasts, as before in all church histories; herewith they were moved around by the devil, felled and prevailed over, thus he got room. The gospel and the faith of Christ were not a great treasure to them, they had to have something new; they were disgusted with great art, Christ was too little for them; they could do it all; it was an annoying doctrine to them. If a sick person no longer likes food, but is afraid and disgusted by it, he is not far from death, he will soon die. So also, if the heavenly food of the divine word is unpleasant and no longer tastes good, he will not keep it up long.

Let no one think, as long as he lives, that he will unlearn the first commandment. Because God Himself thinks highly of it and does not want anything more glorious or better to be preached, and Moses is not ashamed that he always plays one song on one string, that is, one thing, so it is not shameful for us to always teach and hear one thing. I should be more ashamed and disgusted that I always preach and teach the same thing than you, who should hear it from me. But the Holy Spirit and God are not weary of teaching the same thing, and so we are a hostile people, despising everything. May God protect us from the same filth, so that we do not also fall into the trap of making ourselves believe that we can do it. Truly, the text is set here contrary to such rich, disgusting spirits, so that no one may think that he has learned it all.

**V. 7 And speak of it when you sit in your house, or when you walk by the way, when you lie down, or when you rise up.**

(37) Behold, how Moses diligently doeth this: Whether thou be at home, or in the field, thou shalt speak of the word; therefore shalt thou not be weary of it. When thou risest up, and when thou goest to sleep, thou shalt do it; thou shalt paint it in thine hands, and write it over thy door, that thou mayest have it always before thine eyes, and do it always, and that it may always be a memorial unto thee. What is this? What does he mean? Moses not only wanted to imprint this commandment on our hearts, but also on our whole life.

The Jews took a way from this text, from Matth. 23, 5. that they made a parchment skin around the head, on which the ten commandments were written, and wrote them also around the clothes; just as we now preach God's word, read, sing, paint, print and write. This was not a wicked way and custom with the Jews, for they wanted to have God's word before their eyes, and painted it in all places, even in the gardens, and certainly took such a way from this text. But they were boys and peelers, as one is wont to say in the proverb: A paternoster wear at the neck, a rogue in the heart 2c. This is not evil, but it is only a pretense, because they pretend to be godly, and in reality they do not even stand up to it; therefore it is hypocrisy, and Christ is also hostile to them, and punishes them severely for it.

Thou shalt preach and speak of this commandment in the house: that is, whatsoever thou doest in the house, or in the field, or in whatsoever place thou mayest be, thou shalt always remember it, that thou do no evil. When I am in the marketplace, remember God's commandment that I do no harm to my neighbor, for God has commanded me not to steal; where the commandment pleases you, and you love God with your heart, you do not steal. If you have this commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," in the marketplace, or in the field, where one has goods, and [fields] 2) to his neighbor, be obedient to him; if you love GOD and His word, you will protect yourself from all deceit, usury, avarice and deceitfulness.

1) In the original and in the Erlanger: this.  
2) Added by us to give meaning.

and not do anything against it. That is, to act so that one's life is guided by it.

40 Therefore, when thou traffickest in the house, being a craftsman, a brewer, a cobbler, a tailor, a baker, 2c., remember, I will deal thus with my neighbor, that I offend no man, nor exaggerate, translate, deceive, presume. For God commanded in the seventh commandment: I shall not steal, nor cheat, nor defraud anyone 2c. If I love God's word and commandment, I will not wrong anyone. But where are such? Christians should always say, "I will live my life according to this, so that I do not sin against my God or offend my neighbor. And these keep and fulfill this law, who thus bring it into life.

41) Let the Pharisees and hypocrites go, who wrote the law on their hats and skirts, and never remembered God's commandment, and deceived their neighbor. For this writing on the hats is of no use, even if you rub it in with separating water, 3) for such a one is and remains a rogue. But a devout Christian shall say thus: I will direct my life, work and business with God's help, so that I do not sin against my God, and do wrong to no one; that you remember to love, fear and trust God, and to do harm to no one, but to do good to everyone; then continue, you are on the right path.

(42) Those who carry out and continue the commandments in their lives write the mark on their hands. All this is to be done, that thou remember it always in all thy words, works, and undertakings, that thou fear God, trust in him, and do harm to no man, kill not, commit not adultery, steal not, 2c. but be useful to everyone. Lift this up, and lay hold on your life; do it for a year, and tell me again for a year what you can of the first and the other commandments all, and you shall know it. Remember not to seek your own, not to betray your neighbor, not to overreach anyone, then you will see what loving God means, and you will realize that you are not yet

3) Original: einbeißest.

If you have learned the ABC, you will also recognize yourself as a gross sinner. Then there would not be so much theft and evil deeds. If you loved God, you would not worship mammon. Your whole life testifies against you that you do not love God, but rather hate Him.

**V. 9. And thou shalt write them over thy house posts.**

(43) That is, Thou shalt remember, whether thou goest out or cometh in, whether thou dealest with thy neighbor at home or without, that thou shalt so live that thou shalt not do evil against thy God. Therefore, God wants these commandments written before the eyes of all.

44 This is a necessary admonition that Moses gives to the first commandment. For he has seen that people, out of pride, make themselves believe that if they have only heard God's word, they can and do know it all perfectly well, yet they live in anger and do little according to it. Therefore he will direct them from the hearing into the heart and life, how they should live with the heart and in their walk. Then people will also see how they harm their neighbor with words and deeds, always seeking their own, and each thinking only of his own cause: God give, let his neighbor stay where he will. For the world prefers mammon to God.

45. But these are the right high things, when God the Lord not only sets before us His commandments, which we despise, but when He also attacks us, sends us plagues and calamities, throws us into the cross and persecution, hangs poverty and sickness on our necks, so that you think God is your enemy. Then see if you can love God in such affliction and sorrow, and how patient you are in it; if you also suffer such things without grumbling, as Job, who still praises and gives thanks in his cross, and says [Job 1:21, 2:10]: "If we have received good things from the hand of the Lord, why will we not accept evil? Praise be to the name of the Lord." There you will find the right knots. If you have not done evil to your neighbor, and if you have kept the ten commandments of God a little, you will still find that the will of God is not pleasing to you.

who should be your highest comfort and treasure. Item, when you are reviled and violated, see if you can love your worst enemy.

(46) But we will leave this for now, and remain only with the common way, that these commandments should not be regarded badly, as loving God with the tongue alone, but that they should be grasped in the heart and in the whole life, that you always remember what you speak, do, intend and begin, in all your affairs and life, that you do not transgress the ten commandments, angering God and your neighbor, so that the word of God may be your best treasure, and dearest to you of all.

**V. 10-i2. When therefore the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give thee; great and goodly cities, which thou hast not built; and halls full of good things, which thou hast not cut down; and wells hewn up, which thou hast not hewn up; and vineyards, and mountains of oil; 2c. take heed lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.**

(47) After Moses has explained the first commandment, namely, "to love God with all our heart," he continues, and wants us to stay with the same word and not to seek another sermon, for we can do this quite well. Now he also wants to tell us about the obstacles and the aversions against this commandment, or the sins, so that one acts against the first commandment and transgresses, and wants to clear these out of the way, so that we remain with the first commandment, and avoid and flee such things.

The first obstacle and trouble is Mammon, called riches and abundance, about which Moses laments and prophesies that he will tear you away from your God and from his love, so that you will fall on beautiful houses, oil and grain, fields and vineyards, and other temporal goods, which will then become your god, and you will forget the Lord your God, when you are showered with such physical goods. 32, 13-15], as otherwise the god of all the world is the cursed mammon. Now God wants to defend all of them here in the text and bind them: All that is told now shall not be so dear to you.



than God; for you shall love him above all things, and before that you shall leave your house, your court, your castles, your fields, and everything, that you may keep only the commandments of God.

49) But these words are soon spoken, "You shall love God," 1) yet they have a difficult appearance; they do not ring and ring in our hearts; God's word is not valid in our hearts. What is the point of the five words? some think; for their sake I cannot leave house, field, meadows and other my goods; I take a hundred guilders for these words: Love GOD, your Lord. I do not care much about the words, my house and mammon are much more dear to me. Therefore mammon or avarice is the first thing that hinders you from loving God. So that you forget him and despise him, the beautiful houses and vineyards will do that. This is mammon. Baruch the prophet also says [Cap. 3, 17] that people rely on gold. And David knows well the plague and sickness of men, because he says in the 62nd Psalm, v. 11: "If riches come to you, do not set your heart on them." Therefore St. Paul also says [Col. 3, 5] that avarice is idolatry and a root of all evil [1 Tim. 6, 10]. Therefore be warned from this text. For the first devil and the first temptation is mammon or riches, which cause one not to love God and to be drawn away from God's word.

50 Is this not the way things are in the world? Doesn't experience testify to it? When children grow up and become adults, they make a distinction between goods and parents. Who are the ones who prefer to have their parents rather than the goods? How do they remember the pain, sorrow, and toil that their parents have suffered for having brought them up, even for having put honor, body, and goods upon them? Now that they have been brought up, they would like their parents, father and mother, to be dead, so that they alone could have the goods. For the property is much dearer to one than the parents. Yes, one finds pious people who fight with their parents for the goods. They thank their parents so that they would like to see them dead, so that they would get the patrimony.

and bring them to themselves. Then the quarrel, anger and hatred against the parents arise. Otherwise one who loves and fears God would say: Before I would quarrel with you, dear father, before I would let all good things go. Now those who fear God do this.

(51) Thus we also see how often brothers become mortal enemies among themselves for the sake of good. Who breaks the love between the brothers there? Squire Mammon. But where brotherly love would be here, you speak: Before I am angry with you, I would rather that all good things swam in the Elbe.

So one citizen and farmer also acts with the other. Who then can make children despise their parents? Who causes such dissension between brothers who are of one heart, of one flesh and blood? The god Mammon, he arranges it all. So Mammon tramples God's commandments so that they are not respected, neither by children, sisters, brothers nor neighbors, and natural parents, brothers, and all good friends must be put in second place; as you can see in the divisions, where one immediately thinks: If only I had the house, the meadows, my father, mother, brother and sister would be where they wanted. Do you see here how a mighty lord and god the wretched Mammon is, that he also destroys all God's love and commandments, and teaches to consider them as nothing?

Moses faithfully warns us of this, saying: "Mammon will challenge you and ride you; open your eyes and stay with the one God, and remember: "Fie on you, you wretched thing, that for your sake I should have enmity, hatred, strife and envy against my parents, brothers and neighbors; if I never have goods, I have God, who can give them to me. According to the teachings of St. Paul, I should use worldly goods as if I did not have them, 1 Cor. 7:30, 31: "Those who buy do not keep them, and those who need this world do not need them. So let God be dearer to you than all the goods on earth. If he has given you a house, gardens and vineyards, which you have not planted, trust in him; he who has given you these things can give you more.

54. verily, what thou obtainest from thy

1) "To love" put by us (according to the Bible) instead of: "to love" to make five words, as follows immediately.

Parents, you did not acquire or earn this, but God gave it to you through the parents. We must confess this. But if you ask Mammon: Which is nobler and better, God and parents, or goods? he says: Goods are better than God and parents. Therefore Moses admonishes us here that we should prefer God and His commandment to all the goods on earth. For even if everything is taken from you, he is still your God. He can give you more. Even if he would not give you more, he will not let you die of hunger, for he says: "I am your God. It will be certain that the LORD your God has promised you; but hold fast to his word, and know that goods will follow.

55 Therefore I say, The first offense against this commandment is mammon, who wants to be another god, and is also another god. It was so with the Jews, and also still with us, that we look more to the good than to God and his commandment. This is what mammon does. For if you loved God and His commandments, you would not set yourself against God and His word, even against your neighbor, for the sake of good. But now you are attached to mammon, despising and hating God. This is a sure sign that one does not love God, because one acts so deliberately against God and one's neighbor.

56. But it will not be given to us, says Moses [v. 15], "for your God is a fierce God among you. Therefore see to it that not even his wrath be angry, and destroy you from the earth. Then you see that [it] is not a joke, you must not take it to the wind, nor make a mockery of it. For if I do not keep it today, nor tomorrow, I will no longer have a God in him, but a devouring, devouring fire, which will devour everything, as said above [Cap. 4:24]; that is, he will cut you off from the land and destroy you, destroy your life and limb, and then your soul, so that he will condemn you forever with your wealth and goods.

(57) As experience teaches us with usurers and miserly men, who drain and exploit the people to the limit with their stealing and robbery, God has given us the right to do so.

and despise his word, his servants and all warning; so he despises them again, that their wealth, money and goods do not come to the other or third heir. For male quaesit, male perdit, says the whale. But since they as Christians let God be dearer to them than mammon and goods, they would have enough of all things, and wealth and abundance would be in their houses, also in their descendants, as the 37th Psalm, v. 25, says: "I have been young, and have grown old, and have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed going after bread." Item [Proverbs 10:22]: *Benedictio Domini divites facit. Summa Summarum*: This is the first devil and hindrance that makes us forget God and His commandments. But here we are warned to learn to hold His commandments more dear than all the good that is on earth. May God protect us from mammon, amen!

Thus far the first obstacle against the first commandment has been the mammon, which is a true idol and the worst enemy of God. Moses sternly warned his followers against this idol, that they should be careful not to let mammon ride on their backs and listen to them, nor to serve him, and to love temporal goods more than God. Therefore he said that they should take the Ten Commandments into their hearts and always practice them as a doctrine that cannot be practiced, imagined and acted upon enough. For the devil, the world and our flesh are always stirring up and creating opposition, storming and raging against this commandment. Therefore, since these three do not tire of fighting and opposing this commandment, neither should we tire or grow weary of practicing and enforcing this commandment.

59) So this teaching is always necessary among the people, that Moses says: "You shall" not only "sharpen these words", but "when you sit in the house, be on the way" 2c. That is, it is not necessary for you to write it on the walls with letters, to paint it over the doors and posts for eternal remembrance; as the Jews had such a way, but in all business, handling, food and work we should see to it that we do not offend or harm anyone, but act in such a way that God is more able with us, and more able with us.

Mammon is right with us. For if we go out or come in, if we buy or sell, whatever our nature may be, let a man beware lest mammon deceive him, lest he cleave to it more than to God. Let each man look to his own hand, eyes and deeds, what he does, how his nature and trade stand, so that mammon does not deceive him into evil and wickedness.

(60) The shameful mammon is the greatest god on earth, and it is a dangerous thing to deal in goods [Matt. 19:23]. Those who have riches and goods generally trust in them [Luc. 12, 19. 16, 19.]; those who do not have them seek them day and night, and would gladly gain something. He who has wealth has pleasure and joy in it; on the other hand, everyone is afraid of poverty. Everyone must have an advertisement, business, work, and trade, and wait for it; and there it is dangerous, where something is acquired and driven together. For it readily happens that one either has hope and defiance of the good, or doubts of want. This life hovers between scarcity and possessions, between good and poverty; therefore it leans toward one of two ends, that is, toward trust or despair. This is the source of all kinds of mischief, so that people eat and grind, scratch and scrape among themselves, and so that one person betrays and deceives the other wherever he can, according to the common saying: "He who is able puts the other in sackcloth.

### **Great and fine cities that you have not built, houses full of good things, vineyards and olive groves 2c.**

(61) Then he expounds it with more words and a little more extensively; and here we see the assiduous diligence of Moses in expounding this first commandment. First of all he said, and put these words: "I am the LORD thy God, thou shalt not have other gods." To this he adds a prophecy: "I am a zealous God, visiting the sin of the fathers upon the children, even to the third and fourth generation. Item, puts also to it a promise, as: "To those who love me and keep my commandments, to them I do good to the thousandth part" [5 Mos. 5, 8-10.].

62. lastly, he says: do you want the opinion

I will tell you, when you come into the land and take possession of beautiful houses, gardens, vineyards, mountains of oil, water with fish, and all that I will give you in abundance without your labor and merit, then look at it, it will become the first devil that will blind your eyes, so that you will put the fear of God out of your heart, despise God, and forget the first commandment. For thou shalt cleave unto the goodly houses, and vineyards, and lands, and other goods, which I shall give thee, 2c., and shalt make a god of them, and put thy trust in them, and shalt not inquire so much of me, but shalt forget me.

Thus, idolatry is already established when a man trusts more in mammon than in God, and fears lest he lose him. Moses did not say this in vain, and so diligently warned and admonished, for he knew that Mammon was such a god. And here we hear strong evidence that our nature, reason and will are inclined against the first and all other following commandments. We are such fellows: When things go well for us, we forget God and cannot thank Him, and do not recognize His benefits that He has helped us to achieve, nor can we look back to the time when we did not have them.

(64) But when there is danger, affliction, and distress, or when there is a lack, there is no confidence, faith, and hope in us; prayer lies low, and despair comes upon us. This has been seen not only by the prophets and church teachers, but also by the pagans. And many wise people have complained about good fortune and bad fortune, about good days and bad days, that one does not know how to handle this. So there is also a German saying: There must be strong legs that can carry good days. Item: Man can suffer everything, but not good days. It is also said that when a donkey is too comfortable, he goes dancing on the ice and breaks a leg.

The poet Ovidius speaks finely: *Luxuriant animi, rebus plerunque secundis, nec facile est, aequa commoda mente pati.* Thus

1) In the original: eiget; "sich eugen" (äugen) --- to show oneself.

a man can carry everything, however great and heavy it is, except for good times, which are impossible for him to carry. Virgilius also noticed this and added these verses: *Nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futurae, et servare modum rebus sublata secundis.* A man, when he is well off, cannot sustain himself by his own efforts, misses himself, and exalts himself of wealth and happiness, and goes away.

Read the histories, both of Christians and pagans, and you will find it well. About this, there is also the experience that good makes courage, courage makes overconfidence, overconfidence never does good. That is, not being able to endure good days. It is also seen in the household, and everyone in his position grasps it with his hands, if he did not want to see it in the holy scriptures. If a servant has too pious a master, a child a kind father, a maid a kind wife, they cannot bear it; the kinder it is done to them by their lordship, the less they respect it. So also do the citizens; they are always the more wanton, the more lenient the council and the authorities are.

The lighter the masters they have, the worse they are. If someone is to bring them to something with kindness and goodness, he must have good luck; that is why it is like this: If you beg a farmer, his belly swells up. So it is with every man. If he has good days, it is not good for him to perish until he causes misfortune, and God plucks out his great feathers; for the feeding stings him, it is too good for him. There are many sayings about this, all of which belong here, and are based on this opinion, that when a man is happy and feels good, he is never well to deal with, for he becomes stubborn, obstinate and strange; the devil cannot get along with him.

68] This is what God is complaining about through Moses, and he is about to speak in a human way, saying, "I am not well pleased to make you rich and full, because when I bring you into the land, you will turn back and tempt me. 1) As otherwise in the

1) lücken --- to be impudent and wanton; to jump, to leap, to strike behind.

As it is written in Genesis [Deut. 32:15], "Israel has become fat and fatty," so he begins to lick me and strikes me with his heel. In sum, we must be pressed with the cross and suffering so that we will not be proud.

Therefore nothing is better for the world than a sharp, hard, strong regiment, as is still the case with the Turks and some noble squires are swift, grasping rulers, who take the peasants' coats and skirts. Such rude tyrants belong in the world, not pious authorities, so that they may dampen their hopes. For the world cannot be ruled with kindness and gentleness, for there are always too many bad boys.

Therefore, you see what God is complaining about, namely, that when he makes people prosper through his fatherly kindness, they forget him and all his good deeds. Now Germany lacks nothing, because it is so well off, everyone does what he wants; Germany has this plague, it is too well off, and the authorities are too lenient. That is why there is a loud will to courage in all classes; almost everyone lives according to his own liking. It is lacking that the frogs do not have storks as kings; truly, the donkey goes dancing on the ice. But they will continue to be stubborn until the Lord comes and says: "You have despised me long enough; I will teach you morality, so that you may know that I am still God. For experience always agrees with the Holy Scriptures.

71 Therefore Moses says: Behold, it will not be given to you; if it does not happen, punish Moses with lies. The pious Moses is not lacking in his diligence, always repeats the previous warnings and says: Be careful, your God is a zealous God, so that you do not provoke His wrath against you, and He lets you see a little something that you would never have thought of. This is what he always rubs into their nostrils, that they should fear God, and not let themselves be turned away from the Lord, nor forget him, for he is an angry God, and punishes to the third and fourth generation. But the dear Jews did not ask anything about it, God may be zealous in the first commandment, or be angry, as he wants.

This plague is also between our skin and flesh. When we have only good days,

We do not ask for God, priests, princes, father and mother, and even the devil. But when the hour comes for wrath to come upon you, it will be said, "Exterminated from the earth! Then you will lament that your wife is violated before your eyes, your children are killed, your parents are slain, and your skin is beaten out and your neck is cut. There you want to have help, rescue and protection. But then it will have waited too long.

Therefore, the Lord wants you to understand here: If thou shalt be stubborn against me, I will also be unwilling to help, when death, the devil, war, pestilence and all misfortunes come in heaps, and I will also let thee flounder and be stuck, yes, the last 1) play with thee.

74 It is said to you here beforehand, so that you may be guided by it, that even if you cry out to God, he will not hear you. For here the text is clear that God wants to punish your willfulness, which has been driven against him and against your dominion, so that you yourself will say that he has paid and struck you right. In sum, good days cannot be otherwise than forgetting God, and presumption follows, which passes over, and the fear of God perishes.

(75) Oh, that each one of us would now think in his own state: I am well, praise God; I will fear God, give thanks to Him from my heart and serve Him, and in addition I will faithfully fulfill my own, and do what is required of me in my state, I will be humble and devoted; I know that the Lord will show me mercy. But if I am disobedient and unthankful, the Lord has promised me that he will destroy me from the earth. If this were thought of, there would not be so many lamentations and plagues from the drudgery and so much unfaithfulness of the people. But now everyone thinks that our Lord God has died, that his evil and wickedness will not be punished. Therefore, each one should be ready to be obedient to our Lord God and to do good before His wrath is kindled.

In the Turkish regiment, the servants are treated like this: If a maid does not want to be obedient, she is sold for three pennies; then someone buys her and beats her like you beat a cow or donkey, and chases her with a whip if she does not want to do what she is supposed to do. A strict regiment is also kept everywhere else, and it looks better than with us Christians. The Turk has more guilders than our princes have pennies; nevertheless, he is diligent in his affairs. Each of the Turkish servants has his allotted amount of food, drink and work; if he does not spend it as he should, he is soon there with rods and whips; if that does not help, he strikes with his sword, the knife follows soon after and cuts off his head.

(77) But with us, if a laborer or a servant misses a day or two, or is otherwise disobedient and unfaithful to his master, he has no conscience about it, but thinks he is doing right; therefore now almost no one is obedient to father and mother or authorities. But when the devil comes among you, you will be destroyed from the earth. Therefore, such a Turkish regiment must follow, which will smash us to ruins. Such a regime belongs in the world, that one should rule differently to the people, just as the Turk does; when he lifts up a finger, it goes as he wills in his whole empire. And where such rulers are not, God is forgotten, and all kinds of estates are despised as authorities, their commandments, parents, lords and wives, and other ordained persons.

78 For the wanton people make themselves believe that we must be tolerated and have, that we cannot be dispensed with. That is, we have lived without the fear of God, we have forgotten God, we have not feared God; we forget God, and we do not fear him for good days, and for the service of mammon, for he is our God. But if it were so, that every man should have but a morsel of bread and a drink of water, and yet his measured work, as to load up ten cartloads of dung, and to lead it out, and if he did not do this, after him with the distemper, then they would become more pious, and God not so.

despise. But since this is not so (as we may not get there in blissful times), it is also impossible for them to become better. Therefore it follows:

# **V. 15 Lest the wrath of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee.**

79. What has God done to the stiff-necked Jews? In the time of King Ahab, for four and a half years, He did not let a drop of rain fall [1 Kings 17:7]. Then the wrath also came upon them, and the whole earth withered away. It is terrible and horrible to say that there was a great famine [1 Kings 18:2], that there was no food for the people, no fodder for the cattle, so that all the cattle were slaughtered. And how did it go in the final destruction of Jerusalem, did God not pay them honestly? that after other punishments they finally bought dove droppings and donkeys' heads, one almost for three guilders, which they otherwise would not have been allowed to eat. The children died of hunger in their parents' arms; others saw their children slain; some slaughtered their children; after that the cities were plundered. So God avenged their ingratitude and punished their contempt. As if to say: You have forgotten me, well, I will now forget you again. And when the need was there, they cried out; but he heard them not, neither helped they.

So it will also happen to us ungrateful Germans that we will cry out in misfortune and hardship and receive the word: My wrath is fierce, and we will have no hearing nor help. For our days are too good; we know not (with leave) where our backs are. Upon my soul, it is not to be joked about; it is not possible that [it] remain unpunished; the punishment cannot fail. A great plague must come upon Germany; I fear it will all come at once, pestilence, war, famine. No one fears God, everything is wanton; servants, farmers, craftsmen, do everything they want. No one punishes, everyone lives according to his will, cheats and deceives the other. It is impossible that [it] should remain like this for a long time, because the good days deceive us.

Would to God that there were among us some

few understood this, who prayed earnestly that the punishment would be postponed, and if it did not remain, that the wrath would not come in our or our children's time. For when war comes and the Turk comes, faith, preaching, the knowledge of Christ, the sacrament, baptism and the Lord's Supper are all gone, as can be seen under the Turk, and we become like beasts, so that they drive us and hunt us down like cows. Then you will have to do what you do not want to do now. And those who do not want to live according to God's commandment now will only have the Turks sent upon their necks. If the Turkish empire did not harm the gospel, I would wish it upon us, that it would be our master, and afflict us well, who are now safe spirits. But it is impossible, he destroys the Gospel and the Church of God.

(82) Therefore it is better that we should suffer the adversity, the people's willfulness, and the peasants' reproach, with the gospel, than that we should have the Turk for our master without the gospel, and lose the gospel. But if we were under the Turk, each one would have his measured food, certain purpose and time to eat, and a definite work, and not a drink of wine, but water, and his piece of bread, and not a morsel over it. You would not have to go to beer, as it would be good to prevent people's slovenliness and gluttony and drunkenness. As now in Turkey the captive Christians are forbidden to drink, and now they suffer hunger and have to work like donkeys. If you would not do it, the Lord would come with a rope, bind you and scourge you. Then you would know that I had not lied; if I were lying, rebuke me. You would then gladly give thanks for the peace, and God the Lord would take you out of the alehouse in the name of the devil, and you would have to work as if your skin was smoking. Then you would remember me. If I lie, Moses also lies; but he will not lie, therefore it will also become true with you.

First of all, do what God has commanded you. Do not be a servant of mammon, do not forget God. Then do not steal, do not rob.

Do not, serve, work faithfully, do your office, what you are commanded, with diligence and faithfulness. Be obedient to your overlords, and you will have a gracious God, and you will be blessed, become rich, and prosper. But if you do not work faithfully and honestly and treat your neighbor sincerely, you shall be destroyed; wrath, anger and persecution shall befall you.

84 Dear one, do not let the good days deceive you. But this is in vain, and is said to the deaf. As it is said that it is impossible to endure good days. Therefore it must be inculcated with the word of God, to raise us up a little, and to exhort and urge us to fear God, and not to forget Him, if it would help a little, as otherwise, without the sermon, truly, no one would respect Him. For when nature is too comfortable and lives without God's word, it goes dancing on the ice and runs into the lark's field, where it stings the food. In danger, however, it cannot preserve itself; there is nothing but trembling, trembling, fear and despair.

For this reason, the preaching of the divine word is prepared to exhort a man to the fear of God, and to remain with God when he is well, and again, not to despair when he is ill, but to persevere steadfastly in the faith. So also here the divine word admonishes us, saying: Be careful, beware when you have good days; for, do you know what it means? When you fatten the swine, you want to slaughter them; death is nearer to the sows than when they go astray; as Jeremiah the prophet also says [Jer. 12:3].

So, if God gives you good days, gives you grist and mire, and you fatten yourself with God's goods, it is truly for your brat. One will come and slaughter you, and make sausages of you, and eat you up, and consume the sea, the lard and the fat, that is, take away your accumulated goods and treasure.

87. this is a piece that Moses wants to say: rather, when there is good time, and there is no pestilence or other accident present, and you

1) Grist --- coarsely ground grain.

sits in alehouses, drinks, sings and listens, and does not ask much about what [the] grain is worth, where one takes food and drink. As the servants think: The master and the wife must manage well; they are without worries, and the day laborers work four days a week. To the same it is said: Because it is so good, beware of the safety and forgetfulness of God, do not become bold and proud; for it is time that you remember God's commandment and do not forget God.

(88) Truly you should thank God that you are sitting there with good peace as a squire, and God the Lord is keeping you this peace for so long; you are driving your sheep out and in from the sheepfold without any care, so that the murderers do not slay you. But yes, that you only once remember: Dear God, help me to do what you want me to do, that I love you and serve my neighbor, I will cheat no one, give my eggs and cheese right 2) purchase. No one wants to think about this, and thank God for such gifts, to be obedient to the authorities, and to serve the neighbor; but one says: I want to be free, to sup my beer, to sell what is mine with advantage, deceit, and overthrow; because it is mine. And so you need the noble peace and the gifts of God, that you desecrate and blaspheme God. Therefore he will come and tear you out of the earth in his wrath and destroy you. Do you understand me? I am speaking in German. You have a blessed time, I also wish you happiness in your good days, that you may use them well. But watch out, come war, since you now give two pennies for a jug of beer, then you would gladly give a penny.

You will not then sit idle in the marketplace, as you do now, when you live in all riches and abundance, and use these benefits, not to thank God, but rather to spite and shame Him, and to harm your neighbor; you do not think of temporal peace as you thank God for it. So in a household the servant cares nothing for food and drink, does not care for food, clothing and wages, considers it all nothing; for he knows and relies on it,

2) "right", which is missing in the original, is taken by us from the old edition.

The Lord must provide well. He does not think how good his days are, lets someone else take care of him, is disobedient to his lordship; thinks that he is there only to eat and drink; thus abuses his good days, and stings him too much with food, and makes himself shitty enough.

(90) But the great men and mighty men do this much more surely. Doesn't that mean forgetting God when he does good to you, and you don't know how to make yourself bad enough to annoy God and harm your neighbor, you don't think about temporal peace? How, if theurung, war and strife came, and took away this treasure of peaceful, sufficient life? Then servants and maids will become so cheap that twenty, thirty, forty maids and servants would gladly serve more diligently for a piece of bread than they do now and for money. In other places, where there is a theurung, one takes a piece of bread and serves for two days; now she serves barely half a year so diligently for great pay and wages.

91 Therefore Moses saith, Beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee up out of Egypt. But we do not see it now, it is out of our sight; but it will come to our fist one day; we struggle for it, and it will come. We pervert everything, and trust too much in the good days, since we should be afraid in the good days, and not be too sure; again, consider the time of trouble, that then one should trust in God and not despair. For God will not lie; if you misuse your good days, He will destroy you. This is one thing, that we should fear, and not forget evil in the blessed time; that you should think what it would be like if war or terror came, and if you should serve one who would hardly give you a piece of bread, and strike you to the ground for it. Again, that you also hope in God in the time of tribulation. That is, as the wise man Solomon [Proverbs 30:9] says: When things go well for us, we exalt ourselves; when things go badly, we despair; this he took from the first commandment. This is a part of our naughtiness: When it is well with nature, it cannot abstain.

she forgets about God; and lets go hands and feet when things are bad.

Therefore God's commandment and word must come to encourage, awaken and warn us, for your own good, lest you come to harm, and lest, when it is well with you, you trust in your present gifts and goods and do evil against God and your neighbor; otherwise, if it were not for the preaching, it would come to pass that one ass would put the other in sackcloth. So Solomon admonishes us in the same way that Moses did, that we not be deceived by security, lest the donkey go dancing on the ice. Therefore, the donkey's food must be placed higher, so that he can honestly 1) bear the skin, and so that his ribs may be counted; sacks must be placed on him.

93) In the book of Proverbs of Sirach [Cap. 33:25] it is said, "To the ass belong three things, food, sackcloth, and staves; so also to a servant belong food, work, labor, and staves"; that is, to every one that hath business, that hath office or service, whether he be mayor, or judge, or servant, or maid, or whatsoever his profession be, he shall have three things. First of all, he shall be given food and drink, and then a sack to carry out his work and supply him with food and drink, so that he may not only eat and drink, but also work. And if he refuses to have only the food and not the sack, then a good stick must be used, and the skin must be threshed so that the stripes are counted, and the tickle and the lick will be gone from him.

(94) Each one wants only food, but you must also carry the sack. The donkey does not like to carry the sack, nor does the servant like to have the work; but we all want to have the food and the wages, we all strive for good days. There is no lack of food, yes, we have too much; we would also have sacks, but there is no stick, there is no earnestness, anger and emphasis, as there should be. The stick should also follow later, so that one strikes. The Turk or some other horrible tyrant belongs to us; although our princes are also sticks enough.

1) honest--barely.



**V. 16. 17. You shall not tempt the LORD your God, as you tempted him 1) in Massa; but you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes which he commanded.**

This is the other piece. For, as I have said, when one is too well off, he does not fear God, he forgets him, and becomes arrogant and presumptuous. No one cares for the other, thinks that he is not allowed to serve anyone, so he robs and steals in the world. Again, when things go bad, flesh and blood can suffer nothing less than evil days. Mammon has two arms, with which he rules the world; with the right arm he rules, when things are going well, everyone does what he wants; then one fears Mammon, and God is forgotten. When things go badly, when evil days are present, he rules with his left arm; then man tempts God the Lord.

Now the temptation of God is many. But here he speaks of the real temptation of God, namely, when Israel tempted God in the wilderness with the bread of heaven; when they had neither food nor drink, they went to Moses, and once they had a fight with him, grumbling against God and Moses because of their hunger [Ex 16:2, 17:2]. They almost wanted to say, "The devil told you to bring us out of Egypt, and do you think that God is here? Otherwise we would ever have to eat. For this reason they would not believe, nor suffer any lack; they would not wait and trust, but immediately grumbled if there was no food; they set a goal, measure, person, time, manner for God: so you shall give it to me, through this, at the time 2c. They wanted to have our Lord God bound to give it to them according to their will and set goal and time, and could not wait one day for God 2) and say: I need this and that, but I leave it up to you; how or when you give it to me, I will gladly accept it.

97. that is, god is trying, if we want to have a thing from god, as we want to give it to him.

Or we fall away from him, that we also cannot expect One day, or give him what we need, or trust him, and stand firmly on him when things go badly. That's where idolatries and pilgrimages come from in the papacy, so that we celebrate the saints: that's how people ran to the oak tree when they were in trouble, so that the saints would help them. Each one has sought ways that he might suffer nothing, and trust God and expect help from Him. That is to try God, when I lack something, that he should give it to me soon, when I want it, and what I desire from him, and not wait or hope for his help.

Thus did the Jews, tempting and tormenting God in the wilderness, grumbling against God. What they only wanted, he had to do on a strict deadline, as to give water, quails and bread from heaven 2c.; aimed it at him with measure and time, when he should give it to them, but he did not accept it. So at all times mammon rules in two ways: First, when things go well, Mammon is master, and makes us forget God, makes us safe. Again, when things are going badly, he will come again and make you try God in your misfortune, or throw him away and accept another. Thus Mammon wants to rule in abundance and in scarcity. Do you not see this before your eyes? They would like to have it in their fist. If they have it, God is forgotten. If it goes well, it is no good; if it goes badly, much less. If it goes well or badly, he is not to be advised.

99. How can you help him? Mammon fights and stings. The first commandment is in such dire straits that it cannot be kept, for better or worse. How can one make people pious? How can one govern the world? Let there be a measure and a way. For if it goes well, God is forgotten; in danger God is tempted. If the LORD said, I will give a man good days, and he shall serve me. Yes, behind him, as the peasants carry the spits. If I give it to them, they do not thank me; but if I am angry with them, they run away from me, and attach themselves to other gods, or despair.

100. this is how it goes: if I laugh, they will

1) "him" is missing in the original and in the Erlanger.

2) "Gott" taken over by us from the old edition instead of "Gut" in the original and in the Erlanger.

proud; if I am angry, they despair. Thus nature cannot rule the world, and the commandments of God cannot be kept nor understood; for our nature cannot refrain from becoming proud when things go well for it; thus again, when things go badly, it cannot stand and wait. So you see how God's commandment resists on both 1) sides, and yet is equally despised. That would be a middle way or middle road, if it were to be found that God would not let it go too badly nor well, that not only good would go, but also not evil; for whichever goes, God is forgotten, despised or tempted. But this cannot happen, therefore one must be careful.

All idolatry under and in front of the papacy, with the endowment, the going astray 2c., comes from Mammon, that we want to have good days, and help ourselves; the same refuses that one does not trust God, but despises God's commandment, which says: "I am your God. But if we are not helped quickly tomorrow, or in this hour, and just in the way we want, we run to another God.

Do you see now the sum of the first commandment, what it wants? namely, if you are well, do not despise me, but fear me, says God; and if you are unwell, do not despair, but believe in me and trust me; if you are unwell, think also of me. We should all confess and say: O LORD, I am not worthy to sit here in peace with my wife and child and mine, and to have this piece of bread; and realize that it comes from GOD. Therefore, because it is from God, we should serve Him and give thanks for it, also, as the text reads, "love Him with all our heart," fear and trust, and thus believe in the cross and be patient, and wait for God's mercy and gracious help; for He wants to help us. So, if there is pestilence, even though it is evil, but because He has sent it to us, God will also come and will help His Word's followers. Therefore, no one should run elsewhere in any matter.

Let this commandment be written on the fingers and kept before the eyes in all works, so that when things go well, I may not become proud, nor again fall down and perish in adversity; for these are hindrances that turn us away from God. We are to remember this and bring it to life; and because the flesh, the world and the devil vex and afflict us with it, and are so strong, and draw us away from God, therefore it must always be acted upon, and keep us to the Word, and not let us depart from God. 2)

104 Thus we have the interpretation of the first commandment, which Moses explains very well, so that it can be understood, and shows all the obstacles, idolatry and wicked cunning, which the devil sets against it, so that he leads us away from the right faith. On the other hand, you have heard how he sharpens and sharpens it with promises and urges, so that he scares those who do not want to think of him as God; and again, he promises mercy to those who trust in him, because he wants to help the faithful.

The first annoyance was the tiresome mammon or temporal good. Of it he has set these words: Beware, when thou comest into the good and full land, lest the abundance deceive thee, and thou set not thy defiance and pride upon temporal goods, lest they win thine heart, and then remember him that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, and gave thee this land, and helped thee to these goods; forgetting therefore him by whom thou art brought.

(106) Therefore mammon is the first and foremost idol that leads away from the first commandment. For the human heart is arrogant by nature [Jer. 17:9] when it knows that it is able to do something by which it is restrained.

2) Note of the first edition: During this time, Doctor Martin Luther did not preach in Wittenberg, because he was in Marburg in Hesse at the Colloquium with the Sacramentarians, came back from there around Simonis Judä [Oct. 28] and continued to read. - The Marburg discussion was on October 1-4, 1529. On October 12, Luther was in Jena from the return trip; on October 17, he already wrote a letter to Myconius from Wittenberg (Walch, old edition, vol. XXI, 1186.). Therefore, we have placed the resumption of the sermons in the middle of October in the first note to this writing.

Good makes courage, and this courage makes an idol. Therefore, if you gain goods, do not set your heart on them. "If riches come to you, do not set your heart on them" [Ps. 62:11]. But do to him thus: Do not let wealth give you courage, otherwise God will not be feared, and man will become secure and bold. Therefore he speaks here: Remember him who brought you out of misery, that good deceive you not, as if it were of your own; but remember always, as if you were still in misery. Never forget the misery and distress from which you have been delivered. So keep your heart as if you did not yet have it, and as if you were still in poverty.

(107) So now we are also led out of many ropes of conscience and great misery and the tyranny of the papacy; it has been our hell and dungeon. Now we are free, no law drives us anymore, neither to celebrate nor to fast. We should be careful that we do not take courage from this freedom, that we pride ourselves as if we were no longer allowed to believe in God; rather, we should think back all the more often and be grateful to Him that He has delivered us from this prison. That is why we must always preach against the pope; for we should always remember the misery and house of service in which we have been so miserably afflicted and martyred, and not forget the benefits of God; otherwise we will become ungrateful, hard and stubborn, so that we will pay no attention to promises or predictions.

V. 15. For the LORD your God is a zealous God.

(108) Behold, how Moses drives the words of the first commandment, and how he so earnestly exhorts, keeping them always before our eyes and ears; for he is always anxious and fearful lest they become secure and too proud, and forget God in happiness. Just as we must take care that we do not rise up to freedom and forget that which led us out of the ropes and misery, but should remember: He who redeemed us from prison can also throw us back into it, and, what is more, destroy us from the earth as if we were dust. Therefore he holds God up to us as a zealot and as a consuming fire who knows how to take revenge.

[Is. 1, 19. 20.]. Therefore we should fear him and rather believe than feel.

V. 16. 17. You shall not tempt God your Lord, as you tempted Him in Massa.

Trust in God, he says, as the first commandment requires, that one believe in God and trust in Him, and not in the goods; do not make an idol of yourself, that you would pride yourself with what you have in the 1) box or in your hands. So also tell him: If it would go bad for you, as if war, theurung 2c. existed, and you lacked crops of the earth, hold fast, and do not tempt God. For, as has often been said, this is our way, so we are of a mind that we despair in adversity; and pride ourselves when things go well for us. In abundance, man's heart cannot restrain itself nor refrain from pride; our courage grows. And again, when it is in distress, that we are in trouble, it soon wants to despair and despair, and sets and paints for God a goal, a way and a measure, how he should help it, and does not want to expect a time, a person or an hour that pleases him, nor does it want to completely put it at home. This is what God means to try.

(110) Thus the heart of man is a slippery thing: when it is well, it falls into presumption; and again, when it is ill, into despair. Therefore it must be so mixed, and God must throw in one care after another into the goods, and fold them into us, and dampen the courage with a fear, that we may abide in the first commandment. When things are going well, or in prosperity, he is after us with worry, so that you must always think, "Now you are well, but God can turn it around. So, too, in adversity we must temper it with comfort, so that we cling to God's promise and do not tempt God, who wants to be our God. Thus a man remains on the right road, so that he does not despair in adversity, but always stands still and praises God, whether he is well or ill, whether we win or lose.

111 But Mammon is such a great and mighty god in the world that if he were to

1) Original: den.

When he is present, he makes the people proud; when he is not present, he makes the people despondent. That is why Moses fights so fiercely against him. Now this is the interpretation of the first commandment, therefore to love God in that, and not to have other gods. That is, fear God in abundance; if you are well, do not be proud; if you are unwell, trust in Him in adversity. Do not run to another place, and do not seek other gods, but believe that he can help you out of trouble, and punish you in riches, so that the heart may keep the middle road inside, and stand the same. This is what the first commandment demands.

**V. 20. If your son will ask you today or tomorrow, saying, "What are these testimonies, commandments and statutes?**

This is a *prosopopeia*. 1) He commands the parents to be God-fearing, to learn to fear God, and to serve Him in happy times, and to believe in unhappy times, and to keep a pure faith; and this not only for themselves, but also for their children. The parents shall be the schoolmasters of the children, and the children shall also teach it to others; they shall tell the descendants, so that it always remains in fresh memory how God led them out of Egypt. They are to be vain schoolmasters; this is what God wants, for He says that they are to say to their children [v. 21], "We were servants in Egypt. "2c. Hereby he gives them the command that they teach the children God's forbearance, and to be afraid of the forbearance; when it is well with them, that they despise not God, and in time of temptation learn to trust in God, and take hold of his promise, and not despair. For He tempts them and will not forsake them. That is right the ten commandments preached. Moses is a true master and interpreter of the Ten Commandments.

**V.25. And it shall be our righteousness in the sight of the Lord, if we keep and do all these commandments, as he hath commanded us.**

Behold, how highly he exalts and praises the first commandment, for he says, "Whoever keeps this will be counted righteous before God. He writes

righteousness to the fulfillment of this commandment. We teach that no man on earth is justified by works, as the whole world is accustomed to preach against the teaching of the gospel; therefore, only faith in the word and promise of God is necessary [Rom. 3, 24-28. Gal. 2, 16]. Therefore, in the Catechismo, we have stated that the service of God should be in the fear and love of God. Every commandment is set forth in fear and love, that we should fear and love God. This is the first commandment, from which all the other commandments flow. For the works of the other table, that we commit no adultery, kill no one, steal no one, do not make us righteous, nor can they be done by us without faith; for where the first commandment is not, there are none of the other commandments, and what is done by men appears only before the world.

(114) But the first one (for it goes through all the commandments), which teaches how to become righteous, godly and holy. How then? Well, if you keep the first commandment by faith and hearty trust in Christ. Therefore, this commandment alone requires faith. This faith justifies you, as it is written about Abraham in Genesis 15:6. So the first commandment requires the main thing, faith; whoever keeps it is blessed. But no one keeps it, unless it be given him by the Holy Spirit to belong to the gospel. Therefore no one is saved, but Christ must be here beforehand, that one believes in him; by faith one is justified [Rom. 10:4]. Therefore Moses says, "He who is righteous has it because he keeps it and does it. But he that trusteth in God with his heart, and believeth when it is evil, and feareth God with his heart when it is well, keepeth it.

(115) He who fears and trusts in God will not strike anyone dead, will not wrong anyone, but commands God to do what is unjust to him, and suffers it patiently for God's sake, and returns vengeance to God, and he will do well. Thus the fifth commandment is kept, for it flows from the first; for a believer does not avenge himself because he relies on God and trusts Him to do right. Thus the first commandment is the marrow and core of all other commandments. Therefore he says: He who fears the Lord and serves him,

1) *prosopopeia* (personal poetry) is here that what God teaches is put into the mouths of the persons.

He will do good, he will keep and do these commandments. "Keeping" goes to the first commandment, that one trust God and fear Him. This keeping is also followed by "doing," that is, the other commandments will follow; that is, he who fears God does good; thus, he who trusts God has patience, he will help him.

Therefore he is righteous if he keeps and does these things, that is, believes and proves faith by works [Gal. 5:6, Jac. 2:14, 17, 22, 24]. Moses only shows how to

live and keep the commandments; but it takes another man for us to keep them, and to trust in adversity. For a man, as a man, must despair in adversity, and rise up in happiness. So then I say that Moses teaches us what to do and what to keep, but only the gospel teaches where to get and how to take it, namely, that we should believe in Christ; then God will give us grace to be able to restrain our courage when we are well, and to believe in God in the cross and in temptation.

## The seventh chapter.

**V. 1-4. When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and shalt cut off many nations from before thee, the Hittites, the Girgothites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than thou; and when the LORD thy God giveth them before thee to smite them, 1) then thou shalt banish them, that thou make no league with them, nor show them favor. And you shall not make friends with them; your daughters you shall not give to their sons, and their daughters you shall not take from your sons. For they will make your sons disgust me by serving other gods, and the wrath of the LORD will be kindled against you and will soon destroy you.**

(1) Now another trouble comes on, and drives Moses again, that they are afraid of the evil, and calls such trouble a woman and a wicked company; which brings many into great misery and distress; for as the companions are, so must he howl with them. If this is so in outward, civil things, much more will it happen when one joins those who transgress the first commandment of God and rage against it, and seek other gods and make friends. For if they join them, they also turn away from God. Therefore, over mammon is the

1) "that you beat them" is missing in the original and in the Erlanger.

worldly favor; it is also a great wall-breaker and devil, when you go to court the rich and wise; everyone wants to get high.

(2) Wherefore Moses doth strongly charge his people to beware of them that have strange gods, and to have no fellowship, favor, or friendship with them, neither to take their daughters, nor to give their sons in marriage unto them. Cause, for it is dangerous thing for the world's favor; much therefore dare wife, child, body, life, and soul. Because it is such a wicked thing, he sets before them this other evil, and exhorts them to beware of it.

003 How think ye that it was done? The Israelites saw many pious and wise men among the heathen, and many young and beautiful virgins and women, all of whom should be killed and destroyed; and they thought in mercy, Well, we will not harm them, but join ourselves to them; and they married them, saying, Therefore God will not be displeased, neither will he punish us so severely, nor destroy and cut us off from the earth. This is how it happened: they brought the idol into the house, and so the idolatry remained, as can be seen in the book of Joshua and the Judges.

(4) We should also take this upon ourselves, for it is dangerous even in our time. For

Behold, how many there are who deny the gospel for the sake of princes and ungodly bishops and tyrants, only that they may retain grace and favor with men. And now they take many wives, not for the sake of a godly life, but only for the sake of wealth, power and friendship; and no one asks whether the woman or the man is a Christian, if they only have a lot of money. Some people have to abandon God's word for the sake of a rich wife. So the whole world has this idol.

5 After that, it is even worse and more dangerous that one joins the sects and cults, which are very humble and patch in with the people. That is, to hold fellowship with the Cananites, that is, with those who falsify the word of God and let it go. It is a dangerous and annoying thing, and a real idolatry in the world, to seek friendship, worldly favor, wealth, power and wisdom; for one is deceived by deviating from God's word. Thus many fall from the word in our time, for the sake of temporal honor and favor, as the Jews of old clung to the great princes and kings among the Gentiles.

(6) So they also still cling and hang on to the great 1) Hanses, and so they go. Therefore Moses speaks here: Do not look at any splendor or humility, power, honor, wealth, favor, wisdom or friendship, but look at me alone. I will give you all these things and help you more than all the kings, mighty men and wise men on earth. But again, if thou forsake me, and turn to them, and hold with them, and pretend, I will also cause thee more calamities and plagues than they. If there is trouble, remember my word; for my word is more than all this, the wealth, favor and power of the world.

(7) So he wanted to keep his heart pure in the word of God and faith. Flesh and blood cannot do this, but the Holy Spirit must give the courage for one to become so bold that he trusts God more and keeps his word more than he does on his own.

Good or riches, wisdom, kings, and the spirits of the rotten with their false teachings. Otherwise, reason closes its eyes and leaves God's word, goes away, and soon becomes idolatrous. But a God-fearing man, whose heart is strengthened by the Holy Spirit, holds the Word more dear than all these treasures. What good is it if you have all the treasures on earth, and if all the princes and the whole world are your friends, and God is against you and your enemy [Matth. 16, 26]? And again, what can you lack if you have God with you [Rom. 8, 31. 38.]? If you trust in God's word, He can punish you so that no one can redeem you.

(8) These are the two vexations which Moses relates in the interpretation of the first commandment; namely, that first of all mammon offends us; then there is either too much or too little, and that in abundance we forget God, or in want we tempt God. Secondly, evil company, violence, and the favor of the world, and also the spirits of the wicked, which we should avoid and flee, for they lead us away from the first commandment and God's word.

**This is the story of Martin Luther from the pulpit, concerning his journey to Marburg and the conversation he had there with the Sacramentarians.**

(9) Perhaps you would like to know what we did at Marburg; so that you will not be left in doubt, and so that you can shut the mouths of the blasphemers, I will tell you the same thing recently.

(10) We have suffered no danger on the way, and God has heard your prayer, for which you should thank Him; for we have fared better than we had hoped. Thus our adversaries have been very kind and humble to us, more than we thought. For I myself thought that we would find all hard stones there; but God gave them grace to humble themselves, and if God wills, their hopeful writing against us will now come to an end.

11. de peccato originis we disagree 2c. Otherwise they have conceded and entered a piece six or seven willingly- as, of

of infant baptism, of justification, of the use and custom of the Lord's Supper, and agree with us in these matters of God's word, and have willingly renounced their former doctrine; and admit that one receives faith and consolation in the sacrament. But that there is truly and bodily Christ's body and blood, they cannot yet believe. And they have said so much that if it had been with them, they would have given in, and their speeches have been thus: If one had the beer back in the cask, one would not have tapped it. But because they had a measured order from their own, they could not go back.

(12) But they desired brotherhood of us, which we refused them for this time, and could not grant. For if we accepted them as brothers and sisters, we would have to agree to their teaching. However, they did not like this rejection and pretended to show love towards them until God would bring them back, because we should also love our enemies [Matth. 5, 44]. Now, whoever wants to interpret it in an evil way, let him do so; whoever is also able to do more, let him do so. They persist in their opinion that God wants to enlighten them, even though they have mended and adorned themselves, and they have not denied that the true body and blood of Christ is not there, which is as if they were with us.

1.). They confess that those who go to the Lord's Supper truly partake of the body and blood of Christ, but spiritually, that they have Christ in their hearts. They do not want to partake of the body; we have put this on their conscience. For we have God's word and the text for us, which they do not have. Therefore, the matter stands in a good hope. I do not say that there is a brotherly unity, but a kind, friendly unity, that they may kindly seek from us what they lack, and we may serve them again. Wherefore ye shall diligently ask, it shall also become brotherly.

End of the Narration or Report from the Colloquio at Marburg.

14. in the interpretation of the first commandment Moses tells the first trouble, when,- the

Mammon, as the same is a very great hindrance that one does not respect, understand, learn, do or keep the first commandment. For by mammon the world falls away, and also rises again. When mammon is present, it is secure and proud; when it is not present, it despairs and tempts God.

The other trouble is evil company, friendship and violence on earth. These are also an idol, for one defies and trusts in them more than in God, since we should trust God with all things. That is why Moses declared the first commandment, that we should watch and trust in God more than in mammon, violence, all goods and friendship on earth. For goods cannot help in the last moments. When pestilence reigns and death creeps up, a little pestilence can take away all our good company; what we have relied on is in vain. Why then does the heart turn to money and goods, or defy men? For this reason Moses decreed that they should not make friends with the idolatrous nations that were around them, nor should they make alliances with them. And now he sets up the cause:

**V. 4 For they will make your sons disgust me by serving other gods. The wrath of the LORD will be angry with you and will soon destroy you.**

(16) He is always with the words of the first commandment, and includes them, which are, "I am a fervent God, visiting the sin of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. This is how he says here: "No mammon, friend, violence helps against God's wrath; when it festers, he pulls it up out of the earth root and stem. So he always repeats the words of the first commandment, always weaves them in, and keeps them by the hand.

**V. 5 But so shall you do to the heathen: Their altars you shall break, 2c. their pillars you shall break, their groves you shall cut down, and their idols you shall burn with fire.**

017 They shall not make friends with these heathen; and this is the cause: for they shall surely make you idolaters;

As was done. Because they did not keep the commandment and did not follow Mosiah, they thought, "These are good, pious, fine people, and they are also wise; how can we alone be wise? Therefore they have freed their daughters, and have also accepted their gods and served them. This society with the pagans has also brought about a change in religion among them, against which the prophets have cried out and preached so much, and have had great work with it.

(18) Therefore he commanded that it should be rooted up, broken, and washed away, as it is written, that nothing should remain to give them occasion and cause to fall into idolatry; so the idolatry should be destroyed. For as long as idolatry remains, there will always be trouble and a beautiful image before the eyes, for there is no trouble more dangerous or harmful than superstition or false worship. No good or treasure on earth glitters so beautifully as false worship; it is the highest adornment. Money and beautiful young people do not glitter and shine as much as false worship.

(19) And where one does not diligently keep the word of God and the first commandment, no one can help himself. You have often heard the reason. For every man is so minded that he would rather keep the doctrines and laws of men, however hard and great they are, than the commandment of God. How much fasting and torment have we suffered under the papacy? so much money has been given to foundations, monasteries, altars, masses, vigils. This has not been a sore arrival or a burden for us. For it was not called idolatry, but it had a name and appearance that it was a service of God. Nothing is more difficult for reason than to trust in God; and again, nothing is easier than to choose superstition and superstition.

(20) Secondly, that each one by nature prefers to trust and build on what he himself does, rather than on our works; we are inclined to build on these; so we have said, Thus we have lived, doing this and that, which God sees 2c. If we hang these two things on it, as, first, that it has a holy form and beautiful color, or glistens beautifully; after that, that man is inclined for himself that

If he likes to do something he relies on, we will soon fall and fall into idolatry.

Therefore it is very difficult that we do not get angry with God's word and stay with it or do not fall away from it [Matth. 11, 6. Luc. 2, 34]. For this is the highest heresy in the world. And now, what other appearance and reason do our enthusiasts, the papists, Anabaptists and iconoclasts have for their doctrine than works and false confidence? For works or piety and false confidence are always mixed in, so that they think that holiness and the Christian faith are in iconoclasm; or, if otherwise this or that work is done; confidence in our work always creeps in with it.

No one understands this affliction; so deeply is it ingrained in us, and so it clings to us, unless death or the road comes. Because man lives and is healthy, he does not understand it, it does not enter his mind; only in the hour of death, when misery and distress come to his heart and make him despair, it teaches him to say: Oh, Lord God, help me! and to keep the first commandment. Therefore God is the God of those who are in the greatest distress and misery; otherwise they do not call upon Him, because they are in distress or in death [Ps. 32:7]. Like the thief on the cross, who said to the other thief, "We have well deserved our punishments," (Luc. 23:41) and was to blame for the torment in which we were caught, and fell into the first commandment, clinging to it, trusting in it, since he had nothing in himself of good works; he had only sin. Therefore he relies on nothing but God's mercy, and says [v. 42.], "Remember me, O Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom." For this one has said, "You shall not have other gods. I am the LORD thy GOOD"; let me be thy GOOD. Therefore, whoever is not in need or danger cannot learn to trust in God.

23Therefore those pagans were fine, excellent people, and much more pious than we under the papacy; although we also erected many altars there, founded many churches and worship services at great expense, and ordered the worship of the people.



also had many ceremonies, and also poltergeists, and asked them, and did what they wanted. The old fathers were much holier, because they sacrificed their children, as sons and daughters, like other cattle, and burned them on the altars as a delicious, fine sacrifice; therefore, they were much finer people than under the papacy.

(24) Why were they not godly, because they did it in the name of God alone, who created heaven and earth? And it should have been a service to God, that they should do it in honor of God, and God should reward them, because they wanted to sacrifice the children to the true, living God. Why then does God reject them, saying that it is against the first commandment? Where the first commandment does not rule, there can be no worship, and there can be no trust in God; but there soon creeps up a false trust in the work that you yourself do; if the trust is there, then it is false. For so the Gentiles thought: If I sacrifice and burn my son, I will surely obtain favor with God and be saved. So such a heart and trust is attached to the work, when I sacrifice and slay my children to praise and honor God; that is, I rely on this work. Such a thing is contrary to the first commandment.

(25) Now it is my work that I do, and I also rely on it. For he who is so minded must not count himself worthy of our Lord God, but will work until he obtains grace by works. If one obtains it by works, he makes himself God, so that he has no need of God's grace, and our salvation then does not come by grace. But God's commandment says that God will not be merciful to you because you want to buy it from God; for he is not obligated to you, you will not bring him there. Also in these words you hear that he commands the Jews to remove such idols, and it is threatened that they will be destroyed. For this reason the Gentiles are condemned and utterly destroyed.

26 So, under the papacy, if before his death, he has endowed a mass in his will, none has been a

He had no other opinion than that he wanted to become blessed and earn God's grace with this work; unless God had otherwise miraculously helped him out of idolatry. Now it is not as important as the previous pagans'. The same pagans dared something greater, bought it with a greater earnestness than with their own blood, yes, with their bodily children, than with their flesh and blood. Our forefathers wanted to buy it only with money, about three, four florins 2c.

(27) Both these things are contrary to the first commandment, when a man sets up a different kind of worship, and does good works, in which people trust; and such worship is not called, "I am the Lord thy God," but it is such worship that a man remembers his good work, and trusts in it. Such trust is poison and pestilence, even damnation itself; for the heart trusts not in God, but in this or that work.

028 Now therefore the sum of the first commandment is, Trust in me only, and fear me: whatsoever is contrary thereto, let it be condemned. Therefore, he who slaughters or burns his child, son or daughter, trusts not before God, because he has sacrificed the child; he trusts the work more than God. Truly, such work has seemingly failed before reason, and had a glorious appearance of great holiness and worship. The works have been too high, and a great splendor has been made; reason has not been able to resist them; no one has been able to jump over them; as the Jews have also been very angry about it. Dear, what did we do, since in our time the works of the monks shone so beautifully in the papacy, and were considered so great, that we could not resist them? We were annoyed by them and could not jump over them.

For this reason Moses so diligently impressed upon them the first commandment, that they should trust in God's grace alone and not seek comfort elsewhere. The heart should rely solely on God's. The heart should stand and rely on God's grace and mercy alone, and not rely on any work. But if there is a service, work, law and merit elsewhere, do not trust in it. Therefore I say,

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| <p>that this challenge of the Jews has not been a small annoyance, because they have seen that the Gentiles have been doing such a powerful worship; as you see in the papacy with the monks and priests a glittering worship.</p> <p>(30) Because the trouble is so great, and the heathen, the Jews, and the Papists, and all the teachers of works of God, are rushing and shooting against the first commandment, 1) therefore Moses saith, Beware lest thou make friends with them, nor have fellowship with them, lest they deceive thee: but so shalt thou do with them, thou shalt destroy their altars. You shall have nothing to do with them, lest you be deceived by them; then you shall destroy it all, tear it up, that they may worship. The altars were as our churches and chapels are now. After that they had pillars on which they stood and erected images. Especially they were common in the woods, as in our time to the oak, and in other lonely places more, where Satan has had his fool's play. That's why there are also groves of small woods, like our Speckhölzlein, where funny meadows have been laid out; like, the Poltersberg is a real grove, where one comes there to the Kirchmeß, drinks and eats, and all Büberei drives. After that, everyone had a little chapel at home, his own place, where he wanted to worship God and wait for his own services. The Jews are to eradicate all of this, so that there is no opportunity or occasion left for idolatry; also, all places and cities of idolatry are to be avoided, and only the right God is to be served.</p> <p><b>V. 6 For you are a holy nation, which God has chosen from all nations.</b></p> <p>Here the iconoclasts have a text for themselves, and the question is: whether we should remove all images and push them out of the world, because Moses calls us a holy people. Item: whether this law of Moses compels us to do so? Listen, the first commandment teaches you that you must trust in no thing on earth but God alone; that is the point. Therefore, what images are erected or used for this purpose?</p> | <p>The first commandment throws them down first, as if one thinks that God helps for the sake of the image, as if to the oak. There was a small picture of Mary painted on a paper, on which the trust is directed, Mary helps in the picture, and have called in the picture Mariam, and not God. That is called an idolatrous image. The same image of Mary was also in Grimmenthal; item, at Regensburg.</p> <p>But the other images, in which alone one sees past history and things, as in a mirror, these are mirror images, which we do not reject, for they are not images of superstition; otherwise we would not be allowed to have an image on the coin, and a virgin would not be allowed to have a mirror in which one sees the form and face of the one who looks into it. The images of coins are not worshipped, no trust is placed in them, but they are images of memory.</p> <p>33 Therefore see it diligently, and discern it. To overthrow images is not to throw away all kinds of images, but these, as the text implies, which are worshipped as idols. They are called idols, since the heart is attached to them as the pear is attached to the tree, which were many among the pagans and are still in the papacy today, which are not only looked at, but are looked at with trust, since such an image is taken for a god, and heretics have worshipped such images, since the trust is attached, as those to the oak and pear tree, St. Mary's; item, St. Nicolas', St. Wolfgang's in Bavaria, St. Leonard's; item, the image of the holy cross. These may be torn down, but by proper authorities; for such images are not only looked upon, but a devotion, trust and worship is made of them.</p> <p>34 But that I have a painted picture on the wall, which I look at badly without superstition, is not forbidden to me, nor shall it be taken away. For why would I not look at a painted cloth, I look at a sow, cow or dog? The little children must have wooden horses, dogs, docks and the like; and I must also have a picture, otherwise I would not have to have a mirror. Whoever does not want to have them</p> |
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1) Erlanger: close.

I can't do without it, because nothing is said about it in Scripture.

35 But when an image is set up or presented, and confidence is placed in it, tear it in two. Let the first commandment be a gloss, and give right understanding to images. If an image is set up for fear, and faith is put in it, tear it down; but if it is not an idol or altar, so that one bows the knee to it, nor makes a worship of it, it is not an idol, but an image that you keep, and is right and good. This is the difference between images and idols.

**V. 6-8. For you are a holy people to God your Lord. God your Lord has chosen you as a people of possession from among all the nations that are on the earth. The Lord did not accept you and choose you to be more than all the nations, for you are the least of all the nations, but because he loved you.**

This is another idolatry. As if Moses should say: Because you are such a holy, high and strong people, you should make an idolatry out of it, as if God should look at you for your power and strength and choose you as his people. But God alone wants to be respected, and does not want you to look to mammon, friendship, power, company, nor to quantity and strength, nor to trust in them; for trust strikes God to the ground here, and pulls down the idol.

I wanted this text to be remembered, especially by us Germans, who also insist and defy our power and authority when we are to go against the Turk. That is why he tears away the idol here. For this happens by nature, that when someone is powerful, he is a throbber, a poker and a snorer; there is no humility, no trust in God and his mercy, but only on his power and might he insists and defies, as if there were not also many people and many fists on the other side of the water and on the other side of the mountain. When such people do something, they do it not by trusting in God, but for the sake of their strength and quantity, as if there were not many people and many fists on the other side of the water and on the other side of the mountain.

would be no GOt. They do not ask anything about God, but only about their power. So powerful I am, so much people I have.

038 But if thou lookest not upon thy multitude and thy strength, base not thyself thereon [1 Sam. 17:47]. Not that it is evil to have many people, to have a mighty principality, to have armor, sword, guns, money and goods. It is all good to have friendship, power and helpers, for these are God's creatures; but that you make an idol for yourself out of them, and put your trust in them, and trust God no more than mammon, your wealth, the multitude and great power, that shall not be. All this is good, but beware that you do not trust in it. These things shall not be the ground of our confidence, because I put my trust in them. So he overthrows everything in which a man and his heart trust, and which is contrary to the first commandment.

I am not so old, but I have seen many of them who relied on their power and were proud of it, who are now lying in the mud. The reason is that they wanted to overthrow the first commandment and thought: We have so many cities, castles, so many thousand villages, 2c., boasted of their warriors, guns, alliance and company higher than God's; therefore we cannot lack, we will have happiness and victory. Yes, indeed! For what does God sit in heaven? They have gone over it to failure, or have come home, have brought the horror in the neck with them, and have lain down, yet have not become wise.

40 Now, because one wars with the Turk, he also hunts us down in the first commandment; still some will say, We have done it, and ascribe to their strength and power what God alone has accomplished by such means. Therefore, when these things are present, flesh and blood is proud of them. On the other hand, I have seen some who were so bold and proud, when the crowd was attached to them, that they had strength, chance and support, and obtained a little fortune and victory; but when they fell away from them again, they became such treacherous, shameful and pusillanimous, stupid evil-doers, that it is a shame that they even had wood hewn in two and split. So you can see who their god was

is, namely, their authority, attachment, principality, guns and swords, and not God, in whom they should have hoped. Then one must sing them the little song that is appropriate for such rascals [Pf. 60, 13]: *Vana salus hominis, "Menschen Hülfe ist kein nütze"*; item: *Superbia praecedit casum, et exaltatio ruinam*, "wer soll zu Grunde gehen, der wird zuvor stolz"; ante ruinam exaltatur cor, hoffährtiger und stolzer Muth kommt vor dem Fall, Sprüchw. 16, 18. Item [Ps. 116, 11]: *Omnis homo mendax, es ist eitel void Ding um menschliche Hülfe*.

41 Thus Scripture takes it from the first commandment; for the summa of that commandment is to trust in God alone, and to give leave to all other creatures. For whoever relies on anything other than God's mercy cannot stand, he must fall, God grant that he has for help and friends the Turkish emperor, or the whole world with all its might and power, yet he cannot carry it out, he will be lacking; he will be proud before the victory, but it will not last. With this Moses wants to keep the hearts pure in the united trust in God, that no one knows or knows anything but God, and sticks to Him alone. He who looks at something else does not lead it out.

(42) But this does not stir our hearts until the greatest need and temptation comes. If one does not then hold up the first commandment to him and consider it, then flesh and blood despairs, where God does not help. But it does not help the world, it does not go to their hearts until they are brought down; so they must confess that it is so, when they are forsaken by all strength and all good friends, and have no one to help them. Again, he who remembers the word, "I am the Lord," may stand, he may rise again.

43 Therefore Moses says: God loves you, not because yours is much. Yea, beware, he hath not regarded your multitude, because yours is so few. How do you like that? Therefore do not build on it. So when you fight against the Turk, say: I do not build on cannons, and that I have a great army, or many baptized men and people of war; for you, dear God, have soon beaten them. I have indeed the armor of war with one another, but I

do not rely on it, but in your name and trust I will fight, for you are our God; and you say that you alone are to be trusted, and therefore I will use guns, armor and other things only in your name 2c. [Ps. 20, 6. Ps. 10, 14.] So one should go up.

044 What then is the cause that he loveth you? Therefore it is not because of your power, but because he is so gracious, and has thus offered himself against you, and because he keeps the covenant which he spake unto your fathers, to inherit you out of pure mercy and grace, saying:

**V. 9. Know then that the LORD your God is a faithful God, who keeps the covenant and mercy to those who love him and keep his commandments.**

45 Therefore, whatever happens to you is done out of love and favor; that is, look behind you, remember my previous help, and therefore trust in me alone, 2c. because I have taken care of you. See nothing else, but that I love you out of pure goodness and mercy, and thank me for being so gracious, and offer myself against you, that I will be your God; for this I do out of pure grace and favor.

Thus God overthrows all idolatry and wipes it out of our hearts. And this is a fine commentary on the first commandment. First, he overthrows the false trust and confidence and superstition that is in our hearts and wants us to trust in him with all our hearts, for he says that he is our God. By this he wants to eradicate mammon, friendship, violence and crowd. For if you accept these three, you have a false and strange God, and you cannot stand, but you must perish. And he will tell more of them, which do the same hurt with the former; as there is our own righteousness, which also subtracts us from the first commandment.

So far Moses has dealt with the three enemies, that is, idols, who fight against the first commandment, as, mammon or riches; violence, their own power or multitude; 1)

1) In the original and in the Erlanger: "less power"; few - quantity.

Power and friendship of the heathen. These three things, or idols, cause a great number of the world to fall away from the first commandment, and people trust in them more than in God. Favor and love, riches, friendship, their own powers and authority are the idols of the world, as experience shows. Against this he said: "If you have a house, a farm, and other things, so that you have abundance, riches, and food, and have enough of everything, see to it that you do not go to God. Item: Do not make friends with the heathen, and do not worship their gods; beware of evil company, and remember that God did not accept you for your strength and multitude, 2c. but out of mild kindness and mercy.

(48) By all of which Moses would keep the people in the word of God and in the first commandment, so that they would cling to God in all things and not trust in any other creature, but, according to the first commandment, put their heartfelt trust in God alone, in His word and promise, and let all other creatures go. But he that trusteth and buildeth upon mammon shall fall with him: he also that trusteth in friendship, or in power, or in multitude, or in his own strength and might, shall fall with them, and his neck, or rather his soul, shall fall: for there is none of these idols that 1) can help man out of trouble.

(49) I said that Moses had many words to say, and he wanted to persuade the people to trust in God's words, and to put their hope and confidence in God's promise, and he practiced the first commandment very diligently. For we see and experience for ourselves how things are in the world, how strange faith is; it may be preached, but it produces little fruit or benefit. He who has money and goods is brave; he who has great friends is defiant; he who has power and strength is bold. And again, he who has not, but is weak, poor, and miserable, is stupid and despondent, fainthearted and sorrowful. One lets preach, sing and say what one wants, and so remains as it is; but one must say it for the sake of the small group. The others believe

but they want to experience it and will also experience it with their great damage; as, at the time of the misfortune and repugnance, also if distance leg comes behind them. There these three will not help, they must nevertheless leave behind them mammon, money, property, friendship, power and violence. But you who love the word, learn it in the fear of God, and let it be said to you [v. 7]: "The Lord has not accepted you and chosen you to be more than all the nations, for you are the least of all the nations."

50 As if to say, If he had considered this, he would have chosen a greater nation, but you were the least of all the nations; [v. 8] "but that he loved you, and that he kept his oath which he swore to your fathers" 2c. Such a God you have, who does not ask how strong, how great, how rich, how mighty anyone is, but that His word and grace be regarded, and nothing else. He does not want to celebrate, but to be celebrated. He does not ask for things. Nothing counts with him but his grace and mercy, which he promises you [Ps. 130:7]. He respects not thy money or friendship: he will not look upon it. No good, strength, power or fortune shall count with you, but over all and only his grace, as he finely emphasizes here with a glorious text that reads thus:

**V. 9. 10. Know that the LORD your God is a God, a faithful God, who keeps covenant and mercy for those who love him and keep his commandments to a thousand members, and repays those who hate him before his face to destroy them, and does not delay to repay those before his face who hate him.**

51 These are the words that are written in the first commandment. Grace and mercy he keeps, he does not deny. Truly you have a God who will repay. He repeats this promise again, so that he may put it into his heart: "There is a faithful God. And it is extremely necessary that he puts this word, faithful, with it. As if to say, "Believe that he promises grace and mercy, help and comfort, for it is faithfully spoken,

1) Original: the.

And shall also be faithfully kept. Therefore remember and keep his word, hold fast to it, and his grace and mercy will come faithfully [Ps. 111:8].

52 And again, he will not lack the unbelievers and the disobedient, but will punish them severely, as he reproaches them with his zeal and anger. In sum, he wanted to impress the first commandment deeply on his Jews, and on all other people; that is why he so often repeats the words of the same commandment. As if he should say: Only turn to him, then you have a faithful God; as the 86th Psalm, v. 15, also depicts him: Tu, Domino Deus, miserator et misericors, patiens, et multae misericordiae, et verax. He has promised mercy, help, good deeds and consolation everywhere, and just in the Psalm; he also faithfully keeps this promise. Again, he will not fail to punish the wicked who do not believe him but hate him and transgress his commandments. Let no one doubt that both will come to pass unfaithfully, as he has said: Good to the faithful, severe punishment to the disobedient.

Moses is very serious about this, and all the prophets have taken much warning from this text, that in the first commandment God promises, promises, and faithfully keeps grace, mercy, counsel, comfort, and all good things to the faithful, and that He intends to punish and punish the wicked without delay. But the world does not believe it; if it sits in abundance, in goods, and has its mammon, its friendship and power, then it is a mockery to it, then it does not respect it, but says: Let Moses preach as long as he wants. But hear thou, verily, the time will come when it will not be thought of.

As long as there is mammon, friendship, happiness, 2c. among others, one goes there, and Moses cries himself to death over these words: "I am a zealous God", "a consuming fire"; item, I am not joking. But it is all a vain and dead letter to the unbelievers; one does not feel it, so one does not believe it. The words are colder than ice to us, do not ring in our ears until experience and adversity come to hand, and misfortune strikes; then one will be the first to know.

quite aware. As now with the Turk, who a few days ago 1) besieged Vienna 2c. However, even though God cries out: "I am a zealous God", I want it, and I can't stand it, it doesn't help. Oh, no preaching is valid with the rabble. But fools must be listened to with pistons. He who will not listen to words must be advised by spears and rifles.

(55) Thus Moses warned his own and us, saying, Remember that ye keep the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments of our Lord God; but if ye despise them, and make a jest of them, he will make a mockery of you again, as he did of them. Although they hoped and thought that the trouble and danger would be over a thousand years away, it was there in an hour. The same happened to the rebellious peasants; they were not afraid of any misfortune, but in one hour they were all slain. The Austrians also did not take care of the Turk, but thought he was a thousand miles away from them; but in two days they had him over their necks, and misfortune fell upon them, that many of them were slain and carried away captive; the punishment came to them even in time. Moses therefore diligently exhorts us not to trust in these three things, but to be most careful and cautious against them; for calamity cometh unawares.

I could tell you many examples, but I have seen two recently: how the peasants were beaten and destroyed in the uprising and how the Turks have now tyrannized cruelly. There were other examples before: Saul, Sodoma and Gomorrah, the flood of the whole world; for before they looked back, the punishment came. The world does not want to believe this, but thinks that God is not in such a hurry with the punishment, until it experiences it and lies there in the ashes, or is drowned and stabbed to death. Therefore, he who cannot be advised cannot be helped. The world wants to be run with pistons.

(57) And here you see how Moses so faithfully and earnestly warns that one should fear God, for he adds these words: He will repay without delay. As if

1) The Turks besieged Vienna on September 13, 1529; this is preached towards the end of October.

He will say: His wrath will come suddenly [Ps. 2, 12], and punish the unbelievers, who now confidently scrape and throb, that should they become senseless, the wrath of God will soon strike behind them. What they will then gain from it, they may grease their shoes with. This text belongs to the wicked and is their lesson; but they do not turn to it, they are hardened and blinded, so that they do not perceive the first part that is said to them, the wicked.

58. the other piece: "He is a faithful God, who keeps the covenant and mercy." This write both diligently, says Moses, namely, that God is angry and cruel toward those who do not believe in Him, to whom belongs wrath and plague. Again, he also shows mercy and grace to the believer. This should be serious and true on both sides, and it applies to us who have to endure a storm with the world, or pour out the bath with it. In such dangerous and anxious times, let this be our comfort, that God is a faithful and true God in adversity, who has promised grace and mercy, help and counsel to all believers, and will certainly keep this promise.

59 This is so necessary to be eliminated when war, flood, pestilence and other accidents come, as the previous one. The previous one, how God will surely punish the wicked. For when hardship and affliction come, we see our weakness, and there is great trembling and fear; then we realize how poor and meager we are. Soon we run to and fro, and would like help; we want to donate this and that; we hope for mammon; we call on all our good friends and acquaintances. But with this there is no continuance anywhere, here all idolatry perishes. We become so soft, stupid and despondent that no one can raise us up or comfort us; just as the wicked, on the other hand, are so stubborn, stubborn, immovable and hard that no one can soften them up, nor bring them to terror and fear, until they lie on the ground; just as again no one can make the soft, weak and frightened hard and strong enough.

60 Therefore, it must be done: that which

Stubborn, lumps, stones, sticks, and troughs, who fear neither God nor the devil, are to be frightened with serious dread. Again, stupid, frightened and despondent people are to be raised up and strengthened with these sweet words of comfort, saying to them: You have a faithful God, who has promised you grace and mercy, and swears to you that he will be your God. For thus he speaks in the prophet Ezekiel [Cap. 18, 23. 32. 33, 11.]: "As truly as I am God and live, I do not want the death of the sinner, but that he may repent and live."

61 Therefore he does not jest with this promise; such a promise is not a light and easy word to him, but a true earnestness, and it shall be kept to the faithful; he would set heaven and earth before it, yes, heaven and earth would rather perish than that his word should not be fulfilled [Luc. 21, 33]. Put your trust in this, then, and be sure that God is a faithful God, who does not lie, joke or scold, but keeps the covenant and has mercy. "He shows mercy (toward those who keep His commandments) to the thousandth degree." You will certainly experience this.

(62) And so we do: when we are in poverty, we look nowhere, but only where there is money, or not money. When there is shame and disgrace, our eyes are soon turned to where there is honor or none. In times of death, pestilence and war, we see where there is health and where there is peace or no peace. All our thoughts are directed to this. We cannot lift up our hearts to consider these words here. For this reason Moses says: "If you want to trust in God and not have foreign gods, but keep the first commandment, and you are in trouble, distress, or in danger of life and limb, then remember that you should not look where human help and advice, where money and goods, where friends or enemies, life or death remain, but look here at God's word, listen to what God has promised you. For even though there is hardship, death, war, sickness and trouble, you should not be deprived of these words that are spoken here: "I am the Lord, I will keep my covenant faithfully.

From this text many psalms are made, all of which refer to this saying of Moses, since David also boasts that God is faithful, just and a retributor [Ps. 31:24], item, a helper in trouble; as, in the 145th Psalm, v. 18: "The Lord is near to all those who call upon Him, who call upon Him in truth." Item [Ps. 34, 20.], "The righteous must suffer much, but the LORD helpeth him out of all." Item, the 44th Psalm says, v. 23: "We are esteemed as sheep for the slaughter"; as St. Paul also accuses the Romans [Cap. 8, 36], and then speaks [v. 37]: "But in all this we overcome far, for the sake of Him who loved us." The Psalms are always lamenting our distresses and miseries, but the promise is always included: God helps and saves, so that the Psalms are a correct interpretation of the first commandment. For the covenant is firm, that God is faithful [2 Tim. 2, 19], he will keep what he has promised. Again, the Psalms also tell how God will judge the unrighteous and put them to shame. As, in the 91st Psalm, v. 8, it is said: "You will see how it will be repaid to the wicked." God knows well this art, that what the wicked scrape together and gather, that another shall eat it up; yea, for body and goods, people and country shall they come, for they sin against the first commandment. Moses has faithfully warned us about this.

This is the main part of Christian doctrine, that we learn to trust in God, not to despise Him, and to pride ourselves when the three things are present, namely, good, friendship, and power, that we put our trust in creatures, being sure and bold of money and goods, as if we could not trust in our Lord God. Again, that one may not despair even if these three are not there.

65 Therefore, do not do as some of the villains among the burghers and peasants do. When they have money and goods, they are brave and proud, and become mammonists and idolaters, deny God, pride themselves against their God, and trample the first commandment underfoot; they say, "If I only had enough money, what would I complain about? God wants to get behind them before they know it, and oppress them, and God does not want to be there.

They shall lose body and goods, souls and everything. On the other hand, the pious who are afraid of God shall not despair in their affliction. For I and my kind do not have many good days, therefore it is said to us: Let there be no trouble, let God be faithful, and keep His mercy and covenant. As the promise says: "I will show mercy" 2c. If we could only believe the words and be sure that it is God's word, how would our heart and conscience become so proud of it; how would I be so courageous against all creatures; then I could say: Because I have a gracious God who promises me mercy, who is richer than I? For to whom He promises something, He may keep it.

If you believe that God is so favorable to you that he will not abandon you in poverty, disgrace and death, and that all creatures are favorable and favorable to you for his sake, I would like to see who would do me harm! For I could look upon mammon, all friendship, tyrants, the Turk, or the king of France, as a louse or a fly. No one is richer than he; no one is more pious, no one knows more than he; for all this is nothing compared to the grace and mercy I have in God. Egg the devil! who would be stronger than me? This strength of the grace and mercy of God should be raised so that even the devil and the Turk are not respected.

But one hears these words alone and considers them as if they had been spoken by some priest, chaplain or preacher; one does not believe it, one does not consider it to be the word of God Almighty. But he who believes it has it all [Marc. 9, 23], and has it in his fist. But it should also frighten us very much that God says next to it: "If you do not trust me, know that I am angry, and these words or these threats will drive you so that heaven and earth will become too narrow for you, and you will always have to think that the sky will fall, and the sea will drown you, and the earth will sink with you. But if one says this at the same time that God is angry, one asks nothing about it. If any prince was angry, or if it was said that the Turk was angry



there would be great fear; but God does not count for anything in this kind, who says: He is angry with us 2c. So we see in experience and in this daily life how poor people we are, who do not fear the word of God, nor do we trust in it. Because we do not believe the word, we must learn by experience, as this time through the Turk, that he pours out his wrath on us, so that we may see how God is not joking.

(68) Moses wanted to bake, brew and cook the words so that they would come to us. For if we believed it, we would remember as often as we heard these words: O heaven is full of violins! These words would be our sweetest consolation, above all mammon and friendship and the violence of the world, for we would know that heaven and earth were ours. Again, if we did not trust in God, and then heard God say: I will repay and punish without delay, we would be terrified and say: O! if God is angry, He is more to be feared than a hundred Turks. 1) These words should be much more frightening to me than if a hundred Turks or emperors came. Is it not shameful and sinful that one should fear these three things, mammon, friendship and tyrants, more than God? and that one should rejoice more in the creature and a penny, and fear the Turk and evil time more than God? Shall a rustling leaf be stronger than God with all His threatenings; and a red fellow, a florin, delight thee more than all God's promises?

(69) Verily, we should curse ourselves, spit upon ourselves and condemn ourselves, that we should have such perverse hearts within us, which neither trust nor fear God. We should be sorry that we live, because we disobey our Lord God, and fear a rustling leaf more than Him, and love a red florin more. Such badness is in our hearts. This is what Moses wanted to impress upon the people (as I also wanted to do), and he says: God is truly lacking in grace and mercy.

He will have enough goods to give to those who fear him. On the other hand, he will not joke, and he will provide enough plagues and misfortunes to send to you if you disobey him and live according to your will.

**V. 12. 13. And if ye hear these statutes, and keep them, and do them; then the LORD thy God will also keep the covenant and mercy which he sware unto thy fathers, and will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee, and bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, and thy corn, and thy must, and thy oil, and the fruit of thy cows, and the fruit of thy sheep of the field 2c.**

Now he will explain to himself what is "the grace and mercy of God"; item, what is "the wrath of God. For he said that God is a faithful God, who keeps grace and mercy, and does good to you. But what does God do when He shows mercy and grace? To this Moses answers: "He will love you, and bless you, and multiply you" 2c. This will be the blessing, the grace or mercy, that he will give you a wife and child; and all this he will also protect you from Satan, pestilence, weather, and from all misfortune and evil, so that your family will last to the thousandth generation. He will take all things into his keeping.

71] "He shall bless the fruit of thy womb," that is, thy children, that they may be healthy, and that thou mayest have good courage, fine children without infirmity. After that also the fruit of the land shall be blessed, as, thy corn, thy must, and thy oil 2c., and follows, "Blessed shalt thou be among all nations." There you see what is meant by grace and mercy, that he wants to say: If you trust in God, do not worry how you will be fed, how your house and farm, wife and child will be preserved, let me take care of that; only trust in me and leave the worry to me. As the 55th Psalm, v. 23, says: "Cast your concern upon the Lord, and he will do it well." Item, St. Peter in his epistle says [1 Petr. 5, 7.], "Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you." David and St. Peter took these sayings from this text.

1) "Turks" here stands for the Turkish Empire or the Turkish Emperor.

(72) And God will say here through Moses: I have so many angels and so much power that I can bless you and protect you from the devil and from all misfortune, and also help you out of all tribulation and distress. But we would like to have such a God who would not let us suffer at all. Know, then, that it is no matter if the world hates and persecutes you; he wants to love you. If the world wants to make you less, he wants to make you more. He wants to be as strong (when he is not otherwise stronger) as your enemy may be, and wants to save you.

**v. 14. You will be blessed above all nations.**

73 Thou shalt be a blessed and prosperous people. For the other nations trust not in me: and because thou trustest in me, thou shalt have plenty, and there shall be no evil among thee, and thou shalt enjoy mine abundantly.

74. If this is so, how is it that God nevertheless often sends so many plagues and pestilences to His saints, and lets John the Baptist die the most shameful death [Matth. 14, 10.]? Item, to Job he sends much suffering [Job 1, 12. ff.]? To this I answer, All this does no harm; if he makes them suffer, they are not forsaken; he does not leave them in perdition; he puts them to death, and brings them to life again; he puts them to shame, and raises them up again to honor. On the other hand, if the wicked live here in honor, and then die, all their joy, honor and glory are gone [Job 21:17 ff], for they have nothing left but this life, and yet they should not use this life so much that they should be as joyful as a Christian is. The Christians' defiance and consolation is that they should be left alone in this life. Christians should live in want and need as well as the wicked in the greatest abundance, for they can use their poverty and little goods with a better conscience. Even if a Christian does not have as much as a rich man, there is nothing wrong with that, because we do not need abundance (Proverbs 15:16). But if you trust in God, you will have enough and will not die of hunger.

75 And let it be, that the wicked have more than thou; let it not be to him.

as well as to you. Therefore it is said, What thou hast need of, I will give thee all. But if you do not fear God, he will let you seek and gather money, houses, honor and goods, and let them become mighty; but in the end everything will go back to the way it came. Your children will die and be suddenly wiped out; someone else will consume your possessions, your house, your fields, your meadows and your wife, and you will be left with shame, damage and an evil conscience. Therefore it would be better for you to trust me; then you would be blessed in this world, and there in the other and eternal life.

**V. 14-16: You will be blessed above all nations. There shall be none barren among thee, nor among thy cattle. The LORD will put away from thee all sickness, and will not put upon thee any evil plague of the Egyptians, which thou hast experienced, and will put it upon all thy haters. Thou shalt eat up all the nations which the LORD thy God shall give thee.**

Moses wants everyone to learn to keep the first commandment of God, for there shall be no man who sets his heart, confidence or trust in anything but God and His word alone. And the little word "heart" is put here for this reason, so that one may fear God and be frightened or terrified by His word. The heart should cling to God with faith and fear alone; therefore he also promised to be your God, to show grace and mercy to all those who love him and keep his commandments. With this he wants to provoke and entice our hearts to believe in him.

He is not only merciful, but also zealous, and a consuming fire against the despisers of his divine commandments (Sir. 16, 12. 13.), so that pure fear may be in the heart and remain against God, and that we may be subject to him with all fear and trust, and prefer nothing else. Now Moses, as reported above [Cap. 6, § 48 ff.], also included these among the idols, namely Mammon, who also captivates the hearts of men so that they forsake the first commandment and ask nothing of it, that God says: "I will be your God".

and show you grace and mercy. After that he spoke of another idol [Cap. 7, § 36 ff.], which is called: relying on strength, power, might and dominion. The third idol [Cap. 7, § 15 ff.] he called: great friendship. These three idols are in the world, and men are more proud of them than that they should rely on God.

Now this is Mosi's gloss, which he makes about the first commandment, that the first commandment is transgressed, when man sets his heart on mammon, on power and violence, or on friendship, and does not cling to the promises of the divine word, that God wants to nourish, protect and preserve us. This sin now disregards the world, does not punish it, or cannot punish it. It judges only murder, adultery, fornication and theft, but the unholy superstition remains unpunished before the world. And because sin is not punished like others, it does not seem to be a great sin; it remains small in reputation and is disregarded, but the sins that are punished seriously and severely, these are also more respected and much more avoided.

79 But we hear the counterplay here, that it is a much worse sin to build and defy mammon than theft; it also tears deeper. Murder and theft do not eat and drink. The culprit, as the murderer and death-slayer, is punished alone, his friends and family go out free and unharmed; but for the sake of idolatry, God often wipes out a whole family, a city, country and people, a kingdom and empire. Therefore, a Christian considers these the highest sins, which are considered the least in the world. The world considers it honest joy that it relies on money and goods, and that a prince defies his sovereignty. This is not considered a sin, but the same idolatry is placed on top. And this is nothing else than putting the devil in God's place, wanting to take away God's divinity, authority and majesty, and blaspheming him.

80 Therefore Moses uses many words here, so that he may teach us the first commandment, for otherwise such a commandment would not be given.

go into the heart, and it is also a dangerous commandment. For he that hath money is proud; and he that hath many good friends leaveth thereunto. But he that is poor is fainthearted, and there is no comfort to lift him up. Thus the world is full of idolatry. Therefore, God must do what is necessary, and send the Turk or pestilence, the time and other punishments, so that people may learn to fear him. Just as He punished Lucifer and his angels for this sin, and cast him down from heaven, because he sinned against the first commandment, and rebelled against God and His majesty, and wanted to be more than he deserved.

Therefore, we should look to our Lord God for all good things, and not turn our hearts elsewhere with confidence and trust. Nor should we pride ourselves against God, as if we had a better remedy and had nowhere to turn to God; for these are the thoughts of all who despise God. Nor should one despair or despair where things are bad and sorrowful, for the reason that 1) God Himself calls you to trust boldly in His promise. Therefore, it is a matter of concern to you that you should raise up another for God, or seek any other help; for he will give you enough [John 10:11], and take away all harm from you, that is, he will be your merciful God. If any harm befalls you, he will turn it around and give you restitution and everything you need.

There are indeed glorious promises in this text, which belong to those who keep God's commandment. For what they do not have, God will give them; and what He has given them, He will protect and preserve for them. And from this text, as I also mentioned above [63], many excellent psalms are made, which David, like a little bee, sucked the noble juice from it. The prophets, no doubt, also took from it so many beautiful sermons, and fed and watered their listeners from these lovely springs.

**V. 17-19. But will you say in your heart, "This people is more than I am, like**

1) In the original: from causes.

**Can I drive them out? then do not be afraid of them. Remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and all the Egyptians, by great temptation, which you saw with your eyes, and by signs and wonders, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, that the LORD your God might bring you out. So shall the LORD thy God do unto all the nations of whom thou art afraid. 1)**

This is an objection, because some small-minded, despondent man would fall into this challenge, or his heart would be tempted and made stupid by the devil, that he would say: This people is much more than that we small, fewer! and weak people should be able to resist him, stay ahead of them, or beat them and wear them out; it will be impossible that we should thus be greatly strengthened by God, for ours is little, theirs is a great multitude and multitude; and would thereby fall into another grave sin against the first commandment, which is called diffidentia, that one despairs of God's help, lets hands and feet slip, mistrusts God, and despairs of His help.

(84) The mistrust that comes from being weak and not seeing or feeling our outward strength, might and power, we fear that God will not be able to help us unless we are finished. In this hospital, the children of Israel lay ill here, and before that they also sinned greatly by sending scouts to the Promised Land, and by exploring the land's opportunities, fortresses, strong men and giants [Numbers 13:19 ff. 14:1 ff]. This frightened them so much that they did not want to leave; they thought that they were too weak for the giants, that they would not be able to overcome them, that God would not be able to save them from the hand and power of these heathens.

This objection and plea of flesh and blood, or temptation of the devil, is hereby met by Moses, and teaches how God's promises are fulfilled, not by our powers, but by His divine power. He wants to knock down the presumption and the trust in our own powers and human strength and power, to control and resist our mistrust and despair. For if the

If the children of Israel had looked to themselves and their power or wealth, they would have been as nothing against the Gentiles, such as the Cananites, Jebusites, Perizzites, Philistines, Ammonites, and other mighty, powerful countries and peoples, all of whom the children of Israel were to destroy, and would have had to let God's commandment fall to the ground, and not rub against these Gentiles, but leave them satisfied.

But Moses pointed them to God's presence, who had faithfully promised to be with them and help them against all these nations and their great power. For this reason, God makes a comforting promise to the children of Israel. And so that they would believe this all the more, Moses referred the children of Israel to the previous miracles of God, how he had promised them help and how he would certainly give it to them. Therefore, he sets before them the clear example of divine help, grace and mercy, and reminds them of how he threw King Pharaoh and all the war powers of the Egyptians into the Red Sea, and freed the children of Israel from their coercion and tyranny [Exodus 14:7 ff], which alone was a divine work, and otherwise it would have been impossible for them to be free from Pharaoh and the Egyptians for the rest of their lives. With this example of the previous divine help they should comfort themselves; because the God, who would have helped them, could help them again.

So David also prepared himself and strengthened himself: When the Philistine Goliath set upon him, and he had torn apart a bear and a lion by the help of God before, he also remembered the benefit and help of God, comforted himself with it and said: "The God who helped me before from the bear and the lion, the cruel beasts, will also save me from this uncircumcised Philistine [1 Sam. 17, 37]. St. Paul also admonished the Corinthians that God, who brings the dead to life, had restored him to health in Asia through the intercession of the Christians, and that God would still deliver him [2 Cor. 1, 9-11].

88. for one should not forget the previous miracles and the help of God, because they are

1) Original and Erlanger: to those who fear you.

Memorials, reminders and reminders of how God has helped us and can and will help all those who seek help from Him and expect help in faith. Therefore David also says in the Psalter [Ps. 119, 52]: Memor ero mirabilium tuorum, that is: "I remember your deeds of old" 2c. And with this we should also strengthen our faith, that we look to God's word and promise, and to the previous deeds of God and examples of His help.

(89) In particular, however, we are to set God's word and deeds before our eyes in this trial, even when this adversity comes to our hands. For it is common for our nature and reason to hold contrariness against each other in temptations [Ps. 42:6, 43:2]. This is the art of reason, which wants to measure and weigh everything, so that it considers the opportunity of the land, or the type of land, or the quantity of the people. So the Jews put the numbered pennies on the lines, and they calculated how many were the Canaanites, and how few were their number, the Israelites. So they calculated: There is much people and great power, but here little people and little wealth. This the devil is able to do, that he may make a noise before our eyes, and we may measure and reckon our iniquities and the strength of the adversaries; and because we are in the scales and in the measuring, we forget that God says here, "I am the LORD thy God."

90 Thus we do: When we are in need, we look only to the danger of the body, to food, drink, sickness, poverty, or whatever else weighs us down. Then we reckon that the water is too great, and our strength too small, and measure all this against our strength. When I look at my lack of strength and become aware of the countervailing force and the strength in the need before me, I am already lost and godless, and no longer ask anything about God. So it goes: When the devil takes me away from the word, I am stuck, and the devil has won the game, and makes me either despair, or otherwise run away and seek help; for I cannot stand there. Because I do not believe the word of God, the devil has me very soon.

and led onto his ice or slippery slope, so that I fall to the ground and lie down. So it remains that our inability and weakness against the power and force of our enemies is kept in the pursuit.

Women do the same thing in childbirth: when they are in childbirth, they have already calculated that mother and child will remain; because the mother is weak, there are also great inabilities of the body. They look at the strong evil alone, and then despair, or vow the child to some saint, have recourse to an idol; as, to St. Margaret, who should help in such distresses. Many have also made a vow: if the son remains alive in birth, he shall become a spiritual person, and the maiden shall become a nun. No one there has with heartfelt trust commanded this child's need to our Lord God, or thought of the first commandment, that he would have a gracious God, and that he would do mercy in a thousand ways to those who fear him. Then I should say: I entrust myself completely to you, with all my own, in your mercy, because you have said that you will be my God, and that you will show me grace and mercy, and I will rely on that.

For this reason, it is only the devil's art that he makes our weakness and need so great before our eyes that we forget God's word and command and ultimately have to despair. That is what he has brought us to.

But again we should learn the art of saying: Dear God, you have not only commanded me, when I am in trouble, to call upon you and seek help from you, but you have also promised me that you will be my gracious God, my dear Father, helper and protector, and will stand by me in times of need, proving your power and authority over me. This is what you want me to believe and trust in you completely; for your commandment stands there, and demands faith from me that I should even command myself to you. And I could do you no greater harm than if I did not believe your promises, in which you promised me that you would be my God and help me. Believe

I will not leave you, without a doubt, and I will remain in your grace, and all that I ask and need from you will be yes. For this word and promise, which he gives here, God does not withdraw; it does not repent him. And if it should come to pass that God does not keep his word and promises, and I remain stuck in adversity, then it is certainly the fault of my unbelief that I have not trusted in God, but in childhood adversity St. Margaret was supposed to help me, in the days of toothache St. Apollonia, in wars the knight St. George, in shipwrecks St. Niclas, and so on; I have thus placed my faith, trust and confidence in the saints, and have been shamefully deceived.

94 Let us therefore beware of unbelief and despair; let us also put out of sight the peril and distress, but on the other hand let us model to ourselves God's word and promise, and also the examples of divine help. For if we look only at the danger and hardship, the devil has measured out the hardship with such a long yardstick that one cannot bear it, but must despair over it. So he also held distress and fear before the prophets' noses and made them smell it, so that they might be distressed, complain greatly about it, and weep. But the greater the distress, the more thou shalt take hold of this promise in this text, and thrust it back in the devil's face, for God says [v. 21], "Be not afraid of them, for the LORD thy God is among thee, the great and terrible God."

95 Moses set before them a fine example of their own deliverance from the house of Egypt, when they had passed through the Red Sea with dry feet, when nothing but certain death was before their eyes [Ex 14:21]. For so it was with them: Behind them was the enemy, Pharaoh with a great army and power; in front was the sea, over which there was no bridge built, nor any ford to cross, they would all have been drowned in it; on both sides were high mountains, over which it was impossible to pass; heaven and earth were closed up there; there was no other account but certain death. Therefore they also saw

There their strength, which was so great that they even despaired, and thought that now they were lost. They cried out and said, "Were there not graves in Egypt, that we might have died in them?" and could not overcome the danger of the mountains, the sea and the armor of Pharaoh; it was death in their eyes.

96) But when Moses had adhered to the first commandment, which is, "I am the LORD your God," and prayed diligently, he also struck the sea at the commandment of God, and the sea parted from one another, and a magnificent, great, wide highway was formed through it, as wide as almost from Wittenberg to Magdeburg, almost twelve or thirteen miles long. Therefore Moses wants to say here: You have indeed experienced that what your God promises, he wants to do, and he can do it well; therefore he lets these words resound: "I am the Lord, your God. So do not doubt that he can give you health, food, clothing, house, farm, children, and all other necessities; he does not lack power and ability, he can do it well [Luc. 1, 37.]; also the will is there, because he has promised it to you. Why will you not believe and trust in him in all your trouble, that he can and will do for you and give you what you lack? For this reason we should also trust in him, in the face of his highest disgrace, punishment and chastisement.

(97) We should also remember this miracle and special example of redemption from Egypt daily, for many psalms recall and often report this divine work; all the prophets also refer to it, and Isaiah in particular often remembers this redemption. For when an emergency occurred, they remembered how God brought their forefathers out of Egypt, and therefore concluded that he would also help them again. For this reason, Moses wants to teach them to beware, so that they do not raise anything themselves in challenges and hardships, no matter how great the danger; also, do not think primarily about how many enemies you have, and how few are yours; but place the divine word, the promise and beautiful examples before all, which will show you how God 1) can and will help.

1) "Gott" taken by us from the old edition of Walch, instead of: "I" in the original.

Look into this helpful mirror, and let the emergency mirror go, or it may bring you harm. It is a comforting mirror that God, in His word, hangs before your eyes and says: "I am your God," I will help you; only hope in Me. And if his word is not enough for you to keep, since he promises you that he will do it and help everyone, look at the examples and proven deeds of God, since he has made it true and done it in others, on which we have to comfort ourselves and rely.

We Germans should do the same nowadays. We have as enemies the Turk, the Pope, the Emperor, and other tyrants who are all against us; so we have nothing but vain great danger before our eyes. If we now count the numbers, the Turk, the emperor and other enemies are too powerful for us, and we are against them as if one were set against thousands. This mirror is then vain, in vain and lost, which the devil presents to us. We must still turn our eyes away from this mirror and think as if there were no Turk, pope or other tyrant, and draw out the other mirror of life, namely the divine word and promise, and let us be greater and stronger than a thousand Turks and popes; yes, let us be stronger than the whole world is.

For what is the world against God? Is it not, as the prophet Isaiah says [Cap. 40, 15], like a drop of water that sticks to the bucket when the water is poured out? This droplet is far from being a stream; the air has soon licked up such a droplet of water. If we could only grasp this word and promise of God (if we are otherwise true Christians), we would find God's help against us. There would be nothing more certain than that we would defeat the Turk in a short time; we should not be sorry for this if we wanted to subdue the Turk. For God has promised us that He will be our God and in our midst 2c. Whom would this heartfelt comfort, these golden words not make merry and joyful, courageous and defiant, against all enemies, yes, against the devil and the gates of hell itself (Matthew 16:18)?

David in the 18th Psalm also looked at these words, when he says, v. 30: "With you I can crush the warriors, and with my God I can leap over the walls. For where the great and terrifying GOD is, why should there not also be happiness and victory against all enemies? Should not one be able to hunt down and defeat a thousand? Therefore he also speaks in the 46th Psalm, v. 4-6: "Even though the sea rages and rages, and the mountains collapse from its tempest, yet the city of God shall remain with its fountains, where the holy dwellings of the Most High are. God is within her, therefore she will remain well, God will help her early" 2c. Therefore also St. John speaks in his first epistle on the 4th 1) chapter, v. 4: "He who dwells in us is greater than he who dwells in the world." And St. Paul to Romans in the 8th chapter, v. 31: "If God is with us, who can be against us?" With this we should always comfort ourselves. For there is no doubt that with this comfort and faith in these words we Christians have resisted the Turks, the Pope, the Emperor and all persecutors so far, and we would probably want to remain safe from them if we believed God. But we pass by these words and promises, and we are not such people who build on them. Therefore, even if a misfortune befalls us and we get stuck in it, and no help comes to us, it is no wonder; we are not wronged by it; why are we ungodly and unbelieving?

102) The prophet Elisha also had this defiance [2 Kings 6:14 ff]; when he was besieged by the Syrians in the city of Dothan, and his servant went out and saw the enemies before the city, the servant ran in and cried, O we are all lost! and was about to despair. But Elisha the prophet did as if he saw and knew of no enemy, and so answered his servant, "There are more of them with us than with them. Then God asked him to open his eyes to the servant. When this happened, he saw all fiery chariots and horses on the mountains. All the mountains were full of angels, who stood on Elisha's side to drive away the enemies from the city,

1) Erlanger: "am3. Capit."

so that the prophet Elisha would not be harmed, and they would leave the turnips unsown for him (according to the common saying).

103) This is also shown in the battle of chivalry, 2 Kings 19:34, 35, which God did on Sennaerib before Jerusalem. Since he wanted to devour Jerusalem and make it a heap of stones, he knew how to keep the city from him, and he lost a hundred and five 1) and eighty thousand men in one night, who were found slain in the morning in the camp. If we still had faith, the great squires and soldiers would lie on the ground; but because we are either timid or pride ourselves on our strength, it is no wonder that sometimes a wheel goes over our leg and we get stuck in adversity. But if we persevere in this faith, help and salvation would soon be found.

(104) And even if we were to suffer hardship and tribulation in such faith, since we consider God to be our Lord, and were thus beaten and killed, we could not be better off, nor could we die better; the skin would be sold at a high enough price. For if God did not save me here in time, He would still "redeem me from eternal death. God wants to save His own who believe; and even though they sometimes have to pay for the evil neighbor (for one neighbor owes another fire damage, and otherwise one often has to pay for what he did not buy or steal), we believers nevertheless have this advantage, that even though we are slain and perish with the ungodly world, it nevertheless goes to the devil in the abyss of hell, but we go to eternal life, since we want to remain with God forever.

Therefore, we should not be afraid of danger and accidents, but look to God's word and His help for proof, and rely on it; for these are living and powerful words and deeds, and they sufficiently testify to how God wants to help from all causes, even in the midst of death; only that one may be comforted by them and rely on them without doubt. Therefore, in times of need, do not go against God's word; also do not judge.

a god in whom you trust more than in God; remember what the Lord, your God, did to Pharaoh in Egypt. If you do not have enough of this mighty work and irresistible help, then look at his certain promise, what he promises you of his almighty grace. For in these two things, as in words and examples, you will find comfort and help; but only that you base your heart on God and dare to go there.

For this reason Moses gives him so much space and time, and uses so many exquisite words, that he may bring these things before us, and teach us, that at all times, when adversity befalls us, we should put danger and distress out of our sight, and cleave to God's word alone, trusting more in God's promise than fearing all misfortune and calamity, and fearing and seeking no other God. For in this thou shalt have such a God as will put his hands under thee. He will also command his angels over you, to keep you in your ways, as the 91st Psalm, v. 11, gives us such a promise, and otherwise the whole Psalter is nothing but an interpretation and example of the first commandment.

(107) Let us therefore make every effort to learn the first commandment well, so that our hearts may know how to do all things, and then the other thing will follow from Himself, namely, that it may go well with us and that we may experience the power of these promises.

**V.20. For this purpose the LORD your God will send a hornet among them, until what is left is destroyed and hides from you. Do not be afraid of them.**

(108) With this he will convince them of this, and speak to their hearts, saying: Fear God alone, and no one else; for the LORD your God is with you. Therefore, they are still interpretations of the first commandment, that God will say: I am your God, it shall be well with those who love me. Therefore, if you trust in God, He will soon exterminate your enemies, even if He sends hornets among them to sting them to death. In sum, he will help you out of all troubles, only be undaunted.

1) In the original: four.



**V. 22-24: He, the LORD your God, will cut off these people from before you one by one. You cannot destroy them in haste, lest the beasts of the field multiply against you. The LORD thy God shall give them before thee, and shall smite them with a great slaughter, until he destroy them: and he shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy their name under heaven 2c.**

He still insists on the declaration of the first commandment, and gives them great comfort that God will equip them strongly enough to face their enemies and overcome them, for he is their God. If they believe in him, he will force the enemies under their power [Ps. 47:4], only that they hold on to him and let him be their God.

In this way, we too would be made right knights and be able to despise all enemies. But in the name of the devil, we trust in the temporal more than in God, and set our hearts more on human advice, on creatures and present help, than on the living God, who gives us such certain promises here. Therefore, we do not accept such a promise other than as if it had not been spoken by God, but by a juggler, a lottery boy, or a loose holiphile 1). The heart is so wicked that it is eager for mammon, for treasure, or money and temporal goods; and when it has these, it prides itself and insists on them, wants to be on top and nowhere else. But if it does not have such things, and poverty oppresses it, it wants to despair, becomes so fearful that it would let wood cut itself in two and fail, 2) forgets God altogether.

The Gergesenes are an example of what one should do in the world for the sake of God and one's neighbor [Matt. 8:31 ff.], who are very unhappy that the devils, driven out of the possessed man, have entered into their swine, push Christ out of their borders, and would rather have their swine than the Lord Christ. But let all who despise the word of God and put their trust in the creatures keep themselves and give themselves away.

Whoever allows such comfort to be torn from his heart and does not want to be moved by these words is not worthy to be ruled by God, but may have the devil as his ruler. He who does not want to be God's, may remain the devil's.

(112) Truly, there are great fears and idols who fight and dispute against the first commandment, which Moses spoke about before, and worked diligently on it, so that he would bring it into the hearts of his Jews, and so that everyone would place his faith and trust in God's grace. The devil has made the world so clever and so wise that it thinks it knows everything, and yet in truth it knows nothing. So I also always work on this article, so that we first learn to know Christ well and have faith in God. For if this article falls, then all is lost; but if it remains and is preserved, then all is preserved. I am a doctor of the Holy Scriptures, but I am still learning about them, and yet I do not know everything. But the world knows it all. Moses saw that it was very important and very difficult to learn that God is our Lord and to trust in Him, because it is impossible to learn it all. It is spoken with short and few words, but it comprehends much in itself.

(113) And Moses commanded the Jews before that they should not be afraid of the multitude of the Gentiles, whom they should kill and destroy, but remember what God had done before with them, and set before them his word, and the former works or miracles, that they might be confident, and walk freshly, for God would not lie to them, or cause his manifold promises to fall away.

**V. 25. thou shalt burn the images of their gods with fire, and shalt not covet the silver or gold that is in them, nor take it to thyself, lest thou be ensnared in it; for such is an abomination to the LORD thy God. 2c.**

Here, it means not only to remove the images, but also not to melt them, nor to take them and pull them into his treasure. Item, burn them completely. Whether they are kept

1) See Walch, St. Louis Edition, vol. XX, 2395. s. v. Lolhipler.  
2) fail -- to split into logs.

or not, I leave that in its place and dignity. But this text has given much occasion to the enthusiasts and iconoclasts, who have considered it a perfection and righteousness in the sight of God to burn images, or to make a racket with the images and tear them down, and have wanted to be holy people and good Christians through such works. But if this were true, the Turk would be the most holy, and would have great righteousness before God; for he tears down many images, castles and cities. Therefore, one should not boast about it, or pass this iconoclasm off as an art.

I have now written much about this in the book against D. Carlstadt, vom Bilderstürmen, 1) therein I have strongly opposed the same work. And this is my opinion: A Christian should begin from the full righteousness of faith, that he relies on the word of God, and learns to keep the first commandment from the heart, that he loves God, trusts, and fears Him above all things. Whoever does this will easily despise all silver and gold idols. For outward iconoclasm is but a camouflage by which one seeks to gain temporal honor, and to boast as if he had done well.

But you have not yet trusted God, you are not yet godly and a Christian, even though you have torn down monasteries, churches and altars, for anyone could do that. But it is primarily up to God and us humans to learn to keep the first commandment, which is given to the whole world; not only to the Jews, but also to us Gentiles, that we trust in God and recognize Him as our God, who helps us in all needs and troubles, and that we fear Him in all happiness and misfortune. Faith shall shine forth against God in the cross and tribulation. But we are to use the fear of God when it is good for us. So whoever considers the first commandment well would easily forget the images; but careless hearts go out like the iconoclasts did.

1) This refers to the section "von dem Bilderstürmen" in Luther's writing "wider die himmlischen Propheten," Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. XX, 138 ff.

First, learn to trust in our Lord God in all troubles and dangers, both spiritual and bodily, in trials of body and soul, so that you do not fall away from God and look elsewhere for help, or despair as Cain, Saul and Judas did. Again, when you are well, do not become proud or insolent, forgetting God as if you had body, life, prosperity and everything of your own.

In sum, a Christian man should be free to have and not to have images. For in the 22nd chapter of Matthew the Evangelist, v. 20, we read that the Lord Christ attacked the coin of the Jews, and was not afraid to take it in his hands, whether they tempted him thereby; asking, What coin of the penny or coin of the silver, or image and superscription? touches the emperor's image; does not reject these images, but rather confirms them; otherwise no Christian should touch the coin of gold and silver. Therefore it is not a sin to have images. But to have such images, to make idols of them, and to put one's trust in something other than God and the first commandment, such images are to be destroyed.

(119) As we have taken away many images of the saints, and if we had many silver images, we would want to use them for Christian purposes. In the New Testament, God does not ask much about images, but demands the heart. For those who are well instructed in the word of faith can easily forget all idolatry and images, even if they were in the midst of the images. But where one puts God's word and commandment out of sight, one gets all kinds of images and idols. And even if there were no images, one still attaches oneself to mammon, wealth, abundance, to the great multitude, also to good company or covenants, 2) as Moses has seriously forbidden all such things until now.

120) The Jews had a special commandment from this and other texts to burn the images and to beware of images, so that God would control them, that they might

2) Erlanger: "Bildniß".

have not offended against the same. Just as we still prevent our children from attacking lights or knives; not for the sake of the light or the knives, but for the sake of the child, so that it does not attack the light or the knives.

burn them, or cut them with a knife. So the Jews should avoid the images, so that they would use God's laws rightly in spirit, and not fall into idolatry and sin against the first commandment.

# The eighth chapter.

**V. 1. All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye keep, and do them; that ye may live, and be multiplied, and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers 2c.**

I. This chapter is a new sermon on the first commandment. For Moses, as we know, preached many sermons on this first commandment. But in this chapter he wants to admonish and urge us to remember the first commandment daily and diligently, so that we do not forget God. He therefore commands and binds us to the constant contemplation and diligent practice of the first commandment, so that we may find it in deeds and works, as we live by it, and be multiplied.

(2) Moreover, he wants to strengthen their faith through the imagination of God's previous benefits, so that they will trust in him and not fall away from him in temptations. Therefore, he says, they should look back and consider that he had been their God, since he had led, guided, fed and sustained them for forty years in the wilderness, in which places there was nothing to eat or drink, since there were no bakers, brewers, cobblers or tailors; nor did they have food, drink, clothing and all necessities from God. By this glorious work they were to learn and know that he would be their God once again, and if they trusted in him they would have abundance and sufficiency.

Such examples of the divine care and love for his people he puts before everyone's eyes here, so that one would be caused and urged by the experience to believe in God. So the promise is still present today, in which the Lord has shown Himself enough.

He also does such works every day, which should powerfully provoke us to believe in him; but it is lacking in you that you do not believe. You have the word, and see before your eyes the work in the whole creature, which should be able to make you believe, and drive you to believe that he also wants to do good to you.

4 In this chapter he sets forth a sin that goes against the first commandment, which is called turning away one's heart from God in poverty, hunger, sorrow, adversity and affliction, and not relying on Him. Just as, on the other hand, in wealth, abundance and blissful times, one forgets God. And all this was directed by Moses, so that he would gladly control our unbelief and despair, so that we would learn the comfort that is written in the 33rd Psalm, v. 19, that the Lord feeds his own in the wilderness and does not let them die of hunger, just as he sustained the Israelites in the desert.

For this reason, you too should learn how to view and overcome such hunger, lack and temptation in the future, namely, that it is only a humiliation and temptation from God. It is not that he wants to leave the challenged or suffering Christians, but he wants to know whether they also believe in him or not. That is why Moses says in the text [v. 2, 3]: "The Lord your God led you forty years in the wilderness, humbled you, and tempted you, that he might know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. He humbled thee, and caused thee to hunger, but came in due season, and fed thee with manna."

(6) When the Israelites were in Egypt, having enough food and drink, and when they went out of Egypt, carrying with them their cloths full of dough, they behaved themselves sincerely and holy, and nian could not tell whether they loved, believed and trusted in God with all their hearts, while the sack was still full. But when the sack was emptied, and there was no more flour, dough and bread, they soon realized that they had served God only because of their bellies. For then they thought what they had done, and that they had not done right in leaving Egypt: that they had left the onions and fleshpots, and now had neither food nor bread in the wilderness. They grumbled against Moses because of this, as we heard in the 16th chapter<sup>1</sup> of the 2nd book of Moses [v.2.3].

(7) So it is with an unbelieving heart that no longer trusts in God, except because bodily goods are available; but if these are taken away, it turns away from God and blasphemes Him. Moses says: "The fact that the Lord made you hungry should be a humiliation for you to call upon God for food, nourishment and the necessities of life, and to be sure of this from Him. God wants to be your schoolmaster, and teach you to understand the first commandment, that your heart should look to Him and trust in Him when nothing is available, and let it seem as if He wants to leave us altogether.

For God has the way: Before He helps His own, He first causes them to suffer and be afflicted; then, in His own time, He helps them out all the more wonderfully. Here, in the wilderness, He can feed and water the children of Israel for forty years, so that it may be seen that God is able to provide more counsel and do more in all things than all the world; He is also able to do more than all gold, silver, money, goods, food, drink and clothing.

009 For this must be unto me a goodly tailor and cobbler, that can make garments and shoes for forty years: and let this GOOD be a master of a feast, or a father of a house, having such a floor of corn or socle, that out of the air, or stony

Earth can immediately bring forth grain and bread, even water from the rocks. Ps. 65, 10. ff. Ps. 145, 15. 16. Ps. 147, 9. ff. If I should seek bread by reason, I would seek it of the baker, and corn of the castles; so God bringeth it out of the still air. Since there is no craft nor stock, there must be bread and all sufficiency. This is a masterpiece that must be remembered. God could still prove it every moment. Is. 50, 2. 3.

(10) Therefore, we see that all believers who trust in God and love His word must have enough; although there would be no bodily means of food and drink, God knows how to send help; as He fed Eliam in the wilderness by the ravens, and afterwards had him fed by the widow in Sarepta [1 Kings. 17, 4. 15.], and that time the Jews were fed by a new food, as the manna, which they never thought of, nor did their clothes get old or torn.

(11) We should hold this consolation up to our god, the belly, so that we learn the first commandment, trust God and His words and promise in time of need. But the whole world wants to understand the first commandment of God very well; but if they were to recite it, they would not know anything about it, since they wanted to be doctors and masters beforehand. Now I have long been a preacher, a doctor and an old fighter; but if I am to recite the first commandment, I have honestly grasped and grasped it by a silk bevel. The devil can soon teach my listeners another one, if need and poverty arise.

012 As the children of Israel said also unto Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, The devil told you to bring us out of Egypt. So their faith died out. When the belly of the god no longer saw the sack full of flour, all preaching and the first commandment were forgotten. But Moses told them the reason: "God made you lack, so that you might become his child and disciple, and learn to understand the first commandment correctly, and say: Although the sack is empty, the flour is out, and the dough is eaten up, I still believe him; for he has said to me: "I am your God", you shall have enough; although there is no

1) In the original and in the Erlanger: "im 1g. Cap."

If there is sack, dough, flour 2c., I still have our Lord God with me for provision.

013 But the children of Israel said otherwise, that the devil, and not God, had brought them out of Egypt. So do we also, grumbling against God without cause, regardless of his saying, "I will be your God and feed you; or, am I not so strong and important that I could give you ten florins, a bushel of flour and grain? All this makes it so that no one can recite the first commandment correctly; no one even thinks of learning it, or of taking it seriously.

014 But no man understandeth the first commandment aright, except he come first into want and trouble, that it seemeth as if God forgot thee, as if he would have thee stuck. Then you cry out: Oh God! Where shall I go? Where shall I find comfort and help? Shall I look in the cellar, on the floor, in the kitchen, in the closet, and pull out my treasure? but I have none. Then comes the first commandment, and cries unto thee and to all men, I am the LORD thy God. This householder will give you food and drink.

(15) It must be baked and spun from the first commandment. If you want to have a thread on your skin and a piece of bread in your mouth, the first commandment must give it to you, otherwise you will never get anything; mock it as much as you want, you godless boy! The word: "I am your God", I have sworn to you to do good, that gives the hungry bread and flour in sackcloth, also gives health in sickness, and everything else that one needs; just as here from heaven, from the pure air, bread falls down. The Israelites would not have sought bread in the air, but from a rich baker; nor could God give and provide it. Should he not still be able to do such things? Fie on our sorrowful unbelief!

16. remember this work, for it is in accordance with the word and commandment of God, which says, "I am your God. For there it is written that he does good and gives bread, which no one could have expected from that place. But the dear Jews were little enough grateful to God for this; nor does he give it freely and by grace, so that

that such a work be known to everyone, and that the word always remain true that he is our God, and that we trust in him. Who would have thought at that time that He would give bread from the clouds? And yet God did it, so that no one would say, "I proposed it to God, asked Him for it, and thought that He would give it to me out of the air, but He does it out of pure goodness, so that it may be known to you that man does not live by bread alone. 2c.

(17) This saying is also used by the Lord Christ in the fourth chapter of Matthew, v. 4, and confronts the devil with it, who plagued him with the worry of his stomach when he fasted forty days and nights in the desert; he would also have liked to drive Christ into mistrust of God. The Lord Christ answered: "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God"; as if he wanted to say: "Even if these stones are like bread, man does not live on them, but on the word of God.

(18) If there is no bread, nevertheless, if a man keeps the word of God and takes hold of it by faith, then bread will come in due time, even if it is sent down out of desire; and before there is a lack of drink, water must flow out of the rocks. Moses teaches this wonderful art, so that one may have enough in need and sorrow. Even if one had nothing more than the mere word of God, which is thus: "I am the Lord, your God", nevertheless from this word food, drink, bread, grain, wool, body and life, and all necessities would have to be provided.

(19) Learn this art also, that thou mayest trust in God. If you have nothing more than the first commandment, all the rest will come from it, even if the clouds rain bread or the rocks give drink. For he who has the first commandment has everything, and the world must confess, if it is to speak rightly, that it has everything it has from the God who says in the first commandment, "I will be your God.

20. learn this first commandment for the sake of the cause, so that God may be pleased with it, to be your God and helper, and to feed you, as he has done mightily in this example.

with the children of Israel, with the manna, and still wants to prove it to all his own. For thus says the 37th Psalm, v. 19: "He will feed them in the torment." Item, David speaks in the same Psalm, v. 25: "he has been young and grown old, he has never seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed going after bread. Other abundant promises of God testify to this, as in the 34th Psalm, v. 10, where it is said: "Those who fear the Lord will not lack any good. And St. Peter in his epistle says: "Cast all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you" [1 Pet 5:7].

The Lord Christ in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 6, v. 28 ff., also gives us his examples of divine care for his own, saying how he clothes the lilies of the field that do not sew or spin, and feeds the birds of the air that do not sow or plant; much more will he feed, nourish, preserve and protect his Christians, who are many more than the lilies and sparrows. But Moshe's example is also excellent and important, that God gave bread from heaven out of the air and made water flow from the stones to feed and water the children of Israel for forty years. And it serves us exceedingly well to align our faith with it, and to study and learn the first commandment diligently, so that we remain with the dear words of God, and continue with earnest, Christian prayer; for in this way God still wants to help all believers, and give them what they need in this life.

Our own experience also agrees with this miracle and commandment of God, which should ever move us to trust God all the more. For the God (who was able to perform these great miracles, such as keeping clothes and shoes intact for forty years, not letting them wear out and be used, even though they were worn on the body every day; item, who gave bread from above for forty years, so that he could feed and provide for so many hundreds of thousands of people every day) is also our God. Why then will we not heartily commit ourselves and all our possessions to his fatherly hands?

(23) These words which Moses used here, "Remember all the ways by which the Lord led thee these forty years," and "Remember him, and know that the Lord hath drawn thee, as a man draweth his son," apply also to me and to thee. We are to remember this text and let it be our command throughout our lives. But especially this saying, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," we are to take it to heart, to hold it dear and of value; for it commands us to hold the oral word or ministry high and great, to hear and learn diligently.

(24) We should not think that it is enough to hear the ten commandments and the divine word once or twice, but it must be heard and acted upon for and for. For this is the way with external, bodily bread, that if you eat today, you do not leave it at that, but tomorrow you eat again, and continue such eating from day to day, for and for, so that the body may have its food, nourishment and abstinence from it. So do not let it be enough that you have heard and learned the Ten Commandments and God's Word once, but you must learn them all your life, for you can never know them enough nor learn them enough.

Therefore St. Paul also teaches that one should grow and increase in the knowledge of the Lord Christ, which must be done by daily hearing and acting on the divine word. So also the first Psalm, v. 2, teaches that one should delight in the law of the Lord day and night. And John 5:39, the Lord Christ says: "Search the Scriptures, for they testify of me"; he wants us to diligently search and contemplate God's word. One must not become weary or tired of it, let it go, or put it under the bench, but always listen to it, drive it, and bring it out of the way again.

26. we hear here of a beautiful encomium, praise and honor, which Moses gives and ascribes to the divine word and commandments, namely, that there is life in this world, and also in that life; they sustain a man for time and for ever, Ps. 107:9, 20.

Weish. 16, 12. Of which St. Paul also speaks to Timothy: "Godliness (that is, when one believes in God) has the promise of present and future life" [1 Tim. 4, 8]. For whoever places his trust in God has the promise that God will assist and nourish him in this world, and make him blessed in eternal life. For Moses expressly says that God's word makes man live temporally, strengthens him in this life and for the life to come.

(27) In these words Moses speaks all these things of the outward, oral word, against the sects and the spirits that despise the preaching ministry. These are to be held up to their noses. The Jews had the outward word of God, which is thus: I will be your God, therefore you shall believe me; this was a certain promise, also concerning the bodily food; Moses, who leads this word, held this up to them faithfully enough, and through his preaching they received food. Therefore this example is also given, that the children of Israel were tempted with hunger in the wilderness; but because they adhered to the word of God and held fast to God, bread had to come, and so they were abundantly supplied, fed and satisfied in the wilderness.

This miracle still happens daily to Christians, so that they do not have to suffer lack in bodily needs; for St. Paul [1 Tim. 4:8] says that they should have enough here in this life. Even though they must often lack a little, it is only a temptation, and it comes about so that one should run to the word of God and know that the first commandment makes one alive. For if we were not tempted, we would not remember this commandment, nor would we ever learn God's word. The first commandment is a fountain of life; therefore, in time of need, either bread must come, or in its place other food to nourish us; just as in the wilderness the manna came down from heaven and out of the air, without their doing, where no one had sown it. Also the water had to come out of the gorges of stone; their shoes, and everything, held fast and endured well.

29 If anyone now wants to know and have a report of what all these unchanged things are.

Moses himself answers: "The word has done it, in which they trusted. They did not have to tear their old clothes, but to hold them as tightly as if they had been made new, because they received the word that Moses preached among them: I will be your God; by which word they held fast. And this miraculous work, in addition to the attached promises, we should also diligently take to heart and learn to make use of it, for we also have the same word and promise of God, so this deed of God is painted before our eyes in His word. But there it hangs, and will not go away with us either; which Moses complains very much of the children of Israel, that they have not driven it long; it has granted the devotion and godliness with them (as one says) a dance and a high mass.

**V. 5, 6 ff. Know thou in thine heart that the LORD thy God hath drawn thee, as a man draweth his son. Keep therefore the commandments of the LORD thy God, that thou walk in his ways, and fear him: for the LORD thy God leadeth thee into a good land, a land wherein are rivers and fountains and deeps within 2c.**

Luther read this text until the end of the eighth chapter.

(30) Moses is a very diligent preacher, always chastening and urging the Jews to learn the first commandment, and he did not preach it in one day. But first he says, "God has drawn you as a man draws his son." God dealt with them in a fatherly way, he brought them up tenderly. A father sometimes chides his child, and keeps it hard, scolds and punishes it; but soon the father's anger is over, he gives it an apple or a pear again, takes it from it again, wants to see whether the child loves him as its father, and whether it is good to him: he plays with it, takes from the child and gives it back to it, wants to accustom it to himself, so that it gains a childlike confidence in its father.

God does the same with us. He often takes away our possessions and goods, our health and loved ones, so that when we are in hunger, poverty, sickness, sorrow and heartache, we may run to him, plead with him and ask him. For forgiveness

He sends us to the search, not as an enemy, or as our executioner and executioner, but as our dear Father. He wants you to call and knock and say to him, "Give, dear Father," and to desire this with heartfelt longing and desire. This is what the Jews had to do with their desert and arduous journeys, and that when they were led out of the desert, had endured danger and hardship, and were sitting in wealth and abundance, they would not then become secure, forget God, and run after other gods, but would thank God for such benefits, and recognize that they had it all from Him; and, in turn, did not look elsewhere for help in their troubles, which they should expect from God, and look into His hands. Thus God can deal with us in such a way that we know how to keep ourselves right against Him in lack and abundance; and so He must, as a right father, draw us and accustom us according to His hand and way.

(32) Nevertheless, look at the ungodly nature of the Jews, even to this day in the whole world. The Jews thought they had everything by their own strength; therefore, when they were well off and had everything they needed, from that time on they forgot our Lord God. We find such ingratitude even today against the divine word. In what misery and blindness we have been under the pabstry, when we turned all our possessions and goods to the same false worship. Truly, if we were to recognize such distress, there would be no one so poor and unable who would not give away his skirts and cows, or whatever else he had, so that he might be free of this constraint.

But we have now forgotten. If we were to give a bushel of grain to a priest or other poor people at the time of the Gospel, we would be impoverished. Everybody is stingy and scrounges, and gives nothing to nobody. People know how to say: I have earned it with my bloodthirsty work and diligence, should I give it away like this? They always rob, scrape, steal to themselves, not remembering that we have everything from God. We do not have life from ourselves; death is daily on our necks. Our life hangs in another's hand and

Nor does anyone do as he pleases, as if he were master of his life and goods, fearing neither God nor His wrath.

Therefore God must come and make us weary of this life, for the people are hardened and harder than the Adamants. They are still to be found when they are threatened; those who still wish and want the Turk to come hope for him. But, you powerless peasants, you must not hope for him, even if you pretend to: He will make us all free, so that we will not be allowed to give interest, treasury, bullets and tribute. Yes, when the Turk comes, he will cut off your head, he will cut you off in the middle, he will take you away captive with your wife and child. So he makes everything free. But it is no better than always going to the devil with you old people. We still preach for the sake of the young people, whose hearts are not yet poisoned, whether God will give them grace to improve themselves. With the old people it is lost, they are stingy and usurious, they live as if they had the life of themselves, and as if they were masters over life and limb.

(35) As the present world does nothing else, but that ruler and subject, great and small, collect money and goods, and are in contempt of God, serve mammon as their god, and lie in sorrowful security [2 Cor. 4:4]. For this is the thanks and reward of God, when he gives the world everything enough and superfluous, so that nothing is asked about God; no one believes in him, or trusts in him, or calls upon him, or worships him, or even forgets about him. We have another God, namely, our work and our craft. Everybody thinks: I am a rich citizen, a rich farmer, I don't need anybody. Therefore God may send him another people. 1)

(36) When God blesses a land and makes it rich, it is soon forgotten. So do citizens, peasants and noblemen, yes, everyone; they are all beaten over a bar, and all do according to the rule, which is written in the song of Moses [Deut. 32, 15]: *Dilectus meus incrassatus et impinguatus, recalcitravit*, when the people were cowardly, then they lied against God. This is the

1) This will probably mean: Therefore God may prepare for Himself another people.



Thanksgiving for the divine benefits towards us, and the fine, praiseworthy, honest virtue that, when one has pulled one out of the mud and dirt, that the same one (with leave) afterwards again courts him on the mouth, or again pushes him into the dirt. Thus one forgets God and one's neighbor, one depends solely on the creatures and gifts of God.

37. But God will also avenge and punish this ingratitude, so that all kinds of God's plagues will follow it. For if we forget God, our Lord, we must perish; if we are hardened and hardened, he has hellish fire and heavy hammers enough, and so much that he can soften and melt your heart [Jer. 23:29]. Otherwise God will be Father and our gracious Lord, and will deal with us as a father deals with his son or child. He wants to be your faithful dear God, but do not despise him, and do not be stingy, do not forget him [Hebr. 13, 5, 1. For if you would do that, as gracious, kind and fatherly he would have been otherwise, so angry and abominable he would show himself against you [Sir. 5, 7.]. He would have the devil punish you and lead you astray, and destroy your body, goods and soul, and destroy you through the devil's cunning and deceit.

Thus Moses warns and forewarns, so that each one may beware of himself, and not trust in himself, and not forget God (when he is well), or defy His power and might. For when God removes the lack and gives goods, and one becomes ungrateful to God, God's wrath, pestilence, evil time and war soon follow. He who seeks only how to seek the penny soon forgets God and becomes God's enemy.

(39) Therefore, let each one stand here and pray diligently, recognizing the gifts he has received, that his house, farm, land, wife and children, money and goods and livestock are God's, that he has given them, and that they did not come from his hands; he did not obtain them by his own efforts. So remain in the fear of God, that you may say, "Dear Father, it is yours; my hands did not acquire it, your promise and promise gave it. I see these things with my eyes, but I have them from thee, and not by my hands.

(40) But with the wicked there is no fear of God, there one does not give thanks to God, but the idol, presumption, is there, that one has no trust in God; yes, one thinks: There I have my treasure, my grain and my beer in the house. Item, my handicraft and agriculture, that I have acquired; another also send it to him, I will feed myself well on it [Luc. 12, 19.]. This is the thanksgiving and praise or trust of God. In the same way, one gathers treasures to the detriment of the neighbor, defies and insists on the goods, exults over them, does not remember God, does not help other people, prides, robs, steals, lies and deceives others, and thinks that he has his possessions and goods from his sour work.

41. But a godly man thinks: What I have of goods, that I have not from myself; I have not my life also from the parents, if another workmaster had not come to it; for a hundred years ago I had neither skin nor hair. But, dear God, it is all yours, my wealth, my honor and strength. And because God proves so much good in me, He promises with words and testifies with deeds that He is my God, therefore I should say: I will not anger Him, I will do what He wants me to do; why would I steal? why would I cheat my neighbor? God has more than he has ever forgiven; why would I deal falsely with people? I will have enough; for he says here that he will be my strength, my wealth, my money and goods, and will feed me. He wants to be my procurator and food master, just as he was the procurator of the children of Israel in the desert for forty years. God alone does it. Such a man must be pious inwardly and outwardly; God also loves him, and he is useful to others, and does not live for himself alone.

(42) From this manifold stopping, you can see what a rich preacher Moses is. He diligently practices the first commandment, to set the heart before God, that it may believe Him, and trust in His word and promise. So we should also consider his commandment, his promise, and these deeds or examples described.

43: About all this, we Christians should be

think that God sent His Son, the Lord Christ Jesus, into the world and crucified Him for us. We should preach about this daily, for this work is higher than all the treasures and goods of the world. But we also let it pass by and do not ask anything about it, since this love of God, demonstrated to us in Christ, is the most abundant work and highest example of God's grace and mercy toward us, which fills heaven and earth. For we have in the New Testament a much greater sign of God's love for us than those in the Old Testament.

**V. 11. Take heed therefore that thou forget not the LORD thy God, lest thou keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which I command thee this day 2c.**

(44) Moses diligently enforces the first commandment, saying, "Though the world be foolish about it, yet all that we have is of him who says he is our God. Do we not have it all from God? For in that he has scattered his goods and gifts to the whole world, he indicates that this first commandment has been fulfilled. But we use them as if we did not have them from God. So Moses will not cease to inculcate this, and to sing this uneven little song to us, namely: Beware that you do not think that you have it by yourself, your craft, your care, your livestock, but know that you have it from God, from his hand, grace and mercy. Therefore beware of this sin, and of idolatry, presumption; lest thou think that thou hast it all from thyself. Nay, thou hast it not by thy wit, neither hast thou it by thy toil and labor, plow and cow; but by the word of God thou art fed, and therefore it is given thee, not that thou shouldest labor, but that he should be thy God. Know this, and use His with thanksgiving, and He will bless you more; if not, you will have neither happiness nor salvation with your goods.

45 In sum, all goods on earth are works of the first commandment, by which God proves that He is our God. Even if you do not give God

praise, nor know him, yet I cannot, Moses will say, leave it, I must rub it in your ears, and tell you who does good to you; now you know this, or not, in his time 1) you will also be spoken to for it. Therefore, if you knew that you had it from me, you would enjoy it everywhere; but if you do not know it, and do not give thanks for it, you will have to pay for it again. For if God is no longer your God, you will no longer be considered His.

46 Therefore thus saith God, I will also do away with my first commandment; I have been your God long enough: but if thou wilt no more take me for thy God, then thou shalt no more be my people: for when the Turk cometh, or any other distemper, they shall teach thee right manners. For whoever does not believe that everything we have and possess comes from God and is given to us, but trusts in creatures, God will louse him up with his great harm.

47 Therefore learn, while ye have time and space, that ye may come to the understanding and experience of the first commandment, and in no wise forget God, of whom ye have all sufficiency; neither despair when ye have nothing; for with him alone are all treasures found, and there let us seek what each lacks. So then, if there is anything, let us fear him, and let a godly man stand firm on the promises and the examples, and know that God loves him and will not forsake him.

(48) This is the long and glorious exposition of the first commandment, where Moses also told all the hindrances that draw us away from the first commandment. For the first commandment is all about a man taking heed to nothing, and leaving him with nothing but God; then he cannot be deceived. For God is also our God, and one Lord and God of the Old and New Testaments; therefore He will also provide for us here in this life and also in the life to come, amen.

1) "Time" is missing in the original.

# The ninth chapter.

**V. 1. Hear, O Israel, that you are going over Jordan today to invade the nations that are greater and stronger than you, great cities walled up to heaven 2c.**

In the beginning of this fifth book of Moses [Preface § 2. 3.I have said that it is nothing else than a beautiful, delicious sermon or interpretation of the ten commandments of God, and especially of the first and most noble commandment, which he expounds in length and breadth through many chapters, with great diligence and excellent earnestness, as a great master and preacher, so that one may ever learn to esteem the ten commandments dear and great, and see how no better, more useful or more necessary teaching and preaching, nor any higher wisdom or art is to be found on earth.

(2) Now he has hitherto, in order to explain the first commandment well and to make it understandable, told us of many temptations and hindrances that run against it in the world on every side, namely, the great idol Mammon, money and goods, friendship and favor, power and honor, and the like; so that he may warn us to beware and take heed that no one sets his heart on anything other than the word that he has given us and put into this commandment, that he will be our God. For all power is to keep the confidence or trust of the heart pure, so that no one sees or knows anything other than what his God says, speaks or gives.

(3) But of all the hindrances, or vexations, or idolatries, none is greater, nor more injurious, than that which is called our own righteousness or holiness, by which we defy our works and merits. But it is not a coarse, common idol, like the others that rule in the world among the rabble, but the most subtle, beautiful and mischievous devil, which alone charms the highest, most refined people, but most of all afflicts and attacks the right Christians, even clings and clings so tightly that no one can get rid of it as long as we wear this flesh around our necks.

4. for I have often said how we are naturally

t is a very inherent and shameful evil that one seeks holiness in works and fails to earn it from God, so that even the very highest Christians have their greatest trouble and work with it. St. Paul, I think, will be one of the greatest saints, like the prophet David; but when they have reached the highest, they cannot be safe from this idol, as they themselves always complain. For Paul freely confesses that God had to send him an angel of Satan out of hell, who speared him and tortured him quite well, only so that he would not exalt himself to great enlightenment, as if he were better and holier before God than others because of it [2 Cor. 12:7].

Behold, the excellent man in spirit and faith stands in such great danger that he would fall into such hope that he would tickle himself and come before God with his own holiness, and with such a register: So much have I done, suffered, preached, converted 2c., that there was no counsel to resist your misfortune, but that he had to have such a devil on his neck, who plagued him in such a way that he had to remain in the confession that what he was out of pure grace, for the sake of neither work nor merit. Thus, the hole to boast about himself was lost.

(6) This is the complaint of all Christians until the last day, how it is so sour and difficult to resist this challenge. Therefore Moses did not put this idol last for nothing, as he is the last one. And even though the others have all been overcome and subdued, this one remains undead even into the pit. For though they also rule mightily, they can all be weakened and overthrown: mammon with poverty, honor and power with shame and misfortune 2c. Even wisdom can be turned into foolishness and disgrace. But where holiness reigns, it cannot be weakened or dampened by any human art or power. For even if one wants to attack and condemn it, it only boasts of its suffering all the more.

and innocence, makes herself a martyr for the sake of God and justice. Summa, it is our old, thick, tough and stretchy 1) skin, which does not want to be peeled off, as one blues and beats oneself with it.

7. Some pious fathers also complained about this in the desert, and one of them gave a simile, saying: It reminds him of this abomination as of an onion, which, when one skin is peeled off, always has another underneath, as long as something of it remains; so is this filth; though it is overcome in one piece once or twice, so that God's grace retains the glory and honor, yet it always comes back, clings and attaches itself to all works, so that no one can remain untouched by it, for it also has some devil who tramples it underfoot, so that it cannot muster holiness.

(8) Therefore it is a great preaching about the first commandment, especially in this piece, that a man should come to the point of not presuming holiness in works before God. Although, I hope, it is not very necessary for the common crowd, because they do not stand for great piety or holiness, they remain with their idol Mammon and other common idols, so that they cannot come so high. There are few of them who defy great art or wisdom, which is also subtle and high; but none does so much harm as this one, for he wants to be nowhere but with the very best, and because he is the most beautiful, he also seeks the most beautiful church, leaving the others well satisfied. So they are careful enough not to do so, for he who does not do good works does not suffer much.

9th Now this is the right devil and great abomination, hitherto most highly honored under the papacy, shouted out in all churches, monasteries and convents, in all pulpits and high schools, in addition to which so much worship has been instituted and established, and the world's goods have been heaped in heaps; yes, torn down to such an extent that no rich man has died otherwise than in the opinion that, because he would leave nothing better behind him, nor take anything else with him but good works and worship, he should make his will, and contribute so much to the church.

so that God would be served and remembered. Summa, God began in time, yes, he was the first in the beginning of the world; but in particular he has been in the ascendancy and publicly raised as the highest worship in Christendom, now longer than a thousand years, since nothing else has been taught or known, but to place our confidence and blessedness on our own works.

(10) Therefore Moses comes first to overthrow and condemn this idol, using all kinds of ways to frighten and tear his Jews away from it, even though it did little good with them, because afterward they fell as deeply into idolatry as we have been so far. First of all, he warned them when they came into the land, so that they would not go away and say that they had earned it from God, as if their holiness had been so great that he should have given them the land and driven them out and destroyed them.

11. But notice how evenly and masterfully he meets and depicts their mischievousness and hypocrisy, so that they make a pretense of holiness. For this they do nevertheless, the pious peelers, that they give God the glory that he has done it; they are not so rude that they attribute the work to themselves, but in their hearts they play this along with God: He must let them make him a fool and an idol, and take the name that he must look upon their righteousness, and give the land for it, if he would keep his honor otherwise. But they want to do their best, that the blame and cause of the work is not God's, but their own merit, and yet it should be called God's honor, as said, that he is so pious and gives the pious what they deserve, when it is truly nothing else than God's honor robbed, and measured out to them themselves. For God's glory is only that He gives, helps, benefits and saves everyone out of pure grace.

12) Now this is certainly the characteristic of their own righteousness and of all false saints, that they pretend great honor to God, and pretend to be excellently humble, saying that they are poor sinners, not worthy of God's grace, do not want to be called holy nor pious, 2c. but in essence it is nothing else than a desperate, doubtful hopefulness and presumption, so that they cannot be called saints.

rather come before God, they are pure and holy beforehand, nor accept his grace, they have earned it beforehand, that not he but they have the glory. [She] will not take anything from him as a gift, but will give it to him first, that he may repay her as he is our debtor. That is to say, she has made of God a faithful one, who cannot do without our holiness and merit, and has no gratitude for giving us anything unless it is well deserved. Behold, this is a virtue of praiseworthy piety.

(13) The other is like it, in that it comes before God, adorning itself with a work or two that it has done, and wants to cover all the sin and shame that it has ever committed. As we have seen under the Pabst: If someone has lived thirty or forty years in vain sin and iniquity, and after that has fallen down, made a will, or said so many masses, God should welcome him, and all the evil things he has done all his life should be paid for with one florin or ten florins. Is this not a devilish presumption, yes, an insulting mockery and ridicule of the divine majesty, that he, putting all wickedness aside and keeping silent, should for the sake of one florin let everything be given and settled, and give heaven in addition? Yes, he will give them a heaven in which the angels walk with clubs (as people say).

(14) Moses also wants to expose such disgraceful virtue of false holiness, how it conceals countless disgraces and vices under a small appearance, and yet is allowed to step unashamedly before God, to reckon with Him, and to boast as if there were pure holiness, that He must see no more sin and forget all wrath. Therefore, he continues afterwards, telling and reproaching them to see what they have done against God all the forty years before they came into the land. As if he should say: Dear one, if it is to be reckoned and set on an equal footing with God, then you must put so many works against it. Now you consider him to be such a fool, 2) who does not see your iniquity, or ever to it

And be glad of your impotent money, and not count against it the goods he has given you, life and limb, house and home, sun and day, and all that heaven and earth can do or bear; in sum, be silent of all his benefits, none of which is so small as to outweigh all your works, if you can give him.

(15) But if you say, "Yes, God is merciful, and does not demand or reckon so harshly, but spares and gives, as we angered Him before. Answer: So you should also have a good year! Can you now believe that he will forgive you in vain so many sins and iniquities in which you have lain so long, and that God will show you all kinds of good deeds of which you have never been worthy, and think that he cannot or will not take you to heaven without your ten guilders, or whatever you may give him? What is this but that either thou art a fool, that thou missest to put away innumerable sins with one florin, if thou hast never done a good work unto death, or that thou thinkest God, as a desperate knave, to be a fool, who, like a child with a number penny, can be fooled or deceived into not seeing thy wickedness?

16 Now this is all the blindness of evil nature, that where it sees only a spot that is a little pure and white, if it once imposes a good work that it calls well done, it can make it so useful to it, reflecting and tickling itself, that it should regard God as the greatest saint. This is the cleverness of the ostrich, which, when it comes under a bush to cover its head, thinks that it has hidden its whole body so that it cannot be seen, and like young children, they close their eyes and think that if they do not see, no one should see them.

(17) Therefore Moses will teach and conclude: If anyone wishes to come before God, let him not prescribe for himself the way to bring forth his works and to stand on his rights, but let him look at another record and count how much God has given him and done for him without merit, so that he may learn that all our righteousness is nothing and condemned, and that there is no other way or path to righteousness but to know and confess this, that we are before God.

1) In the original: gerathet.

2) Potzen --- scarecrow, popanz.

God are not pious nor righteous, but must receive what he gives us out of pure grace, no work being required or considered for it. As the prophet says in the Psalter, Ps. 143, 2: "Do not go into judgment with your servant, for there is no living man righteous before you. Item, Ps. 130, 4: "With thee there is nothing but forgiveness to fear thee." Such a heart that denies itself, that finds neither piety nor merit in itself, is true piety before God. And for the sake of such faith and confession, it is called pious and righteous to confess 1) freely: Dear Lord, I know of no piety in my body and in my life, but this is my comfort and defiance before you, that you gladly give to a poor sinner, and forgive all sin out of sheer grace.

The Pharisee comes and stands before God with his works: "I thank you, Lord, that I am not like other people, nor like this tax collector; I fast two times a week, and tithe everything I have. O an excellent saint, whom no one could punish without the shameful idol of 2) presumption, that he comes trolling, boasting, and giving thanks not of grace, but of his fasting and good works, as if he had no right to grace.

(19) Next to him is the poor tax collector, who has neither works nor merit, and knows nothing that God should look upon unless he freely confesses that he is a sinner, and for this very reason he comes and asks for mercy, seeking and desiring nothing but to receive from God. Christ pronounces judgment on this one, that he has gone home righteous and pleasing to God because of this faith; but the other, with his holiness and many works, is condemned and not worthy to hold a candle to the publican.

020 Behold, we all lack this now, even as the Jews lacked it. For this, as I said, is our old skin, through flesh.

and blood, marrow and bone; for everyone would like to raise up something that would be valid before God, on which he would like to rest and rest, and boast that [it] would be his own, and not have to stand naked and bare before God, and bring his shame before Him [Gen. 3:11]. For this reason all spiritual orders have been established, all churches and services have been set up, all wills and spiritual devices have been created, so that everyone hoped that God would look at it and consider it so exquisite as they thought that He would have to lift us up to heaven and take us.

21 Therefore, if one rejects this and teaches against it, it will immediately follow that everyone will cry out, "Well, then, let us do no good works;" and quickly go the wrong way, either making God a fool and an idol with our works, or doing nothing at all. There is no way to avoid 3), there is no way to stop here. No one wants to remain on the middle road, that we denied ourselves badly before God, as those who sought nothing but to receive the grace and promise offered, but then went and did what we could, even freely for nothing, for the sake of no merit or our own enjoyment. It is said, preached, and heard, but no one can do it, if one is to be able to do it and prove it. For my part, I must confess it, and I respect that no one so holy and full of the spirit will have to confess it. For, since all the saints have felt it and lamented it, we will certainly not be above it. I feel it well, when it is a matter of meeting, how nature resists, seeks and reaches out, and would like to find a work that it could push up to God, and speak: I have nevertheless done this, preached and directed so much. And even though I know that [it] does not apply, nor should it apply, I cannot let it go, nor can I come to the point that I could so merely surrender to His grace.

22 But is it not a miserable pity that a man should not be able to do so much, when God Himself beckons to him, saying, "Dear one, you have two paths before you; take them.

1) In the original and in the Erlanger: er.  
2) In the original and the Erlanger: "and" instead of: the. Cf. in the previous chapter § 40 and § 44.

3) "Dem" put by us instead of: "Denn" in the original.

and yet choose one: Wouldst thou rather have my grace and eternal blessedness freely, given and carried home, without all thy cost and labor; or stand to gain it by thy works, and yet not obtain it? Yes, [he] exhorts and entices to grace, and against it dreads eternal wrath and punishment, where we do not accept it. How should or can he do more, if he does not help us, that he so abundantly offers and pours out his grace, provokes and gives, admonishes and frightens, punishes and strikes us? he himself would like to let go of justice, and make a line through it: so we want to have justice without grace, and yet also have our own little idol with us.

(23) Such is the misery of our lives that we do not accept the treasure, on which we should devote life and limb, spare no food or effort, and run so that we would sweat blood if it were to be found in any place. Now he comes from himself and brings the treasure to the door, admonishing so warmly and fatherly, praying so earnestly, threatening so terribly; so may we not be. If we should spit on ourselves and become enemies, that we are such unholy people, who against the offered grace rightly defy, that is, invite wrath and disfavor upon us.

(24) For what is it but to seek and to require justice, saying, Go into judgment with me, and give me that which I have earned? Summa: I am not allowed to your mercy anywhere; but next to it out of sight all sin and wickedness, as if you had not angered God once. See, this is what Moses wanted to put down, to warn and to defend, that one should look out for this idol and beware of it. Therefore, let him who can learn learn that he should by no means seek merit or his own righteousness, nor should he have anything to do with any work that he wants to bring before God, but run and flee from it, as from the devil himself.

25 Thus sayest thou: How is it then that there are so many sayings and promises in the Scriptures, that those who are pious and do good works shall both here and there receive their reward? as [Luc. 6:38], "Prayer, and it shall be restored unto you" 2c. Answer: It is therefore necessary to know what is to be done.

To be righteous before God and to do good works, of which I have said enough; that is, not that you should come in disguise and say, "Lord, I have done this, write it down, and repay it;" but that you should say from the heart, "Lord, I take all your goods, benefits and graces as a sinner and a desperate man, worthy of eternal wrath and hellish fire, as I go and stand, if you should deal with him according to justice and merit. But I do not look at my sin, nor at what I have earned, but at your word and earnest commandment, that you command, admonish and forbid that no one bring any work before you to earn anything, but out of fatherly kindness receive forgiveness of sin and all kinds of benefits, and stand and remain in the pure confidence of your grace.

26 Wherefore if there be such confidence in the heart, the works that are done therein shall be called good and acceptable unto God, and for that cause shall obtain the promise. For this is the promise: He that keepeth the first commandment, and standeth in grace, shall also all his life, and whatsoever he doeth, be acceptable and well-pleasing; for apart from grace an idol is so soon made of it, under false pretences of good works. But he that hath this understanding cannot trust in them, nor make them an idol, but abideth pure and right in faith, and doeth works in and of grace. Therefore they are called righteous good works. Behold, the Scripture speaks of this in the 112th Psalm, v. 1, 2: "Blessed is he that feareth the Lord, that delighteth in his commandments: his seed shall be mighty upon the earth; the generation of the righteous shall be blessed." So also in the 128th Psalm, v. 1. 2, the Holy Spirit says in the same way: "Blessed is he who fears the Lord and walks in his ways. Thou shalt be nourished with the work of thine hands: thou shalt prosper." As if to say, it is in the work that it lies, which must be before and in all works; for fear suffers not that one should trust in works, or leave his comfort. But if the heart's confidence in God's grace is right, God is so pleased with the works done from such a heart that he graces them with all kinds of blessings and benefits, as the Psalms now quoted indicate.

### The other part.

27 From all this we see why Moses is so diligent and serious about the first commandment, and so faithfully warns against this idol as against the most harmful poison. But he needs a strong defense against it, shows and gives strong medicine, so that one can come before it and resist it.

28) First, by indicating and concluding that God did not bring them into the land for the sake of holiness, nor for the sake of wickedness, but for the sake of His promise, which He holds out to them, saying [v. 5]: "That He may perform the word which the LORD swore to your fathers 2c, which is, as he elsewhere often says, for his name's sake; whence also the 25th Psalm, v. 11. asks, "For thy name's sake, O LORD, be merciful to my iniquity." Now where is the name? Just in the first commandment, where he unites himself and lets preach and offer to the whole world that he wants to be our God and give everything good. With this, it is said: Your holiness counts for nothing, your piety deserves nothing, but the commandment, in which his name is written, his promise is bound and set forth, that counts, that does it, that is the only reason why he does you good and gives you the land.

29. If you want to know where you got body and soul, money, goods, honor, art, wisdom, power, etc., just look at this commandment, which will show you that you were not born to it, nor did you acquire or earn it through your luck, cleverness, work, or effort, but everything came from the fact that he promised, before you ever did anything, that he would be your God; therefore you have everything you can, down to the last penny. It is always necessary to do this, as Moses does here, so that one learns to regard this commandment rightly, and to recognize and extend it in such a way that one draws and grasps oneself and all divine goods into it, yes, also the Lord Christ and the whole New Testament, which even springs and flows from this promise, and finally remains in it, as in him such promise is fulfilled and confirmed, that he is our gracious Father, and through Christ forgives all sin, redeems from sin and death, gives all his goods, and gives eternal life.

(30) Secondly, that Moses might teach them these things, and put away their pride, he began to describe their legend, and made a long register, wherein he told them, and set before them all that they had committed, because they were in the wilderness; that they might see and understand that God gave them nothing for their merit, but only for his promised grace. And this is the summary of the whole chapter: What should he give you because of your piety? You have been a stiff-necked, stubborn people from the beginning to the present time, who have continually provoked and angered God, so that when he should have acted according to your merits, he should have destroyed you all in one heap long ago.

Behold, there stands the glory and praise of us all, a beautiful and praiseworthy virtue, which befits the wretched creature in the face of its God and Lord. When God does us all good, more than we can wish, we give him nothing in return but cursed disobedience and a stiff-necked head. How then the world is now everywhere full of stiff-necked, unruly people, servants, maids, peasants, burghers, nobility, like the coarse, crooked and awkward blocks 1) and logs, who have nowhere to serve but in the brick kiln with fire to cope. Let them not be told, nor hindered, nor controlled, as they are threatened with fire, water, pestilence and all misfortune, as if they had iron and steel in their necks, which no one can break until the executioner knocks them in two with the wheel or death strikes them.

But much harder and more stiff-necked is the people, who are under the delusion that they are holy and God's people, as the Jews boast [Matth. 19, 20]. There are people so hard and stiff that neither God nor the world can bear them, in whom everything is lost, how one deals with them, one warns, urges, begs or pleads. As this history sufficiently shows and paints, how they were so often tormented and beaten during the forty years, and daily had so many cruel, terrible examples of God's wrath before their eyes, before which their heart should have melted; nor was it forgotten and despised from hours. This is the fruit of the

1) In the original: ungelenkten Blöcher.



great holiness, sought and praised by his own works, which, as said above [§ 15], may throb, boast, and defy God with a florin or two, and have a work or two so blown out, proud, and stiff, as if he must count their unvirtue and idolatry to great merit.

(33) Behold, Moses will enforce these things upon them, and bind them up, that they may be reflected in them, and have them always before their eyes: therefore he speaketh so much, and maketh it great and dreadful, that they may tremble at it, as they have been ever disobedient and rebellious from the day that they came forth out of Egypt (Exodus 32:8, 9). And consider especially the thing which they did as soon as they came out of the land into the wilderness, at Mount Sinai, when God made a covenant with them, and gave the ten commandments, how they committed idolatry with the golden calf, and angered God so much that he wanted to destroy them all at once, that Moses also had to burn the calf with fire and turn it into powder, and then throw the dust on the water and give it to them to drink. 32, 20. ff.] that they had to drink their own abomination. Behold, the sin he will not keep silent nor forget, writes it in the book, that they had to read and hear [it] publicly several times a year, drives also even the words: Remember it, and do not forget 2c. So that they do not throw it behind them and put it under the bench, nor leave it out of consideration, as if God had forgotten it, but always let it ring in their ears, and hear nothing but their sin and shame.

34 Let this be said to him by way of example, both by me and by others, against this temptation; for, as I have said, there is no better counsel nor art against it, than that every man should take hold of his own bosom, and there he will find a register, which will tell him much other than his holiness, that thou must put down the peacock's tail, and say, Lord, I will gladly forget all works and merits, that I may only come to grace. Like the poor publican (Luc. 18, 11. ff.), who lets the Pharisee read his register, and boasts of good works; but he knows neither works nor holiness, but uses another register, which is called: Mihi peccatori, in which is written

Nothing but vain trespasses and sins; such a sight teaches him finely to despair of it, to make no holiness of his own, and to run from the merit of works to grace.

For this reason, God also rules His saints in such a way that they always carry sin around their necks, even keeping such rough knots on them, that they must remain in fear and humility and not become too secure or presumptuous. Christ wanted to have St. Peter and Paul as high apostles, but before that, he wanted them to start and fall low enough that the former denied him [Matth. 26:74] and became apostate to him; the latter persecuted him [Acts 9:4], blasphemed him and condemned him to the utmost; only because he tied a shackle around their necks, so that they could not forget their misfortune, otherwise they would also have fallen into this desperate misfortune. But now they must remain here, so that they may not presume on any holiness, and may not despise any sinner. Therefore, whoever wants to escape from shameful presumption, let him also do so that he looks behind him and reckons how he spent his life before. As I and others have to say, "As long as I have been a knave, deceiving countless souls with false doctrine and idolatry, blaspheming and crucifying my Lord daily," 2c., so he will probably crawl to the cross and be glad that he may come to grace as a sinner.

36 The Book of Jesus Sirach also teaches this on the 5th, v. 5: Noli esse sine metu de propitiato, do not be sure and without fear of the sins that are already forgiven. Why is that? Precisely because Moses also teaches us to ward off misfortune. For as soon as we forget what we have been, we forget the grace that has been given to us. Because we no longer consider the misfortune that should humble us, it soon follows that the gospel is no longer tasty, and after that all kinds of horrible bad habits come in again with heaps, ingratitude, pride and arrogance, contempt for one's neighbor, 2c., and then becomes seven times worse, as Christ says (Matth. 12, 45. Luc. 11, 26.), than it was before; as we now see and experience all too much every day.

37 St. Peter must have seen this as well,

since he says of such 2 Petr. 1, 9: <sup>1)</sup> "With whom these things are not, he is blind, and seeth nothing, and forgetteth the purifying of his former sin." 2c., that is, such a man is made of them, as one that goeth blind, and seeth nothing with open eyes, nor regardeth or feeleth, and is secure and presumptuous, as if he had never troubled no water, 2) and could no more err. But it is said: "That your sins are never sins and forgotten is not the fault of your yellow hair, but of grace and forgiveness; but if you are thus forgotten, and neither see nor consider how much God has confessed to you, and how great a treasure he has bestowed on you, you give place to the devil again, so that he plunges you into blindness, and all kinds of sin and shame. Therefore also now so many of our kind have fallen away from the gospel, only because they make themselves believe that they now have it, are full and safe, and no longer think that before they also lay in hell and deep blindness, or were before the net and yarn.

38 Therefore, lest we fall into this accursed evil, let us diligently learn the first commandment, and always keep it. Learning, I say, so that we remain disciples all our lives, and beware of overindulgence and harmful delusion, as if we had heard enough and could now do it well; for we have no rest, even from all other idols and temptations, but much less from this conceit of righteousness. I confess myself to be one of the most, for I have done diligence, so God also has great mercy, and helps to resist confidently, yet I cannot bring myself to get rid of the idol, and must remain a disciple of the first commandment as long as I live. All the other people on earth can do it all too well, not only the ten commandments, but also far above them, so many orders, and ranks, and works to excess; think that the Holy Spirit had to teach and set much higher things in conciliis, as if they had gone far beyond all ten commandments, yet there never was, or still is, anyone who has rightly considered the least commandment, or understands the least part.

1) In the original: "2 Pet. 2."

2) saddened--distressed.

**V. 8-10. For in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to anger, so that he would destroy you with wrath, when I went up into the mountain to receive the tables of stone, the tables of the covenant which the LORD had made with you; and I tarried forty days and forty nights in the mountain, and ate no bread and drank no water, and the LORD gave me the two tables of stone written with the finger of God, and on them all the words as the LORD had spoken to you out of the fire on the mountain in the day of the assembly.**

39. It has been shown to you many times how Moses used many words in the interpretation of the first commandment, which he practiced with great diligence, just as a schoolmaster reads and teaches the lesson to his students with great diligence, so that they may grasp and learn it well; Or as a mother spreads porridge on her child, that it may eat it and be nourished; so he wills that the people of Israel, through these many words and sermons, may well understand the first commandment, learn it diligently, and live by it. And he would gladly bring them to the knowledge of themselves, that they should take it by the nose, and think behind themselves, as they had done in the wilderness, saying: I fasted for forty days in the wilderness for your sake, and had great labor and trouble, that I might fetch you the commandments of God, and bring them to you from Mount Sinai, which trouble I had to lose; this labor was done in vain, because ye angered our Lord God with the golden calf.

40 He reads this virtue to them in this register, always impressing upon them that they have been a stiff-necked and stubborn people, idolatrous and disobedient, and that it has cost him much effort to swear them in to God, 3) and to bring them back to grace. They are to read this register, they are to look into this mirror. He sets it before them written, so that they should not forget it, but be humbled by their legend. And their sins and vices must now serve them so that they may be more devout.

41. we should also not forget the wrongdoings we have committed.

3) eintheidingen --- to bring back to grace through original language.

but to remember it for our humiliation. I also use to do the same for him. For I, Martin Luther, have also been a prankster for a long time, and have been in the monastery life, have seduced people, and I cannot pay the souls that I have seduced. I must still keep this record and this bad habit in mind, so that they may preach to me about my good works and my own righteousness, on which I also relied in the papacy, and may now remember that I no longer desecrate and blaspheme God. And even though I am now no longer a blasphemer nor a desecrator of God, for I do not deceive the people with my preaching, I also no longer sacrifice and crucify Christ in the mass, but I praise and extol the mercy of God: nevertheless, my life is done in such a way that I need God's grace and mercy, my life is insufficient, and my works are so incompetent that I may not defy God on them, nor ask and desire heaven for them. I must say with David, Ps. 143, 2: "Lord, do not enter into judgment with your servant" 2c., my life is too weak and frail, and my faith too little, so love is somewhat cold in me. I need the mediator and throne of grace, the Lord Christ JEsu. I must crawl under this cover and ask him for forgiveness of sins; he must forget that which is still sinful and frail in me, cover it up, and grant me grace. But whoever else wants to seek right from God will find right enough.

**V. 11. And after the forty days and forty nights the Lord gave me the two stone tablets of the covenant 2c.**

(42) These are the virtues they should look at; they should look at this list and sit down, look behind them, and realize who they have been. They shall not put this painting under the pew, but put it before their eyes, and look at it, and preach from it in the pulpit, and let them bring up their badness, and let them always hold it up before their noses, as they have done from their youth, and what wicked deeds they have committed against God, so that their hearts may be afraid of it, and the people may say, "Lord,

Do not deal with us according to our sins, do not repay us according to our iniquities", Ps. 103, 10, but be merciful to us poor sinners, we desire mercy and not justice [Dan. 9, 18. 19.]; thus they would remain finely humble. Therefore, if we do not curb the old rascal, we also forget the grace of God. Therefore, Moses is always reproaching the children of Israel for breaking in two the tablets that God Himself had written. He makes their sin great and grievous, so that they almost despair, for he says that he is angry with their sin and has broken the two tablets of the Ten Commandments.

(43) And they would say, Though our fathers have sinned, yet will we not do so, and sin. Yes, they did it even worse than their fathers, after they had entered the land. Under the papacy we also made it bad enough with idolatry, and also made idol calves more than they. The people of Israel did not worship the cast calf, but they wanted to worship God Israel by this calf; they wanted to serve God under the image of the calf, they erected it in honor of God. For they knew that in the Old Testament the Old Fathers and Patriarchs, as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, sacrificed calves to our Lord God, therefore they approached, wanted to improve it, and also erected a golden calf to the living God, thus they wanted to serve the God who had led them out of Egypt; they certainly did not want to serve the devil.

(44) Just as today, with our apparent and glittering works, we also want to honor and serve God and make Him gracious to us. For my own part, I did not enter the monastery to serve the devil, but to earn heaven by my obedience, chastity and poverty. That is, to raise a calf and to worship the calf. But this, the sin of the Jews with the calf, was still a golden and delicious sin against our idol and sin. And if we had been there, we would have eaten the calf with great devotion and holiness. You have certainly taken into consideration and remembered the glorious examples of your

Ancestors, that the patriarchs used calves for their sacrifices, therefore they wanted to follow their fathers, and honor our Lord God in this image, and he who should have overthrown them and talked them out of it, he must have been bold.

(45) We are all of such a mind and nature that we soon forget our sins, but Moses brings it up again, and says to the people, "Remember how you kept yourself, and what trouble you caused me, that I turned away your sin, and reconciled you to God by my prayer, and stopped his fierce and burning anger.

**V. 25. and fell before the Lord, as at first, forty days and forty nights, and ate no bread, and drank no water 2c.**

46. in the other book of Moses [Cap. 32, 20] you have heard how Moses burned the golden calf to powder, and poured water into the dust, and also gave the Jews who had worshipped the calf the dust to drink, so that they might see what a weak, loose and impotent god they had served and worshipped. Moses did this to their great shame, that they had to eat their god and drink it into themselves; he turned their worship into dust and ashes and destroyed it completely, so that he would not have left even a small pea of this calf. From this we learn that one should not establish one's own worship, nor should one defy and rely on it, for one's own righteousness is a great sin.

(47) And that Moses also did not leave the dust, he shows the great displeasure and serious anger of God when we do our own worship.

(48) We must do the same to this day, and not cease from destroying the pope's idolatry and false worship and abuses. We must give up to the pope and his

They curse the rich, blaspheme and defile them, and do not shut their mouths, but preach against them without ceasing. For some now pretend that we can do nothing else but condemn, reproach and blaspheme the pope and his own. Yes, this cannot be otherwise; for as soon as one forgets the errors, the grace of God is also forgotten, and the grace offered is despised; therefore one must always remember it and preach against it. For God is heartily hostile to one's own chosen devotions and worship, and does not want one to leave a single stump of it, but to keep one's heart pure in the faith and trust of God, who thus says: "I am the Lord your God. And we should know that God gives us everything; for He has promised to be our God, and to keep His faithful all here and there.

So Moses is a fine teacher. He interpreted the first commandment well, and led the people to their own knowledge, and humbled the hopeful, presumptuous spirits, above which he also reproached them with all kinds of bad habits, so that they would deserve something else than the promised land. Just as we think ourselves worthy of the good gospel, so now our evangelicals are seven times worse than they were before. For after we have learned the gospel, we steal, lie, deceive, eat and drink, and do all kinds of vices. Since one devil has been cast out from among us, seven more wicked ones have now come back into us, as can now be seen in princes, lords, noblemen, citizens and peasants, as they are now doing, and behaving without all shyness, despite God and His decree. 1)

1) Note of the Eisleben edition: "End of these sermons on the 4th Sunday of Advent [December 19] Anno 1529. D. M. Luth. has not preached more in this book, because the Imperial Diet at Augsburg Anno 1530 has followed it."

# C. D. Mart. Luther's Interpretation of the Song of Moses, Deut. 32.

Laid out in 1530 or later, issued in 1532.

Translated from the Latin by Justus Jonas.

## Preface of Justus Jonas.

When the high prophet Moses in his fifth book had presented and interpreted the ten commandments, namely the first and the second table, to the people by many noble, faithful, delicious sermons; as then this same fifth book is a real bundle, and an exceedingly excellent glossa ordinaria and commentarius about the ten commandments; Shortly before his death he left this song for the whole people of Israel and all his descendants as a memorial and for the last time, in which he summarized and understood in short words the summa of the first, most noble and highest commandment, and otherwise of all preaching, admonition and admonition, which he did for a long time, from the first day of his profession and entrance, with the great people; so that they might understand this first, highest commandment of the first table: "I am your God" 2c. and the whole divine law, not only to be proclaimed, read and preached by priests and Levites every seven years, and to be heard in its time, but also that the same teaching be practiced among the people, among young and old, in the congregation and in homes, with daily remembrance, with daily teaching, practicing and admonishing, with daily singing and saying, and be sounded to the people; just as songs and chants are still being made for the common man and the youth, in which the

Summa of the whole gospel and knowledge of Christ.

For Moses, as a special high man, knew well that this blessed teaching, namely to spread and preserve the true word of God among the people, no human wisdom, no work, no care, no effort, nor diligence is enough, and that it does not help that one has the books and writings; As some now think, if they have the books alone, they are learned and holy; indeed, that it does not help that Deuteronomy lies in the ark of the covenant, or in the Liberei [2 Mos. 25, 16. 40, 20. 2 Kön. 22, 8.], but if also the preachers (as, such high prophet of all high prophets, Moses himself, and others) drive the divine word with all highest faithful diligence, with living voice and daily stopping. If these ten commandments, or divine word, are imagined by young and old people alike, with daily incitement, with supplications, with entreaties, with entreaties, with singing and saying, with all inward and outward exercise, it may nevertheless be great good fortune, and special rich grace of God, that it adheres and remains with some, before such great, fierce raving and raging of the devil, who would gladly wipe it to the ground, and through false

\*Luther originally wrote this interpretation in Latin, but no single Latin edition of it is known, nor is it included in the Latin collections of the Wittenberg and Jena editions. It is also not known exactly when the interpretation took place. Seckendorf (nist. Tutb. lib. II. 53, x. 148 a) and Walch (Vorrede zum 3. Bande, § 12) place it in the year 1529; but there can hardly be any doubt that it is to be placed later. (Cf. the notes to ? 29, ? 50 and ? 70.) Justus Jonas translated it into German and added a preface. This translation (perhaps from a "manuscript") was first published by Georg Rhaw at Wittenberg in 1532 under the title: Auslegung I). Mart. Luther's on the Song of Moses at the Two and Thirtieth Cap. Deutero. Translated from Latin by Justum Jonam. In the same year another edition was published, printed at Nuremberg by Kunigund Hergotin. In the German collections, this translation is found: in the Wittenberg edition (1556), vol. V, p. 247b; in the Eisleben edition, vol. I, p. 555; in the Altenburg edition, vol. I V, p. 786; in the Leipzig edition, vol. I V, p. 287, and in the Erlangen edition, vol. 52, p. 400. Both Walch and the Erlangen edition are based on the text of the first edition, so we have followed these. The Wittenberg edition has allowed itself so many and in part so significant changes with the text that it can come into consideration for us only here and there for the correction of individual readings. If one had only the Wittenberg edition, one would believe that the preface also originates from Luther, for the title of the same reads: "Preface to the Song of Moses", and in the preface itself the words: "according to the interpretation of Martini" have been omitted, and the relevant passage there reads: "I have therefore printed this song in German". In the Erlangen edition, the preface by Jonas is missing.

Doctrine and other wiles of Satan and wickedness of the desperate world will not be completely forgotten and even suppressed.

And so Moses, as a great man, to whom such an unspeakably great burden of governing the great people was laid, shortly before his death, was already thinking in his heart how soon all the good that he had done would fall; how miserable and wretched it would be after his death and further on; how the longer it would become, the worse it would become in the same people in the future, he briefly touched upon and exalted the great, excellent blessing that God had bestowed upon the people in this song with very important words; 1) after that, throughout the entire song until the end, he, as a true, sharp Moses, uses all kinds of harsh, horrible words of punishment and ghastly threats of divine seriousness and wrath.

And, as his proverb reads [Matth. 12, 34]: "When the heart is full, the mouth overflows", one can see in these words that Moses wrote this song out of fierce, heated, godly zeal, and that this song, shortly before his death, cost the faithful pious heart, the excellent high man, many a heavy, sorrowful thought, many a strong challenge; as we shall see. As if a faithful, pious preacher, who from the bottom of his heart would like to see God's word remain among the people and reach out to the descendants, should sing a little song, as it will still be in thirty or forty years in all the world, for the sake of the excellent, unspeakable, great ingratitude and contempt, which now and then bishops and princes, and also noblemen, citizens, peasants 2c. on this side show against the divine word, he would also not find much joy or gaudeamus, but much heartache, requiem and lament to sing. Rather, Moses had great anguish and pain from it, who prophesied here in this song, how it should go to the whole people in the future and for a long time, when they will now have their kings and princes 2c., until s<sup>es</sup>] be over with them.

Because this song does not only concern the Israelites, but also all of us, and the dear gentle fellows, who nowadays in all classes despise God, the Lord, with his ten commandments, and say: The pastors can do nothing else, but preach the ten commandments, I have given this song, according to the interpretation of D. Martini, 2) German want to give day, the scholars, so their parish priests with

1) recover --- repeat.

2) The words: "nach... Martini" are missing in the Wittenberg edition.

to make those who despise the Ten Commandments uninstructed again; to show that Moses does not hold the Ten Commandments in low esteem, that they may see what the Ten Commandments are, who the man is who was seen and heard on Mount Sinai (as described in Ex. 19:16, 18), with proofs of divine majesty, with great and terrible fire, with strong lightning and thunder. with proof of divine majesty, with great terrible fire, with strong lightning and thunder, as one who wants to be and remain the Lord, let himself be seen and heard; and what great things the whole world, emperor, pope, princes, lords, kingdoms, countries, people, is interested in the short ten commandments (which every peasant and farmhand can now hear, but nevertheless despises and tramples underfoot).

It is a great, special gift and grace of God that the catechism is now being taught purely in the church, namely, the Ten Commandments, faith, and the Lord's Prayer. For through this, every person has the whole theology, and can learn what the right, best, highest, true service of God is, what God's will and commandment is, what He demands of us; item, how each one in his state, in all conduct and life, should hold himself against his neighbor, and live so that it pleases God. And if the Lutheran doctrine (to which the devil is so bitterly hostile) had been of no use other than to make the Catechism and the Ten Commandments known to the people again, which under the Papacy had to be the least doctrine against the pilgrimages, against the doctrine of monasticism and hearing mass, it would still have built more in the Christian church than Paris and all the high schools, as long as they had been on earth.

But the wicked world is everywhere ungrateful and perverse, both against God's commandments and against the Gospel. When it hears the commandments, it cannot think how great the Lord is until it feels thunder and lightning, either physically or spiritually in its conscience. If grace and mercy are proclaimed to her, she cannot let them be given to her, but wants to earn God's grace with her own works.

So, when the Ten Commandments are preached to people, they do not think that God is so serious about the commandments, and that they concern all the greatest things that are in heaven and earth, in this world and that. For the first tablet concerns God Himself, His divinity, His divine honor, which angels and men owe Him. But the other panel concerns the greatest things that are under heaven and on earth, all politics and regiments, all

The commandments are the basis of all households, all commerce and advertising, and therefore there is no wisdom, life or being that is not included in the commandments.

But many, when they hear the ten commandments, think of the children's Bible, think it is a bad children's sermon; do not think that they are such very high, great commandments, and that behind them is such a great Lord, such a high majesty, such a high master. But we know, praise God, that hearing and learning the Ten Commandments, item, knowing what is law, what is gospel, what is commandment, what is promise, is not to be regarded as such a bad children's teaching, but they are the highest two teachings under the sun, without which no one can come to God or know the truth.

We will leave it for this time to speak of the Gospel; but when you hear the Ten Commandments mentioned, you must not go with your thoughts into the children's Bible, or think that they are short words, which are also written in other children's books, which one hears every day, but you may well go higher, and know that you are hearing a teaching, especially in the first commandment: "I am your God" 2c., "Thou shalt not have other gods", which no prophet, not even Moses himself, not even an apostle, not even an angel in heaven has learned or studied.

For a poor creature, a poor man, to truly consider the high majesty that created heaven and earth, angels and men, as their Lord and God, to promise himself all good things to him, to trust in him in life and death, is not an art that can be studied. No saint on earth ever lived in this way, not even John Baptist, who studied it. This is why the Lord Christ says in Matthew 22:40 that the whole law and all the prophets hang on the two commandments.

For in the first commandment everything is comprehended that concerns God's glory, His divinity, His holy name, His holy will, and the highest, holiest divine service. Therefore, all ceremonies, all spiritual life, all worship services, whether among Christians or pagans, should and must be judged by the first commandment, so that if they are in accordance with it, they are quite pleasing to God; if they are not in accordance with it, they are idolatrous, devilish and vile abominations before God.

So in the other commandment, "Love your neighbor," or in the other tablet, are comprehended all right, godly, Christian good works, which may be done in all the world by young or old, in whatever state they may be, shall also and must be judged by the other tablet, and

be judged. And they that cry much of good works, but tread under foot this greatest register, where the good works are told, and commit adultery, murder, thievery without ceasing, may well be reflected in the other table. For all other good works, though they seem great and shining, if they are not according to the commandments of the other table and are done in obedience to God according to the first commandment, are vain hypocritical works, which God does not respect and which are of no use to the neighbor.

So then, everything concerning God and the neighbor is set forth in the Ten Commandments; and all the books of the Prophets, as well as many of the Psalms, are all preaching, reminding, and interpreting, with more and richer words, the first commandment: "I am your God. Item, all the histories in Joshua, in the book of Judges, of Kings, of Chronicles are examples of how God held so firmly above the first commandment, how He punished the unbelieving and the wicked, and how He saved and comforted the faithful.

But so great is the cunning and wickedness of the devil, that he can destroy holiness and worship, which have the greatest glory and appearance before the world, as the innumerable statutes and monasticism under the pope and the Turk, so that everyone, or the greater part of them, falls upon them, and not only leaves the right commandments of God, especially the first, standing, but tramples them underfoot.

So under the Pabstthum no mad monk's dream has been, no lie of rosaries so impudently, it is more violently driven with teachings and preaching, with words and works, than the holy ten commandments, and the highest, holiest, noblest commandment, which demands the highest, purest, noblest service of God, that we should believe God from the heart, fear him 2c.

Therefore, when Moses knew that there were all kinds of hypocrites among the people of Israel, who were following the worship of Baal and other false worship, deviating from these commandments and throwing the first commandment to the wind, he left this song for them to read, In it, he warns them with short but strong words, which all the prophets have subsequently warned them of, which has also happened to them in such a way that both heaven and earth must testify that not a single word has been missing, that everything has come true.

And in this song we will now see that God does not want to joke with the Ten Commandments, but how small and weak they seem, how little they are respected by the mighty, by the rich, by the wise, by the false saints, yet they shall rule in heaven and on earth.

They will condemn all false holiness and heresies, overthrow and erect kingdoms and principalities, as they have proven in the kingdom of Israel and Judah, and still prove daily with many examples.

For even if the world does not believe it, and in certainty and blindness despises God with His commandments, God the Lord nevertheless continues.

He shows that he is the Lord and God, comforts and saves his pious children, shows them abundant kindness and grace; however, under all kinds of crosses and tribulations. Again, he afflicts, punishes, redeems, and finally overthrows the wicked, as the first commandment says, and as the Psalms sing about it; as can be seen in all histories, both of the Scriptures and of the Gentiles. This is what we will continue to hear and read in this song.

## The Song of Moses, Deut. 32.

(1) In this song (although he should speak in a friendly manner at the end), the prophet Moses does not need many gentle words, but speaks everything with great, excellent, hard earnestness; he scolds, condemns and punishes in the fastest way, shows great severity and sharpness. And first of all, he throws countless, great, bodily and spiritual benefits before God's ungrateful people, puts them before their eyes so that they may grasp them. Again, he paints before their eyes their fine gratitude, which they and their descendants will prove to the pious, faithful God; namely, that they will forget all great benefits and God Himself, turn away to foreign gods, and therefore invite God's wrath and malediction from themselves.

(2) And Moses, like a true Moses and preacher of the law, does not offer much fatherly enticement, but scolds, punishes, jeers and is angry at their great ingratitude, speaks burning, fiery words, and threatens everywhere with an almighty, strong God, from whose hands no one will escape or escape.

3 With this he indicates the nature of the law [Rom. 4, 15. 7, 7.], namely, that it shows sin, terrifies the conscience, and that without grace and mercy through the law no one can become godly before God, that [it] is also not to be dared to deal with such great majesty through our beggarly, miserable works, or to meet the fire with straws.

**V. 1. Hearken, ye heavens, I will speak, and the earth shall hear the speech of my mouth.**

He calls heaven and earth and all creatures to witness, as in a great matter, which concerns not temporal goods, not a kingdom or principality, not a house, court, gold or silver, but the highest and best of each; namely, either to have God, the fountain of all good, with all eternal and temporal salvation, with heaven and earth and all creatures, or eternally (which is terrible) to lose and do without. Yes, what matter does not concern the emperor, not to reconcile princes or lords, but to have God, the eternal Majesty, graciously, to prosper here and there, or to die and perish in God's disgrace, in eternal despair of all divine and human consolation, without all help or salvation, eternally and without intermission.

(5) In such a great matter there should still be little testimony or little witnesses too little; there should still stand up the beautiful, high, wide sky, with the noble sun, with the moon, with all the stars. The earth with all its plants, with all its birds, with all its animals, and the great wide sea with all its fishes, and everything that moves in it, would have to come and bear witness to their God against the wicked, save His eternal divine honor and justice, and confirm His judgment [Revelation 6:12, Wis 19:6 ff].

(6) When the hour comes for God the Lord to awaken against the despisers and never to be forgotten or despised, suddenly all their courage falls away, their hearts and minds are filled with fear.



know so completely upset, stupid, sad and despondent that they feel nothing but that not only God, but heaven, earth, leaves and grass, all creatures are angry with them, convince them, accuse them and condemn them.

7 Thus Habakkuk the prophet forewarns the king of Babylon, saying in chapter 2, v. 11: "For even the stones of the wall shall cry out, and the beams of the bars shall answer him"; that is, when God shall visit him, he shall have such a desponding spirit, when a plank cracks on the wall, that he shall think the heavens are about to fall. So also Moses, in the 26th of the third book, v. 36, warns the wicked that God will make them so despondent that they will chase a rustling leaf 2c. But we see the same thing in Isaiah in the first chapter, v. 2, that he, following Moses, cries out to heaven and earth about the ingratitude of the stiff-necked, godless, wicked people'. Yes, they will also witness all too strongly in his time.

**V. 2. Let my teaching drip like rain, and my speech like dew, like rain on the grass, and like drops on the herb.**

(8) Here Moses desires that his teaching may drip like the rain and dew on the grass and herbage, that is, that it may be strong and bear fruit, so that he does not speak and preach in the wind. After he speaks of the greatest thing on earth, of the business of religion, namely, of the first, highest commandment of God, which is right religion, which is the highest and most excellent service of God. And again, what is the highest abomination before God;- namely false doctrine, false worship, false holiness, all kinds of hypocrisy, which all goes straight against the first, highest commandment of God, which hypocrisy Moses [v. 33.] calls vain vipers and dragons poison and gall [Isa. 59, 5. 6.].

(9) Therefore he desires that this his right doctrine may bring forth fruit in many. He compares God's word to rain and dew. For where it is preached purely, it is not, like human statutes, without benefit or fruit, which Peter [2. Ep. 2, 17.f] calls "clouds without rain", but works and creates something great. He compares the audience to grass and herbage [Isa. 40, 6.] For like rain and

The dew makes the meadows cheerful and green, so that flowers and grass spring up and grow according to every desire; thus God's word refreshes the hearts and consciences; and where the same rain of divine word falls, it does not go off without improvement and fruit.

**V. 3. For I will call upon the name of the LORD. Let our God have the glory.**

(10) That is, I will sing a little song, which I will start high, and no one under the sun shall start it higher, nor be able to make it better. My best song and best teaching shall be the first commandment of God; namely, that one should give glory to the one, true God, heartily fear and love him, trust in him alone and build on him, and that all other services, however holy, excellent and delicious they may seem, if they are performed apart from or next to the first commandment, are vain idolatry and hypocrisy.

(11) And my song is thus: "Give glory to God". That is, to the one, true, living God alone belongs the glory, praise and honor in heaven and on earth. "He alone is (as Moses says in this fifth book Cap. 10, 17.) one GOD above all gods, one HEART of all lords," who created heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is therein [1 Tim. 6, 16. Revelation 1, 8.]. Who hath all kingdoms of the earth in his hand, directing and subduing them as he pleaseth; who giveth breath and life unto all men of the earth; who formeth and ruleth all kings' hearts, senses, and thoughts, and otherwise all men of the earth, inwardly, as it pleaseth him; who alone giveth all gifts, bodily and spiritual; without whom no man can have body, life, wisdom, strength, health, power, wealth, or any other good, or keep them for a moment. To him, says Moses, give glory, that is, recognize him for a Lord who creates and works all things, from whom alone all gifts flow. So also Jeremiah says in the 9th, v. 23, 24: "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, let not a strong man boast of his strength, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him that will boast boast of this, that he knoweth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD" 2c.

(12) Now here it is decided that no man's glory is, but all majesty, all majesty, authority and power is God's alone, who alone gives wisdom [Luc. 21:15], strength, wealth, to whom he wills, takes it away again, and changes it with all men as he wills. Therefore no kingdom can stand longer than he wills; no government, no household, no wealth or welfare can last or remain longer than he wills. As Daniel Cap. 2, 21: He raises up kingdoms and brings them down as he wills.

(13) To recognize and know this, to give all glory to him alone, to earnestly expect from him all gifts, all physical and spiritual help and comfort, to rely on him in fortune and misfortune, in life and death, to flee to him in all temptations, to seek and call upon him alone in all distresses and afflictions, this is the highest, most pleasing service of God.

14) The glory, however, 1) is given to God the Lord only by the small group, the faithful and pious on earth; these trust and rely on Him from the heart, recognize that they have all goods from Him, that they could not stay a moment before the devil, if God does not protect and guard them [1 Sam. 2, 6-8. f.]. The hypocrites, however, and all other godless people, even though they profess God's omnipotence and glory with their mouths, still rely in their hearts on their own holiness, wisdom, strength, ability, on their own works, on man's help and comfort; and if they do not feel the same in times of need, they become frightened, despair and despair, run away from God, blaspheme and curse God.

15 Now this is a strong comfort to the pious and faithful: Even though they see daily in the world that God's word and works are so shamefully mocked, ridiculed, despised and trampled underfoot, they still know it to be true that it may last for a while. It may be for a moment that God watches the despisers, but at last they learn that this first commandment remains true, and that God retains the power and glory. How to

Now and then they see that small and great are stingy without fear of God, without shyness, despise God's word and the pious, faithful preachers, and throw the ten commandments to the winds as a small doctrine; but they do not know that finally this first commandment will remain true; and that they now and then do not want to believe, they will have to experience in their conscience, in body and soul, in honor and property, wife and children.

16 Therefore, if one leaves the glory to God, seeks all help and comfort from Him, and waits for Him, for He has promised blessing and grace, then it will be well, whether in church matters or in the ministry, whether in government, in housekeeping, or in small or large affairs. We can see this: Where there is a pious, faithful bishop and pastor who does not seek his own honor, but recognizes that he has the Spirit, grace, the Word and all gifts from God, God Himself is bishop and pastor with him; again, where heretics and false teachers rob God of His honor and seek their own honor, it works, as we have seen and experienced more in our time with Thoma Münzer and others. So also in regiments: Where there is God-fearing authority, which keeps God before its eyes and gives Him glory, God Himself sits in the council, helps to watch, guard and govern.

17 Again, where kings, princes and lords forget God, rob God of His glory, build on their own schemes and wisdom, on wealth and power, on covenants, understanding and the help of men, everything goes back, there is neither happiness nor blessing; as experience shows, as the histories of the Gentiles and the Bible indicate. But even if our Lord God allows the wicked to carry out some evil plans, ungodly counsels and thoughts, so that it seems they do what they want, they do it as they please, and theirs is the glory and power, God does nothing about it, it still comes to an evil end in the end, as the 73rd Psalm, v. 19, says: "They perish, and come to an end suddenly and with terror."

V. 4. Without **change are the works of the Rock; for all his ways are judgments. Faithful is God, and no evil in him; just and upright is he.**

18 He calls God a rock with an almost subtle, comforting title, that he is a very strong, certain comfort to all who rely on him and dare cheerfully. All other help and comfort is an uncertain sandy ground. This is found in experience. But whoever heartily relies on God can stand in all temptations. So David also says in the 18th Psalm, v. 3: "My rock, my fortress, my refuge, in whom I trust." Item, Ps. 62, 8: "With God is my salvation, my honor, the rock of my strength, my confidence is in God."

### **His works are without change and perfect.**

(19) He speaks of the works of God, which God works in all believers' 1) hearts, and in all who fear and love God rightly. For when hearts are cleansed and sanctified by faith, there is no hypocrisy, but there is true perfect holiness and purity, and true holy worship, so that the heart rightly recognizes God, esteems Him great, fears and loves Him dearly, thanks Him for so many benefits, and calls upon Him in every need.

(20) And the works that God works in us, he holds against our own works, since by works invented by ourselves, or by our own dreams, we want to make God worship according to our own convenience, which he should please him with, but by which we turn away from God to foreign gods. As has been, monasticism, item, the masses, and the like under the papacy; these are not works without change, but hypocritical, imperfect, damned works.

'21. Further, he says, "All his ways are judgments." All the life and walk of believers is righteous, going according to GOD's command and word, according to the holy ten commandments, not in human dreams or discretion. Thus, GOD is faithful, just, righteous. He speaks all this of God in such a way that he indicates what God demands in the first commandment, because he wants us to respect and hold him as a faithful, just, benevolent God who means it paternally. For here he does not speak of a divine nature or essence, but speaks of what one should consider God to be, what one should think of Him in the heart, and what one should think of Him in the heart.

1) Thus Walch and the Wittenberg edition; Erlanger: allen gläubigen.

He wants to have touched the false gods and all idolatrous abominations with these words. As if he should say: Whoever truly serves God, namely, that he heartily trusts and fears him (as the first commandment says), is certain of all his things, does not build on himself nor on his works, but on God's word and promise, which cannot waver nor fail; there the heart is satisfied with God, there the conscience can be joyful and quiet. This is the right, highest, holiest service of God; there is no falsehood, no lies, nor hypocrisy, but the heart within is holy and pure through faith. Therefore, all other outward works and conduct are holy and pure to the pure.

22 Again, in all other services, however delicious they may seem, which are outside the first table, without faith and fear of God, with all kinds of outward acts, there is all uncertainty, all toil and labor, heartache and sorrow of conscience. There the hearts and consciences always remain in doubt, and can never come to rest; there the heart remains inwardly full of blindness, full of unbelief; therefore also the outward works, so that one wants to earn salvation, how holy they seem, are a vile abomination, vile filth and dung before God.

### **V. 5. the perverse and insane kind have corrupted him, and are not his children, because of their reproach.**

(23) Moses prophesied here how it would be after his death, that they would easily fall away from God's commandment and commandments, despise the Ten Commandments, worship according to their own conceit, trample underfoot the first commandment, as all hypocrites do, and become a wicked, evil, adulterous people. Therefore, they will no longer be dear children nor God's people, even though they bear the name, but enemies of God and children of harlots, adulterers and adulteresses, because of the spiritual fornication they will commit [Ezek. 16, 26. f. 23, 5. 11. ff.]. So he says just before this song, in the 31st chapter, v. 29.: "I know that after my death ye shall destroy it, and go out of the way which I have commanded, then shall calamity befall you."

**V. 6. Do you then give thanks to the Lord your God, you foolish and unwise people? Is he not your Father and your Lord? Has he not made you and prepared you?**

24. Now here the high prophet Moses, looking at the unspeakable goodness and innumerable benefits of God, and on the other hand the great ingratitude and shameful contempt, is completely inflamed and says: Is this the thanks that God has adopted you as his own dear children, that he has snatched you out of the midst of death, led you out of Egypt, delivered you mightily from the hands of Pharaoh, made the Reed Sea stand before your eyes like walls, fed you with the bread of heaven in the wilderness 2c.? As if to say: For all this, that God is just, faithful, kind, and a gracious Father to all, that He chose you above all other nations, peoples and kingdoms on earth, for your sake drowned King Pharaoh, took the kingdoms of Canaan; item, that for so long you have lacked nothing, but like a father or mother her child, carried you on her hands, protected and sheltered you everywhere; you and your descendants will pay him with such fine thanks that you will esteem all kinds of idolatrous, foolish worship more highly than the first commandment of God, than the first tablet, where he demands that you take him for a god, build on him alone and trust in him. For you will become apostate sons of whores, who will be able to hope and trust in their own works, in idolatry, in the favor of men, in help, in comfort, in gold and silver; but not in God, whom you will easily regard, as if there were no help nor counsel with him, as if nothing at all were attached to him. Therefore you will not be sons of the Father, but a foolish, unwise people who will seek help when there is no help. This may well be said to us at this time of the gospel: Is this the thanksgiving that you have been delivered from the ministry and innumerable troubles? 2c.

**V. 7. Remember the former days, take note of the years of the former times. Ask your father, he will tell you; your elders, they will tell you.**

(25) Then he begins to count, as from a register, the benefits of God, beginning with the first, that God has chosen this people above all other nations, that God has done so many countless benefits to the people. Therefore he says, "Ask your father," that is, ask your fathers and your elders. As if he should say: If you look at Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, you will find innumerable benefits, how God loved your fathers, how faithfully he took care of them. Such a reminder is necessary for us. For Adam's children are like that, when a good deed is over, it is soon forgotten, as experience shows in our time.

**V. 8 When the Most High divided the nations and scattered the children of men, he set the boundaries of the nations according to the number of the children of Israel.**

The first blessing is that although God the Lord is one God of all nations, peoples and kingdoms on earth, all of which He created, He also divides to each people its borders and measure, as is written in the first book of Moses, Cap. 11, 8, 9, ff. 17, 26, 27, he did not choose a nation among all of them to establish his worship, to call himself God and Father of the house, but the nation of Israel. And it is truly an excellent, great blessing, praise and glory that the high majesty will not be preached, recognized, found or encountered anywhere but in Israel alone. And that among so many kingdoms and lands there should be no knowledge of God but in the people alone, and that he has separated all other kingdoms, lands and borders so that no other people on earth should be called God's people but as far as Israel dwells and their land reaches; all the others should be called godless Gentiles.

**V. 9: For the Lord's portion is His people, Jacob is the cord of His inheritance.**

That is, God's people do not go further than Jacob and Israel [Ps. 74:1, 2, 100:3]. With these words he wants to show how dear children, how holy, pleasant and chosen they are above all other nations.

**V. 10 He found him in the wilderness, in the arid desert, howling. He felt him over and gave him understanding: he guarded him like the apple of his eye.**

That is, he gave his law to the people on Mount Sinai, made a covenant with them that he would be their God; also led them so wonderfully for forty years in the wilderness, preserved and nourished them, delivered them from so many hardships, fears and dangers, so often gave them credit for their shameful unbelief, impatience and grumbling, so often forgave their sin and stubborn hardness. He guarded them like the apple of his eye, in spite of those who would harm them; he protected and preserved them from all evil, sorrow and misfortune through his angel, so that they had no lack of anything. Now this is the other, and an almost great blessing. Whoever among us also considers how God so wonderfully guides us from our youth, so graciously nourishes us, protects us from all evil like the apple of our eye, will also find how ungrateful we are.

**V. 11: As an eagle wakes up its nest and soars over its young. He spread his wings and took him and carried him on his wings.**

29 With the words he indicates how he tolerated and carried them in the desert. One says, and the nature heralds, as Plinius, Aristotle and others write, that various eagles are, but the best kind uses to beat its young ones with the wings, and to make them brave, that they learn to fly, also to hold against the sun shine, and which do not look immediately into the sun, throw them out of the nest, as a bad kind. So Moses wants to say: God, the Lord, has kept you under his wings, as in the nest, and taught you to fly, 1) as an eagle does its young; for he has both tried, with mercy and punishment, to bring you to learn to fly, that is, to trust and believe in him; as we have seen in the eighth chapter.

**V. 12. The Lord alone guided him, and no foreign god was with him.**

(30) That is, under Moses the right true worship was going on, where God Himself preached, spoke, and taught among them through Moses, where God Himself kept house, was near and among the people. The other Gentiles were left to walk in darkness in their erroneous ways. So now, when the Ten Commandments are preached and the Gospel taught, God Himself also teaches among us, greeting us kindly enough, if we could thank Him alone. Before, there was only false teaching and error. In addition, he also led the people outwardly himself, and gave them a great, strong, safe escort by public, divine signs, by day by a cloud, by night by a fiery pillar.

**V.13. He made him go up on high on the earth, and etched him with the produce of the field, and made him sing honey out of the rocks, and oil out of the hard stones.**

(31) The third good thing he shows is that God drove out the Gentiles and their kings from the land of Canaan for their sake, and made them dwell in a glorious, delightful, good land, where they had fullness and plenty of everything. But that he said: "He made them suck honey from the rocks and oil from the hard stones," he uses such figures to indicate that God had given them all kinds of rich blessings in crops, food and fruits in the lands; So that even where there were not good, moist meadows, where there were not fields or meadows, there nevertheless grew fig trees, oil trees, all kinds of other trees; there nevertheless was enough milk and honey, and all kinds of need; so also otherwise oil trees grow gladly where there is dry land, and bees make honey, where there is not good land, but sandy, dry land.

**V. 14 Butter from the cows, and milk from the sheep, with fat from the lambs. And fat rams, and goats with fat kidneys, and wheat, and watered him with the blood of grapes.**

32] There he uses poetic, flowery words, as is customary in songs and hymns, and wants to indicate that they are connected with all kinds of bodily

1) Wittenberg and Erlanger: learned.

2) There can hardly be any doubt that this statement refers to z 30 ff. of the previous scripture. From this it would follow that our interpretation would have to be set later than 1529. This assumption is made certain by what is said in § SO of this chapter.

God abundantly provided us with food and bodily blessings, livestock, fruit, butter, lambs, sheep, and fat rams.

From this we are to learn that God also gives such gifts of the flesh, and if He does not give them, no amount of work, diligence, carts or shepherds, diligent stewardship, care or toil will help. What nobleman or farmer thinks that he has such gifts from God, or that God in the first line of the Ten Commandments, when He says, "I am your God," demands that all the same goods be asked of Him and maintained, or that without Him no one can have or keep them? But here he calls "grape blood" wine, that in the same countries much, and the several part of red wine grows.

**V. 15: When he became fat and full, he became horny. You became fat, and thick, and slippery. And he hath forsaken the God that made him; he hath despised the rock of his salvation.**

34 That is, God, who delivered you from the hand of Pharaoh the king, who showed you so innumerable good things, you have forgotten, and just by this you have forgotten that it was well with you.

(35) It is a wicked, poisonous kind of human heart that it becomes angry through divine benefits, through happiness and good days, and the more God graces it, and the greater, more excellent gifts God gives it, whether physical or spiritual, the less it humbles itself against God, the less it fears, the more secure it becomes, the sooner it forgets God and His word, the sooner it trusts and builds on itself, and wants to be God itself. Therefore Moses warns in this book at the 6th chapter, v. 10-12. He says: "When you have great and fine cities that you have not built, and houses full of good things that you have not filled, and wells that you have not dug, and vineyards and oliveyards that you have not planted, so that you may eat and be satisfied, then beware lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of Egypt. Item, in the 8th chapter, v. 7, 8, 10, 11: "The LORD your God leads you into a good land, a land where streams, wells and deeps are within, which flow by the mountains and in the meadows; a land where wheat, barley,

Vines, fig trees and pomegranates are inside; a land where oil trees and honey are inside 2c. Take heed therefore that thou forget not the LORD thy God." And so the heathen also have said that it is easier to bear misfortune than not to abuse good fortune and good days; and they all testify that no such wise man has ever been found who has not been more fortunate. But isn't it a shameful plague that God should be responsible for all His innumerable benefits?

**V. 16: And hath provoked him to zeal by strangers, by abominations hath he provoked him to anger.**

They have fulfilled this, unfortunately, too much. For when they should have been thankful for so many bodily and spiritual benefits, they turned away from God to strange gods, sinned without ceasing against the first table with all kinds of abominations and idolatries, provoked God the Lord to zeal and anger, paid him for his benefits with vain disobedience and ingratitude; as the histories of the judges and the books of the kings indicate. For such are the fine fruits of Adam's children: If God keeps them meager, or makes them suffer poverty, they grumble against Him, as the Israelites also did, when they said, when they lacked water, "Is God among us, or not?" [If he gives enough, they will be sure and proud, despising and forgetting God.

(37) Therefore, to hold fast to God the Lord, and to trust in Him heartily (for better or for worse), is the highest holiness, the highest art and wisdom, the noblest worship on earth. And even if the hypocrites have been dealing with other worship services for a long time, the first line in the Ten Commandments always comes and says: "I am your God", you hypocrite, you holy Baalite, you holy Papist, you never believed a tittle of it.

**V.17. They sacrificed to the devils of the field and not to their God, to the gods they did not know, to the new ones who came recently, whom your fathers did not honor.**

038 That is, all kinds of idolatry of the heathen, as Baal, Ashtarothe, Moloch, Chamos, Camarim 2c., and set up all kinds of worship,

on the mountains and heights, in the forests and groves, of which nothing was commanded in the law, of which their fathers knew nothing, which they had invented and invented for themselves, because they followed their conceit and thoughts, about which afterwards all true prophets complain vehemently. This is what we did with the monasteries and the papist mass.

**V. 18. Your rock that gave you birth you have left out of account, and you have forgotten God who made you.**

(39) Moses speaks these words out of great, mighty earnestness and out of a heart that is inflamed with divine zeal to save God's glory against the devil's lies. As 1) he should say: "Oh, my heart would break for sorrow that I know, and now I see before my eyes, how you will so easily abandon and so shamefully despise the true living God, the great, certain consolation, the most solid fortress and strongest rock in all temptations and hardships, without which you could not live or remain a moment before the devil, who gave birth to and raised you alone, like a mother to her child. Yes, that you will so shamefully forget the dear, hearty Father (who so fatherly means you, so graciously protects you from the devil and all evil, and so abundantly showers you with all kinds of graces and goods), and instead cling to hopeless, dead idols, and devise all kinds of idolatry and idols, which can neither advise you nor help, comfort, protect, nor save you: that is worth lamenting.

**V.19. And when the Lord saw it, he was moved with anger against his sons and his daughters.**

(40) Then he indicates that the wrath should be all the more swift and fierce, because such dear sons and daughters forget the faithful father.

**V. 20. And he said: I will hide my face from them, will see where it will go out with them at last. For it is a perverse kind, they are children, there is no faith in them.**

41. that he says: "I will hide my face from them", he speaks in the person of God; that is, I will blind them, so that they shall not see with seeing eyes 2c. [Isa. 6, 10.], that they shall die and perish in vain blindness and error, without God and God's knowledge, seeking God with their works and services, and yet not finding Him. For to see God's face is called in the Scriptures: To know God, to see and notice His will and works. Thus the 80th Psalm, v. 20, says: "Lord, show us your face, and we shall be helped." Again, God's face is hidden from those who are blinded, so that they do not recognize God or His work.

But "children", "since there is no faith in them", he calls such hypocrites, who pretend to be holy and pious with all kinds of outward works, and yet neither know nor want to keep the highest, holiest service of God (which is required by the first commandment); they think that they are the dear children, if they are damned bastards, and God's worst enemies.

**V. 21 They have provoked me to anger against that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanity. And I will provoke them again against that which is not a people, against a foolish people will I provoke them.**

(43) That is, as they in the wilderness received another God, which was not grievous unto me; so will I again reject them, and receive another people, which shall also be grievous enough unto them. As Paul tells the Romans in chapter 11, v. 11 ff., the Gentiles were accepted through the gospel. Therefore also at this day the Jews are most bitterly and fiercely angry with us, that we say they are never God's people, but we are God's people; as this verse says.

**V.22. For the fire is kindled by my wrath, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall devour the land with her increase, and shall set on fire the foundations of the mountains.**

(44) Fire is called here not only a bodily fire, but all the terrible, dreadful desolation that was done by the sword and by fire, when the king of Babylon, and the end of Babylon, and the end of Babylon, and the end of Babylon, and the end of Babylon, and the end of Babylon, and the end of Babylon.

The Romans have so miserably destroyed, destroyed and devastated Jerusalem that in the whole country, and especially in Jerusalem, not one stone has been left upon another, that all the precious buildings have been turned into a heap of stones and ashes [Jer. 52, 13. ff. Luc. 19, 44.] And this is what he indicates when he says, "and shall burn unto the lowest hell," that is, in the whole land there shall not be left any building or plant, but even the bare ground and the mountains shall burn, as if the fire would eat through the earth into the lowest hell; for so it goes when desolation comes.

**V. 23. I will heap [all] calamity upon them; I will shoot all my arrows at them.**

The same misfortune is described and told as in a register in the fifth book of Moses at the 28th chapter, v. 16. ff., and Moses himself describes in the next verse also the arrows, and the same misfortune.

**V. 24. They shall faint with hunger, and be consumed with fever and with bitter pestilence. I will send the teeth of beasts among them, and raging serpents.**

(46) There he mentions three or four arrows, famine, fever, pestilence, wild beasts; and in the next verse he puts war and bloodshed; and these plagues are afterward often referred to in the prophets. To this he says "raging serpents." These are the right whisks and sharp rods with which our Lord God has executed many a great, secure, proud bogeyman 1) and despiser. And when he starts it, it is quite horrible. It does not help that woman and child miserably weep and wail, lament and scream. This is what the citizens and peasants (who now despise God's word, preachers and priests, and say: The priests can do nothing but preach the Ten Commandments) want to experience.

**V. 25. From without the sword shall rob them, and in the chambers terror. Both, youths and virgins, the babes with the gray man.**

That is, war and disaster will come upon them, and they will be filled with pusillanimity, terror and dismayed, frightened minds.

1) "Uä ein Uebermüthigen, Frevler.

**V. 26. I will say, Where are they? I will lift up their memory among men.**

(48) That is, I will bring down their kingdom and priesthood to the ground, I will destroy them [Hab. 3:6 ff], I will destroy the chief city Jerusalem, the temple, and the ceremonies, all in a heap; and where before there was royal rule, and all manner of good order, and sacrifices, and glorious feasts, there shall be desolation and silence; and every man shall say, Where is the kingdom of the Jews? Where is their priesthood? Where are their glorious feasts and sacrifices? All this has come true, as Jeremiah the prophet mourns and laments [Klagl. 1, 12]. So there is also the experience to this day, that although there is still a handful of Jews, yet their government and all their worship are torn to pieces, that they have neither their own kingdom nor priesthood, as other nations.

**And their memory is preserved among the people.**

49 That is, they are everywhere despised, poor people, who have neither name nor reputation anymore, that they are something or are able, but are vain footcloths compared to the fact that they floated above before and were the head.

50) That God is able and able to do this, namely, to make a whole, great, glorious being, as a whole kingdom's splendor and name, desolate, desolate, and quiet in a hurry, of this he boasts in the first commandment, when he says: "I am God," 2c. but one does not believe it. The pope and the papists would not have thought fifteen or sixteen years ago, 2) that so many great monasteries and convents, since their services were so glorious, should become desolate because of their abominations. But God's judgment and work are before us.

**V. 27. If I did not give the wrath of the enemies, lest their enemies should be proud, and say, Our hand is high, and the LORD hath not done these things.**

2) Compare the note to § 29 of this chapter. By this statement it becomes certain that our interpretation is to be put into the year 1530 or later.



051 For this cause saith he; because he hath often provoked his wrath, and hath redeemed the wicked, and delivered them from their enemies. He did this for his name's sake, so that his name would not be blasphemed by the surrounding nations. Therefore, with this verse he raises the glory and pride of the Jews, because they might want to say: "We have not been as wicked as Moses sings, for God has often delivered us by miraculous signs. He answers them and says: "It was not because of your merit, for you would have deserved the above-mentioned punishment at all times; but if I had accepted you as a people, I had to spare my name, even if you were desperate, unbelieving boys. But I will not look on nor spare you forever, but your end shall come at last, as you have deserved.

**V.28. For there is a people where there is no counsel within, and there is no understanding in them.**

That is, they know neither God nor His works; they boast that I am their God, and do not know Me; in their blindness they walk securely with their hypocrisy, and without ceasing do all kinds of idolatry against the first, highest commandment; they are presumptuous and secure, wanting to think that they are dear children, and that their cause is well with Me, when My fierce wrath shall soon be poured out upon them. That is why they do not even think of converting or reforming.

**V. 29. Oh that they would be wise, and understand these things, that they might know what is to come after them.**

(53) As if to say: I have preached to them for so long, now I have admonished them enough that they should fear and love the one God alone, and trust in Him and not depart from Him (as the first commandment reads). The prophets after this time will also do nothing else, but that the fear of God and faith in God is the highest service of God. If God wanted such sermons to be preached, they would then become wise, not despise it, and realize that their death and life, their prosperity and destruction, their blessedness and damnation, are all concerned with it.

54. but I know they will be safe

and idolatry; And as they have caused me much heartache in the wilderness, so they will let the future prophets also preach to the wind, nevertheless running after their idolatries, until Sennacherib and Salmanasser, item, Nebucad Nezar, the king of Babylon, come, and finally the Romans, and teach 1) them to understand the ten commandments, namely, that God is a zealous, strong God, who finally does not let unbelief and godlessness go unpunished. Thus Solomon also says in Proverbs, chapter 1, v. 20. 24. ff: "God's wisdom is heard in the streets. She stretches out her hand, and no one pays attention to it. So also will I laugh (says God) in your calamity, and mock you when there cometh that ye fear; when upon you cometh as a storm that ye fear, and your calamity as a weather, when upon you cometh fear and trouble." Thus, when the Lord Christ looked upon the city of Jerusalem with compassion, and wept over her [Luc. 19:41]. Since he himself, and afterwards also the apostles, exhorted the Jewish people to reform, and warned them of their great accident, there were very few wise men who took it to heart, no one had any regard for what would follow after 2) their preaching or heartfelt lamentations and weeping; but after a short time they experienced it all too strongly.

**V. 30: How is it that one shall chase a thousand of them, and two shall make ten thousand to flee? Is it not so that she has sold her rock, and the Lord has delivered her up?**

That is, when the punishment comes, their heart and courage will be gone; they will not only hear the words of the prophets, but they will know by the work that it is over with them, that God has forsaken them. And so it happened when the king of Babylon attacked them like a terrible weather, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, when one Gentile frightened a thousand Jews and put them to flight, and when there was nothing on the Jews' side but trembling, fear, trembling, and despair, but before that, when God was still with them. One Jew frightened a thousand Gentiles, and all blessed victory was on their side [Deut. 26:7, 8]. So, [to].

1) Wittenberger and Erlanger: learn.  
2) Erlanger: still.

At this time, one will not believe what a strong power God's assistance is until he removes his hand and lets us try what strength, ability, heart or courage we have of ourselves.

**V. 31 For our rock is not like their rock, for our enemies themselves are judges.**

56 That is, when your God, your great, certain, strong protection, stood by you, you did well; when a king of the Gentiles was as a fly to you, it was the same to meet the enemies with great or small armor, for God was with you, who has not only horse and man, but also all the hearts and minds of the enemies in his hand.

**Because our rock is not like their rock.**

57 That is, we have a different Lord and God than the Gentiles. The heathen have idols of silver and gold, have much riches and power; but our God has it all in his hand, and can no man overthrow a sword, neither look upon you with anger, nor have an evil thought in his mind.

(58) The nations themselves have confessed that no one could harm or break the people of Israel by force or power as long as their God was with them. Therefore Balaam also gave counsel to King Moab that he should first provoke the people to sin, so that their God would let them go, and so that he would prevail [Deut. 31:16]. So Balaam is one of the witnesses who must testify that Israel's God is a strong rock and an unconquerable God. So also the Egyptians are witnesses, who said in the 14th chapter of the 2nd book of Moses, v. 25: "Let us flee [from] Israel, for God is fighting for them." So also the Philistines are witnesses, in the first book Samuelis at the 5th chapter, v. 7. Therefore no gods have kept so hard with their people, or proved their power, as the true, living GOD in Israel. So he says here above in the 3rd chapter, v. 22: "Do not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God fights for you."

**V. 32 For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the field of Gomorrah. Their berry is a bilberry; they have bitter grapes.**

(59) That is, they should be a pleasant vineyard, which God Himself has planted, in which there would be many fruitful vines according to all pleasure [Hos. 10:1]. They should be a fine, God-fearing, thankful people, with many, many faithful, pious children among them, who would love God's word with all their heart, bring other people to it, and bear much fruit: there are vain thistles and thorns, vain wild grapes, vain misgrowth, rotten, spoiled berries, and vain such fine little fruits as Sodoma and Gomorrah. If there should be found among them vain delicious, pure, strong must and good wine: then it is vain lurking, 1) yea, vain poison and gall, all manner of false doctrine, and even fancied, idolatrous worship. So the other prophets have taken such a likeness from Moses; as when Isaiah says in the 5th chapter, v. 2, "He waited for his vineyard to bring forth grapes, but it brought forth wild grapes." And the 80th Psalm, v. 14, also compares the whole nation to a vineyard, which the wild sows ravage 2c. These fierce, harsh words he speaks out of quite heated zeal and great earnestness, against false doctrine and false worship.

**V. 33: Their wine is the fury of dragons and the gall of fierce vipers.**

(60) He gives this fine title (since he calls it dragon's fury, poison and gall out of great, fierce anger and zeal) to their false doctrine, by which all kinds of abominable error were introduced, and the right doctrine of faith of the true prophets was suppressed. For there is no more harmful and evil poison under the sun than false teaching, which does murderous and unspeakable harm, and leads people away from God without ceasing, to vile abomination and vile blasphemy.

61. Such poison and gall was the worship of Baal in the days of Elijah the prophet [1 Kings 18:26]. Such poison and gall was also the calves of Samaria, and all the worship of the high places 2c. [1 Kings 12:28, 32.] Still the people, the kings and princes hung den-

1) In the original and in the Wittenberg correctly: "laur", which Walch and the Erlanger have changed into "saur". "Lauer" is bad wine. See Vol. XX, 2396 of our edition s. v. Lauer.

2) Thus the Wittenbergers. Erlanger: mörderlich unsäglich.

They listened to the false prophets, persecuted and strangled the pious prophets [2 Chron. 18, 17. ff]. Such poison has been under the papacy so many innumerable, godless teachings: the doctrine of the mass and of the opere operato, of purgatory, of monastic vows, of the celibate state 2c., which has done terrible and unspeakable harm; nor is all this praised by the devil and his apostles as holy sacrifice, holy, godly devotion and worship, as the Holy Spirit through Moses calls harmful poison and gall; and Paul the apostle also says [1 Tim. 4, 1. 2 Tim. 2, 26.] that such false teaching is devilish teaching, and eats away at it like cancer.

#### **V. 34. Is not this hidden with me and sealed in my treasures?**

(62) That is, do not think that I am a god like Baal, who does not see nor hear, from whom you can finally cover or hide yourselves. I know and see all your abominations, all your ways and works that you do; but for my name's sake I spare you, but it shall be borrowed from you, not given. Even though you do not see out of blindness and certainty what kind of punishment has been decreed for you in heaven, and how the first commandment should and must remain true, I have hidden all the records of your abominations, your ingratitude, your contempt with me, and no one may take it into his mind that a despiser or godless person should remain unpunished.

(63) This is said against safety, that they should not think, because God gives them money, goods, fields and meadows, that they are therefore well with God, and that all things are good; for he also gives bodily goods to the heathen; but that they should consider what punishment they have earned, how the first commandment should remain true, so that it cannot be false, since God the Lord is concerned about his divine majesty, honor, praise, and all of deity. For no one should think that he has a gracious God when he gives him bodily goods, house, farm, wife, child, fields, meadows; for the 37th Psalm, v. 20, 35, and all Scripture say that the wicked are richest and happiest in the world.

If there is a blessing, look first at what God has in the secret register.

64 But no godless man can do this, but go along in vain blindness and security. So now and nobility, peasants and burghers 2c., that they are relieved of many burdens, the indulgence, the ban, the money fairs, the stationers, the mendicant monks 2c., by which, through the spiritual salvation of their consciences, they annually receive noticeably more of their food, thereby retaining many a florin; they think, if God increases their bodily food, that they have a gracious God; they go in vain security, now also utterly despise God's word and the preachers who faithfully mean it; but they do not know what God has in the register, and that he will spare such sin terrible punishment until his time.

#### **V. 35. Vengeance is mine, I will repay. In his time shall her foot slide; for the time of her accident is at hand, and her future hasteth on.**

In this word, which God says here through Moses, "vengeance is mine", the first commandment is praised again, that it should remain true, and no wicked person should escape vengeance or punishment. Thus, according to these words of Moses, the 94th Psalm, v. 1-3: "O Lord God, who is vengeance, God, who is vengeance, appear. Arise, thou judge of the earth, how long shall the wicked defy?" "Mine (says he) is vengeance"; as if he should say: Though I spare for a time, and bring up punishment for my name's sake, yet your abomination shall not go unpunished; Though ye now dwell in a good land, and have fields, and meadows, and vineyards, and all manner of fruits in abundance, and so walk as in a mummery or a larva, as though ye were dear children of God, yet vengeance is mine, and mine hand, when it shall go, no man shall withstand it; when ye are most secure, then will I let myself be seen, that my name be LORD.

66 And so it happened to them: The punishment was delayed until the hour came when the Romans played havoc with them, and all at once sought them home, as they had long before deserved. And so their foot slipped, so that now they have neither

Kingdom nor priesthood. And so you see that Moses prophesies that one day the people with kingdom and priesthood shall have an end. The good fellows who now so shamefully despise the gospel and misuse it will also learn that God's vengeance is upon them.

**V.36. For the LORD will judge his people, and he will repent of his servants. For he will see that their strength is gone, and is finished, even with him that was shut up and left.**

67 That is, in this matter, since it concerns his honor, he will not spare even his own people, and will not consider the glorious name and glory that they are called Israel, that they are called God's people and God's inheritance, that they are called dear children, but the first commandment's sentence, which is called: "He seeks at home the iniquity of the fathers against the children" 2c. will strike them. And there shall be no help for it. But he will be merciful, as the other part of the first commandment says, and will show mercy, without regard to person, to those who fear and love him with all their hearts and keep his commandments. And here Moses prophesies that the rest of the small group of Israel who turn to Christ will be preserved. Otherwise it is said [v. 36]: "Their power shall be utterly consumed, even with him that was secretly shut up and left," that is, little or nothing shall remain of the kingdom of Israel, and finally of the whole people; they shall all be scattered among the Gentiles in mourning and misery.

**V. 37. And they will say, Where are their gods? Their rock in which they trusted?**

(68) With all the wicked and such hypocrites who pretend to holiness and worship, without the fear of God and faith, without the highest worship of the first table, God finally allows their own consciences to contradict and mock them, so that they think in their great anguish, "Oh, where are we now? O where is our God now? For, while things are going well, all hypocrites are quite secure, think they are very well with God, think nothing else, that it is because they are so holy that they are so well; but when adversity comes, they become despondent, and

Their own hearts and consciences say to them, "What good are our good works, our labor and our toil? [Weish. 5, 6. 7. ff.]

It is true that the devil would like to speak such bitter words into the hearts of true Christians and believers: Where is your God now? as the 42nd Psalm, v. 4, indicates. But the true God holds firm over His first commandment, and when it comes to the highest, or to the right moves and needs, He finally does not remain outside. He soon says how silent he is: Here I am; and the longer he consumes, the richer he comforts. But false, idolatrous consolation remains outside, and the false gods let their worshippers float and sink. Only then do they see and realize what they have been in their security, what they have believed, what a fine god they have. This is what he means: "They will say, Where are your gods?"

**V. 38. From which sacrifice they ate fat, and drank the wine of their libation. Let them arise and help you, and protect you.**

They make themselves believe that they are very holy and do not eat sacrifices to idols, but their sacrifices are pleasing to the true, right God. Thus the papists have done with the great abuse of the masses. Thus the Turk, who sets his Mahomet above and beside Christ, boasts that he also serves God and has great worship among his people; but because he does not recognize Christ and does not believe in the true God, all his worship is an abomination, and it will also be said to him, "Where are their gods? Where is their Mahomet? And next, since he was situated before Vienna in Austria, 1) it may well be said, since sixty or eighty thousand people have died of the pestilence, and since such despondency has come to his people that he has had to depart and publicly see and experience the hand and power of the true, living God and our Savior Jesus Christ.

**V. 39. See now that I am I, and there is no God beside me. I can kill, and make alive; that which I have broken, that**

1) Compare in the previous interpretation Cap. 7,? 54. There it says: "a few days ago"; here: "next", that is, in recently past time:

**I can heal it, and there is no one to deliver it from my hand.**

This is the way of the wicked and all hypocrites, that they pretend to holiness with many outward services, as if they were greatly concerned about God, and yet they live in all security, despising all of God's commandments, especially the first commandment, as if there were no God, as if the ten commandments were a dream [Titus 1:16]. Therefore, if God, the Lord, is to preserve His divinity, He must finally let them find and experience it through experience, otherwise they will always say, as the Psalm says in the person of the wicked, "Should God know anything about this? [Therefore he must prove by experience that he is God, so that the despisers must finally confess that he still lives and reigns, when they have despised him for a long time.

**V. 40. For I will lift up my hand to heaven, and will say, I live forever.**

This is a strong affirmation, since God the Lord swears by Himself that the first tablet and the first commandment shall remain true. And this oath, since God swears by Himself, if He has no one greater over Him, is expressed here for the comfort of the faithful and true Israelites, and for the terror of the despisers and the wicked. For this strong oath, and such glorious defiance and glory, indicates that God alone has a certain, eternal, infinite life and infinite power and authority. All our life and being, doings and fortunes are uncertain, transient. Now here God's eternal power, which no one can hinder, is praised, as it is said: to judge, to praise, to avenge; the three R's belong to God alone; we are not to subject anything to ourselves, nor to praise anything of ourselves. So the 2nd Psalm, v. 12. says: "GOD's is the power."

**V. 41. When I shall sharpen the lightning of my sword, and my hand shall attack judgment, I will again avenge myself on my enemies, and repay those who hate me.**

73This is the word that is written in the first commandment, that I, God, seek at home the iniquity of the fathers against the children, in the third commandment.

and fourth generation 2c. I will make and keep a reminder, not only to you, my people Israel, but in all the kingdoms of the Gentiles; and I need the very words of the first commandment, "To those who hate me" 2c.

(74) By saying, "The lightning of my sword," he means that God's punishment and vengeance will be great and terrible, which will strike and pierce all the wicked, all the despisers of God's commandments, whether Jews or Gentiles, when the hour comes, like lightning and a strong, sudden thunderclap, which cannot be stopped, which cannot be resisted.

**V. 42. I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh, over the blood of the slain, and over the prison, and the enemy's head shall be bared.**

75. I will make my punishment and cruel vengeance in such a way that, even though I have raised up wrath, it will be completely pitiful in the end. But that Moses says in the person of God: "My arrows shall be full of blood", "my sword shall devour flesh", he speaks in the Hebrew language. [But he says, "When the wrath comes, I will suddenly give place to their worst enemies, and I will bring war and sorrow and calamity upon them like a great and strong river, and I will cause a bloodshed, and there shall be no mercy nor rest.

(76) These things also, verily, happened unto the Jews, when the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, and after him 1) the Romans, laid waste the city of Jerusalem, that, as Josephus wrote, eleven times an hundred thousand were left dead by famine and by the sword. But that he says, "The head of the enemy shall be stripped," that is, my disobedient people, my enemies, shall be deprived of their kingdom, [there] shall be an end of all things with them. In our time, we also see publicly that God, by all kinds of signs, is threatening his wrath with the most terrible enemy, the Turk; thus, unfortunately, he has shed much Christian blood; but there are few who went to meet the divine wrath with earnest prayer.

1) In the original and in the Erlanger: "da ernach"; Wittenberger: "da hernach".

**V.43. Rejoice, O nations, with his people; for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will avenge himself on his enemies, and will make atonement for the land of his people.**

That is, though he will punish his people severely for their sin, yet you Gentiles will still rejoice with his people, and will be made partakers of the rich grace, blessing and promise. For there will still be a remnant that is rightly Israel, rightly God-fearing and faithful, as the prophets, apostles and their disciples, in whom he will nevertheless (when such a great storm and weather of such terrible wrath is over) fulfill all the blessed promise of grace, and through them make holy Abraham's seed and children out of the stones, that is, out of the idolatrous Gentiles [Matt. 3:9].

78. "And will avenge the blood of his servants," that is, the blood of all the pious prophets, and after them the apostles, and all the innocent blood that this people will shed manifold to maintain their false, idolatrous worship, God will avenge terribly, from Planer's blood to the last innocent drop of blood that will be shed. And yet "will be gracious to the land of his people", that is, to the rest of the Israelites who will believe. To him God will raise up a new and everlasting kingdom on the throne of David and in the house of Israel, which will have no end, since the Lord and King will be the Lord Christ, which is now revealed through the gospel, to whom be praise and glory forever and ever, amen.

End of the song Moses.

# V. Interpretations on the Second Book of

## From the last words of David, 2 Sam. 23, 1-7. \*)

1543.

### Preface.\*\*)

1 St. Jerome writes that he was moved to reinterpret the Biblia from Hebrew into Latin, that the enemies of Christ, the Jews, mock us Christians, as if they had

we do not have the correct Biblia, which was then in use throughout Christendom, because it lacked some words and letters that would be much different in Hebrew; which

\*) In his second great writing Against the Jews, "From the Appearance of Camphoras," Luther says that the best translators of the Bible have allowed themselves to be influenced too much by the rabbis, and thus lacked the analogy of faith. Then he continues (Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XX, 2107, F 190): "For I myself have followed their translation about too much, that I must recant, especially 2 Sam. 23 in vsrdis novissimis Duvii, as I will soon do." Luther fulfilled this promise immediately. Still in 1543, our writing was published in Wittenberg by Nickel Schirlentz under the title: "Von den Letzten Worten Davids. D. Wart. Luther." In it, Luther shows in the most glorious way that only those can have the right understanding of the Holy Scriptures who look at them in the light of the New Testament, that is, in the faith in the only Son of God, Jesus Christ, D. Caspar Cruciger translated our writing into Latin. During this work he fell ill, but nevertheless completed it on November 15, 1549, and died the next day. (IVitt. [1549s, Dorn. III, col. 130 d.] LI. Georg Rörer first included it in the third volume of the Wittenberg Latin edition published in 1549, but then it also came out separately under the title: Ds novissimis vsrkis Davittis Oorninsntutio pia st sunota, Martini Dntüsi wüsolo^ins Doctori", (isrinuniss sxploata ak antors, st in Datinnm ssrionsrn onovrsu, stnrlio st ttiliMntia Osspuris OrnoiMri, D. Dlisolo^ias. Xnno primnin ssorsirn säita, Dipsius in ollicina Vslsntini Dapas. Xnno M.D.D. O[1. Maii. In the collections, the German script is found: in the Wittenberger (1856), vol. V, p. 536; in the Jenaer (1562), vol. VIII, p. 137; in the Altenburger, vol. VIII, p. 304; in the Leipziger, vol. IV, p. 302; and in the Erlanger, vol. 37, p. I. The Latin translation is found in the Latin Wittenberger (1549), Dorn. III, col. 911>. We give the text according to the Erlanger, which follows the first edition, comparing the Wittenberger, the Jenaer and the Latin.

\*\*) This superscription is in the Wittenberg and in the Jena editions.

before also moved others more, as, Aquila, Theodotus, Origen 2c., until that one had at the time with sixfold interpretations, which they called Hexapla. So now, in our time, there is also so much interpreting, that perhaps in time (as happened then) so many bibles will come, so many masters will be in the Hebrew language, that there will be no end.

2. And this must also happen in the end, if one wants to turn to what the Jews say or judge about our Bible, who are not one among themselves, so stretching and tearing the Bible with their grammar that one can certainly (where one should follow them) never come to a unified Bible, because each rabbi wants to be better than the other; They must also all confess that in some places they do not understand the words, much less have a pure, certain Hebrew Bible, without any deficiency, even to speak according to the grammatica, let alone the theology, in which they are nevertheless to nothing at all.

(3) Therefore such mockery of the Jews does not concern me, and for the sake of their judgment I did not want to know one letter in the Hebrew language. The reason is this: We Christians have the sense and understanding of the Bible, because we have the New Testament, that is, Jesus Christ, who promised in the Old Testament, and who came afterwards, bringing with him the light and understanding of the Scriptures; as he says John 5:46: "Moses wrote of me; if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me also." Item, Luc. 24, 44. 45.: "It must be fulfilled, what is written of me in the law, prophets and psalms. And opened their minds, that they might understand the scriptures."

For there it is, there it lies, there it remains: Whoever does not have this man, who is called Jesus Christ, Son of God, whom we Christians preach, right and pure, nor wants to have him, let him leave the Bible alone, that is my advice, he will certainly be offended, and the more he studies, the more blind and foolish he becomes, whether he is a Jew, a Tartar, a Turk, a Christian, or however he wants to boast. Behold, what did the heretics Arianis, Manichaeis, Pelagianis 1) and countless others lack among us Christians? What did the pope lack? Have

1) Erlanger: Pelagianus.

Did they not have the certain, bright, powerful words of the New Testament? What is lacking in our rotten ones at this time? Do they not have the New Testament clear and certain enough? If the New Testament were to be translated according to any such mad devil's head, how many New Testaments would we have to have?

(5) Now, if it should be wished and chosen, either that I should have St. Augustine and the dear fathers, that is, the apostles' understanding in the Scriptures, with the defect that St. Augustine sometimes does not have the right letters or words in the Hebrew, as the Jews mock; or if the Jews should have certain letters and words (which they nevertheless do not have through and through, everywhere) without St. Augustine and the fathers' understanding, that is, with the Jews' understanding, it is well to reckon what I would choose. I let the Jews go to the devil with their understanding and letters, and lead to heaven with St. Augustine's understanding, without their letters. For although Augustine cannot, as the Jews do, say Kikajon, since he says cucurbita, Jonā 4, 6. item, cannot say veniet Hemdath, since he says veniet Desideratus, Hagg. 2, 8. and the like, his faith does not break the neck nor the leg, because he knows the right man, who is called Way, Truth and Life, of whom the prophets prophesy and testify; as said.

6 Again, the Jews, because they do not accept this Christ, cannot know nor understand what Moses, the prophets and psalms say, what right faith is, what the ten commandments want, what the examples and histories teach and give, but the Scriptures must be to them (according to Isaiah 29:12). Prophecy) as a letter to one who cannot read, who sees the letters very well, but does not know what they give, as the German proverb says: A white field, in it is black seed, many a man passes by who does not know what is there. But he who is able and ready to read runs over, grasps the meaning, regardless of whether he does not actually look at some letters or words. Before the other one spells a word, he has read the whole letter. Thus, a musician has sung a song before the other searches and finds whether it is a sol or fa in the clave.

7 Look at the fine man Lyra, who is a good Hebrew and faithful Christian, how he does such good work, where he goes against the Jewish mind, according to the New Testament. But where he otherwise follows his Rabbi Solomon, how coldly and lazily he goes off, that it has neither hands nor feet; whether he certainly has the words and letters, nor is he even better and purer than they all, both old and new Hebrews, who follow the rabbis too much. Truly, one must not make diligence with interpreting and glossing, as one brings the Rabbis' and grammarians' understanding among us Christians; without that, it sticks to itself all too readily, like pitch and glue, even if one wants to beware of it deliberately. For the letters and examples of the others blind the eyes, that one sometimes lets the sense of Christ go, where it should not be, so that the Jewish mind creeps in unawares, as has happened to all interpreters, none excepted, not even me.

8. summa, if we do not turn our diligence to draw the Hebrew Bible, wherever it will suffer, to the understanding of the New Testament, against the mind

of the rabbis, it would have been better to remain with the old interpretation (which has the best and most out of it, through the New Testament), than that one should have so much interpretation (for the sake of a few others, which should be different, or still uninterpreted), 1) which misleads the reader's memory, and hinders his study, and makes it more uncertain than before.

(9) Therefore I have taken upon me for an example to interpret the last words of David, not as they are translated, when I followed all the others, lest I should be wise alone; but now I will be self-willed, and follow none but my spirit. Whoever does not like it, let it go. It is not the first time that I write what others do not like, I am well used to it (praise God). For I, in turn, do not put up with everything that others write. Let each one see how he builds on the foundation, gold or wood, silver or hay, precious stones or straw. The day of the Lord will reveal it (1 Cor. 3:12, 13).

1) This parenthesis translates Cruciger: proptsr pauos. yuasäm loea, ubi ant Hbraiva Isotio niia sst, and quorunäum voeum lutsprstatio nonärnu esrtu öst.

## Interpretation of David's last words, 2 Sam. 23:1-7.)

**V. 1. These are the last words of David.**

1 He means such last words, on which he wants to die and go away, as one says: Thereby I will leave it and remain forever. For these are not the last words of his life or regiment, but his last will and testament, which we Germans call "Seelrecht" (right of the soul), on which a man wants to die, so that it will happen and remain after his death. Ultima voluntas is what the lawyers call it; a person can live for a long time, talk a lot, do a lot and suffer a lot, but his will and last will always remain firm. So these are also David's last words, that is, his soul's testament, even though he may have spoken, done and suffered much after that; as follows in the text, when he had the people counted and was punished for it, appointed his son as king, built the temple on the foundations of the city.

to build the mountain Moriah, also took a young maiden, Abishag, a 2) Sunamite woman, as his wife, who was supposed to warm him, because none of the other wives were allowed to him after they had been violated by Absalom 2c. [1 Kings 1:3.]

**David the son of Jesse spoke.**

(2) How humbly he looks on; he does not boast of his circumcision, nor of his holiness, nor of his kingdom, but badly, "The son of Jesse"; he is not ashamed of his lowly lineage, that he was a shepherd; yes, that is much more, he confesses his birth, when he came here full of sins, and worthy of death.

2) The words: "Abisag, eine" are missing in the Wittenberg, in the Jena and in Walch. Also in Latin the name Abisag is missing.



887  
as all men are. For he will speak of other things so high, that no nobility nor holiness shall avail, and no misery, neither sin nor death, shall hurt.

The man assured of the Messiah of God Jacob spoke sweetly with Psalms Israel.

(3) Then he goes forth, and boasts exceedingly, but with truth, without all haughtiness. Here David is another man than Jesse's son. This he has not inherited from his birth, nor learned from his father, nor gained by his royal power or wisdom. It was given to him from above, without any merit on his part, so he is happy, praises and gives thanks so heartily. What is it then that he praises? First of all, it is that I am the man to whom God has promised the Messiah of the God of Jacob; that he will come from me, from my blood, tribe and house, I am sure and certain. Not only because God has promised it to me, who is certain and firm in His words and will certainly not lie to me, but also because I firmly believe it, stand firm and immovable on it, as I cannot fail in such faith, and comfortably rely on God's word with all confidence. Therefore I am joyful, willing to live and die as and when God wills. I know where I or my soul will stay and where I will leave it. It shall not float away from me in error or in doubt, nor shall it depart in evil. I have certain assurances from God about His Messiah, so I also have a firm, certain faith.

4 The word Hebrew is not well to give with one word. Constitutum est, says St. Jerome, is close enough. Stabilitus, certificatus, firmatus, gefestiget, I would like to say. But I am averse to new words, so it does not read well here either, gefestiget from Messia 2c. I think the epistle Hebr. 11, 1, looks here at the word

XXX, since it speaks: fides est substantia; graece υποβρασις, which we have translated: "Faith is a certain confidence." There is no other way to say it to a German, if he is to understand it. For faith is, and ought to be, a steadfastness of heart, the

does not waver, shake, tremble, falter or doubt, but stands firm and is sure of his cause. The same word is also found in the saying Isa. 40, 8: "God's word endures forever." "Abide", that is, it holds fast, is certain, does not waver, does not flinch, does not sink, does not fall, does not fail. Where this word comes into the heart with right faith, it makes the heart like it, also firm, certain and sure, so that it becomes so stiff, upright and hard against all temptation, devils, death, and whatever it may be called, that it defiantly and haughtily despises and scorns everything that wants to doubt, tremble, be angry and wrathful, because it knows that God's word cannot lie to it. Such is a stabilitus, substantiatus, constantius, substantificatus,<sup>1</sup> ) hypostaticus, certus passive, sicut verbum Domini certum active; like Paulus 2 Tim. 1, 12.: "I know and am certain" 2c., 2 Petr. 1, 10.: "Make your profession certain."

(5) So David is one who is sure of the promise, and believes it firmly, that Messiah, whom God promised to the patriarch Jacob (Gen. 49:10).(Gen. 49:10): "The scepter of Judah shall not depart until the coming of Shiloh"), should certainly come from his blood; and the promise of Messiah to Jacob is hereby negated and made clearer in David (as will follow), that henceforth the tribe of Judah is to be left on both sides, and that David's house alone must be looked to, as from it, and no other house in the tribe of Judah, Messiah must come in all certainty. Yet, although the two parts, promise and faith, must be together, for where there is no promise, there can be no faith, and where there is no faith, the promise comes to nothing; Faith, however, is not always equally firm, but is sometimes challenged and weak, but the promise, as the eternal word of God, always remains equally firm and certain for and for; therefore David is primarily called XXX, firm, that he has the firm promise, although he cannot keep or grasp the same without faith, he must also be there. This is said of the first.

6 On the other hand, he boasts: "Lovely with

1) In the Wittenberg, in the Jena, and in Walch: stantiuatus; in Latin this word is missing.

Psalms Israel"; that is, he did not keep this certain promise of the Messiah with him, or only for himself. For faith does not rest and celebrate, it goes out, speaks and preaches of such a promise and grace of God that other people also come and share it. Yes, with great joy he begins to compose beautiful, sweet psalms, sings lovely, merry songs, so that at the same time he can cheerfully praise and thank God, and also usefully provoke and teach the people. So David also boasts here that he has made many beautiful, sweet, lovely psalms of the promised Messiah, which were to be sung in praise of God in Israel, and have also been sung, in which at the same time also excellent prophecy and high understanding are preached and given to the people of Israel. And since David began such poetry of the Psalms and brought it into pregnancy, many others were enlightened by it and awakened to be prophets, who also helped and made beautiful Psalms, such as the children Korah, Heman, Assaph 2c.

(7) For he does not mean only the sweetness and sweetness of the Psalms according to grammatica and musica, where the words are graceful and artificial, and the song or tone is sweet and lovely, that is, beautiful text and beautiful notes, but rather according to theologia, according to the spiritual understanding, where the Psalms are quite sweet and lovely, because they are comforting to all sorrowful, miserable consciences, which are in the anguish of sins, and death torment and fear, and all kinds of distress and misery. To such hearts the Psalter, because it sings and preaches the Messiah, is a sweet, comforting, lovely song, even if one reads or says the mere words without notes. But the musica or notes, as a wonderful creature and gift of God, helps very well, especially when the crowd sings along and is very serious. For we read of the prophet Elisha, 2 Kings 3:15, that he awakens the spirit of prophecy in himself through the playing of the psalter (since the psalter was played according to the order of David); just as David often chases away the evil spirit of Saul with his playing of the psalter, or prevents or weakens it, we read in 1 Sam. 16:23. For the evil spirit does not like it when one sings or preaches God's word in the right faith.

He is a spirit of sadness, and cannot remain where a heart is spiritually joyful (that is, in God and His Word); of which St. Anthony also says that spiritual joy hurts the devil.

But he calls his psalms "Israel's psalms" and does not want them to be his own or to have the glory of them alone, but Israel is to confirm them and judge and recognize them as his own. For it is important that the people of God or God's people accept a word or song and recognize it as right, because the spirit of God must be in such a people, who wants to be honored in his people. This is how we Christians speak of our psalmists. St. Ambrose made many beautiful hymnos ecclesiae, called hymns of the Church, because the Church accepted them and uses them as if she had made them and they were her songs. Therefore, one does not say: Thus sings Ambrose, Gregory, Prudentius, Sedulius, but, thus sings the Christian church. For they are now the church's songs, which Ambrosius, Sedulius 2c. sing with the church, and the church with them, and when they die, the church remains, singing their songs forever. So David wants to call his psalms "Israel's psalms", that is, the psalms of the church, which has the same spirit that made them through David, and sings them continually, even after David's death. He felt in his spirit that his psalms would remain forever, as long as Israel or God's people would remain, that is, until the end of the world; as has happened until now, and will happen. That is why they should be called "Israel's Psalms".

## **V. 2. The Spirit of the Lord has spoken through me. And his speech has been through my tongue.**

(9) Here David wants to become too strange for me, and to go too high; God grant that I may attain it a little; for here he begins to speak of the high holy trinity of divine being. First, he mentions the Holy Spirit, to whom he gives everything that the prophets prophesy. And on this and similar sayings St. Peter 2. ep. 1, 21. sees: "No prophecy has ever been produced by human will, but the Holy Spirit is the source of all prophecy.

The holy men of God have spoken by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, in the article of faith 1) one sings of the Holy Spirit thus: "Who has spoken through the prophets." So now one gives to the Holy Spirit the whole holy scripture, and the outward word and sacrament, so that our outward ears and senses are moved or moved; for also our Lord Christ Himself gives His words to the Holy Spirit, as He speaks Luc. 4, 18. from Is. 61, 1.: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, therefore He has anointed me" 2c. and Matth. 12, 18. from Is. 42, 1.: "Behold, this is My servant, whom I have chosen. I will put my spirit upon him"; and Luc. 1, 35.: "The Holy Spirit overshadows Mariam", stirs her, takes her blood and makes her pregnant, so that the Lord says: "conceived by the Holy Spirit."

(10) What a glorious, arrogant arrogance this is! He who may boast that the Spirit of the Lord speaks through him, and that his tongue speaks the word of the Holy Spirit, must of course be very sure of his own things. This will not be David, son of Jesse, born in sins, but he who is raised to be a prophet by God's promise. Should he not make sweet psalms who has such a master who teaches him and speaks through him? Hear now who has ears to hear! My words are not my words, but he who hears me hears God, he who despises me despises God [Luc. 10, 16]. For I see that 'many of my descendants shall not hear my words, to their great hurt. Neither we nor anyone who is not a prophet may lead such fame. This we may do, provided we are holy and have the Holy Spirit, that we may boast ourselves catechumens and disciples of the prophets, as those who repeat and preach what we have heard and learned from the prophets and apostles, and are certain that the prophets taught them. These are called in the Old Testament the "prophets' children," who do not set anything of their own nor new, as the prophets do; but teach what they have from the prophets, and are "Israel," as David says, to whom he makes the Psalms.

**V. 3. The God of Israel has spoken to me, the refuge of Israel has spoken, the righteous ruler among men, the ruler in the fear of God.**

Now we have three speakers. David says above [v. 2] that the Spirit of the Lord spoke through his tongue; thus the person of the Holy Spirit is clearly indicated to us Christians. What Turks, Jews and other godless people believe, we do not respect. Thus we have heard that the outward effect is attributed to the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures and in our faith, since He speaks, baptizes and rules with us bodily through the prophets, apostles and church ministers. Therefore these words of David are also of the Holy Spirit, which he speaks through his tongue from two other speakers. What then does he speak of them? First, he speaks of the God of Israel, who spoke to David, that is, promised him. Now who God is, this speaker, we Christians know from the Gospel of John, namely, it is the Father, who spoke in the beginning, Gen. 1, 3: "Let there be light"; and His word is the person of the Son, by whose word all things were made, Jn. 1, 3. The same Son is called by the Spirit through David here XXX, the "stronghold of Israel, and righteous ruler over men". He also speaks, that is, the Holy Spirit introduces the guardian Israel that he also speaks. So all three persons speak, and yet is One Speaker, One Promiser, One Promise, as it is one God.

12) Just as the outward effect of God on man is assigned to the Holy Spirit, so it is the quality of the Son that He became man, a Lord and Judge over all men, and is set over all creatures, as Psalm 8:5-7 sings: "What is man, that you remember him, and the Son of man, that you visit him? Thou hast made him lack a little time of God, but with honors and ornaments thou hast crowned him. Thou hast made him ruler over the work of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." It is not yet a threefold dominion, or three rulers, but One Ruler and One Dominion, which the Father has given to the Son, yes, to man and man's child, no doubt not in such a way that He excludes Himself and the Holy Spirit from it.

1) That is, in the Nicene Creed.

I have closed. Nevertheless, it is and is called man's dominion, which God gives him. Therefore, the same man who is called ruler here must be true God, because he possesses God's kingdom and is therefore equal to God in the unified rule. For God does not leave or give His honor or His own kingdom to anyone else; as He says in Exodus 20:3: "You shall have no other gods before Me," and Isaiah 42:8: "I will not give My honor to anyone else, nor My glory to idols." But now he gives his glory and kingdom to this man and to the Son of man, that is, he subjects everything that is made to him, as he himself has it under him: so the same man must be neither another God nor an idol, but the true, natural God with the Father and the Holy Spirit. If we have time and grace, we will discuss more such sayings hereafter, especially in the Psalter.

Now let us work out these words of David beforehand, wherein he finely confesses the two highest articles, that in God there are three distinct persons, and that the one, the Son, should become man, and receive the kingdom and glory from the Father above all things, and that the Holy Spirit should write these things in men's hearts by faith, who also proclaimed them beforehand by the bodily mouth and tongue of the prophets. This is not the work of men or angels, because it is not the work of men or angels to promise these things beforehand and to create faith in the hearts of men afterwards. It is God's gift (says St. Paul [Eph. 2, 8]) such faith, which the Holy Spirit works and gives.

(14) It is also not for everyone to notice and read the divine three persons differently in the Scriptures and Psalms; for where a carnal mind comes upon these words, he reads them one after another, as they are written: "The Spirit of the Lord has spoken through me, the God of Israel has spoken to me, the Lord of Israel has spoken, the righteous ruler among men" (2c), and do not think otherwise, it is all spoken by GOD, as by One Person, with many other words; or fall into the Jewish blindness, since they make David such a righteous ruler and ruler in the fear of GOD, and the promise in

The commandment and the laws are reversed, that he who wants to rule over men should be just and godly, when David so devoutly and heartily boasts that these are words of promise from the Messiah of the God of Jacob, and not commandments over worldly lords.

(15) It would be the same for him in the other Psalm, since the three persons speak differently, as three different speakers. God the Father speaks [Ps. 2, 6]: "I have set my king on my holy mountain." This king is certainly another person of yours who sets him as king. Now it follows quickly, "I will preach from the way," which reads as if it were still the Father, and so reason would read it, if it were the King, the Son, as follows [v. 7.]: "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." That the same is a man is certain; for he shall preach, and be Messiah, as he says in the other verse: "They rage against the Lord and his Messiah." But that he is God is proved by the fact that the Father says, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee"; as we Christians well know. Item, that he gives him the whole earth as his own, with Gentiles, and what is in it, which is just as much as God's own kingdom. Item, he commands, v. 12: "They shall kiss the Son" or worship him, serve him with fear, and curses that "blessed are all those who trust in him", which belongs to God alone. Whether they do not all obey him according to the Gospel, nothing breaks off his rule over all creatures. Whoever will not be under him with grace must be under him with disgrace. He who will not reign with him must (like his enemies) be his footstool. He is judge over the living and the dead. Do you think that the Turk, the Pabst, the Jews and all the wicked people of the world and the devils will not want his grace, but will rage against it, so they will escape his power? They will certainly find out. For "God mocks them in heaven, and will speak to them in his wrath" [v. 4]. Summa, he is Lord, and remains Lord, as far as God himself is Lord, for he has given him dominion over everything; the power is certain, and remains well. Woe to him who does not accept it with grace, he will find it with wrath forever.

(16) Now here we have two distinct persons, the Father and the Son; so the Holy Spirit is without that, who made and spoke such Psalm 1) of the Father and the Son, introduced with their words, 2). Thus the distinct Trinity of Persons is in One inseparable Divine Being, and that the Son is Man and Messiah confesses, as it is confessed in the last words of David. A carnal heart runs over, or thinks that David made it as a pious man, of himself or others; as the blind Jews do; but David will not suffer the words to be ascribed to him. They are funny, lovely "Psalms Israel" (he says), but I did not make them, but "the Spirit of the Lord has spoken through me". And how could flesh and blood, reason and human wisdom speak of such high, incomprehensible things? It is vain foolishness and vexation before it.

17) But to confirm this opinion of David, that he believed as said and died on it, let us take before us the words on which he based himself, and from which he made such lovely psalms, which are found in 2 Sam. 7:12 ff. 1 Chron. 18:10 ff. and read thus:

**[And the LORD hath declared unto thee, that the LORD will build thee an house; and when thy days be expired, and thou shalt return unto thy fathers, I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons. And I will establish his kingdom, and he shall build me an house, and I will establish his throne for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. And I will not turn away my mercy from him, as I turned it from him that was before thee; but I will set him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for ever.**

1) In the original: "such psalms", that is: such psalm.

2) "introduced with their words" that is: in which father and son are introduced speaking. - Cruciger offers: kos psatmos, but here only the second Psalm is spoken of.

18) The first part, where he says: "The Lord proclaims to you that the Lord will build you a house", is clearly said about the house of David, that his children shall possess the scepter of Judah up to Messiah; as enough is said about this in that booklet about the Jews. 3) And here again we find the three persons in God; first of all the Holy Spirit, who speaks through the prophet Nathan, as we have seen above.

[§ 9] heard that the holy Scriptures are spoken by the Holy Spirit, according to the saying of David, "The Spirit of the Lord hath spoken by me." In the same way he speaks through all the prophets. Further, the Holy Spirit introduces the person of the Father in his speech, saying, "The Lord proclaimeth unto thee." And immediately after, the person of the Son, saying, "That the Lord will build thee an house." And yet there is one God and Lord, who speaks through Nathan, and David proclaims, and builds his house; all three One Speaker, One Proclaimer, One Builder. Whether such a difference of the persons is not seen by everyone's reason in the Scriptures, there is nothing to it. I know well how they gloss over this and similar words, the wise men who master the Holy Spirit.

(19) But where you find in the Scriptures that God speaks of God as if he were two persons, you may boldly reason that there three persons are indicated in the Godhead. As, here in this place the LORD speaks, that the LORD will build David a house. Item, Gen. 19, 24: "The LORD rained fire and brimstone from the LORD" 2c. For the Holy Spirit is not a fool, nor a drunkard, that should speak one tittle, much less one word, in vain. Now if the Lord (that is, the Son) rains fire and brimstone from the Lord (that is, from the Father), then at the same time there is the Holy Spirit, who speaks such things through Abraham, or whoever it was, from the two Lord. Nevertheless, they are all three One Lord, One God, who rains fire and brimstone. We will hear more of such examples hereafter.

20) And the other piece, when he saith, When thy days be expired, and thou shalt go unto thy fathers, I will raise up thy seed after thee.

3) That is: in the writing "Of the Jews and their lies". Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XX, 1902, § 96 ff.

awaken" 2c. Here the right text is about Messiah. For such cannot be said of Solomon, much less of another son of David; it must be the right some son of David, Messiah, who was to come after the scepter of Judah. "He shall build me an house," he says, "and I will confirm his kingdom forever." This house cannot be the temple of Solomon. Because hard before it [1 Chron. 18, 4. 5.] he says: "You shall not build me a house for a dwelling. For I have not dwelt in any house since I brought the children of Israel out of Egypt." And Solomon himself 1 Kings 8:27: "Do you think that God will dwell on earth? Behold, heaven and all the heavens may not comprehend thee; how then shall this house which I have built?" But even more powerfully says Isaiah, Cap. 66, 1: "Thus saith the LORD, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What then is this house that ye will build me? or what is the place where I shall rest?"

21) Here God rejects with expressed words the great devotion of the Jews, who boasted of the temple, as if they built God a house, and did God great service with it, became proud, stiff-necked prophet murderers, yet God here confesses that he does not want to look at the temple, but a humble, afflicted spirit, which is afraid of his word [Is. 66, 2.], yes, that shall be his temple and rest; rejects also there all sacrifices and services of the temple, since he speaks, v. 3.: "He that killeth an ox is even as he that killeth a man. He who sacrifices a sheep is as one who breaks a dog's neck. He who offers a grain offering is as one who offers an offering of sow's blood. He that offereth incense is as one that offereth iniquity," that is, idolatry, "praise." For God did not have the temple built so that they would proudly despise His word and sacrifice much to sanctify themselves, but "that His name", not He Himself, "should dwell there" (as the Scripture says everywhere), that is, they should hear His word there and call upon Him, so that He would be honored. So they wanted the glory and honor of having such a temple, and beat the prophets to death for the sake of God's word.

(22) Therefore this house of God, which Messiah, David's son and God's son, is to build, must be a much greater and more glorious house. For, you yourself calculate, if God is to dwell in this house, it must be much greater and more glorious, neither heaven nor earth, because He is so great that heaven is His chair on which He sits, and earth is His footstool. What room is left here, where his head, breast, and arm may dwell? That it is well said, What house of stone and wood would ye build me for a dwelling, if heaven and earth were far, far too strait for me? Of this house the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament, teach us, and it is called the Holy Christian Church, as far as the world is; not only that, but also an eternal house, which abides and lives forever, since God eternally dwells, rules, and keeps house within it. This wants to become a little house and temple!

23 Now let us look at the carpenter or builder of this house. He is to be a man and David's son, as the text says, "one of your sons"; and yet he is to build a house of God that is better and more glorious than heaven and earth, and that will endure forever. Where will he get the art and power? This cannot be neither man's nor angel's art or power. For angels cannot create heaven or earth, not even the smallest creature, much less man. Therefore, this house's carpenter must be a real true God, who has the right power of divine nature to create heaven and earth, and much better, that is, he must be an almighty God, and yet is not the person who says of him: "I want to be his father, and he shall be my son, and he shall build me a house. Here the persons are tremendously and clearly distinguished, as father and son, and as master builder and master of the house. Nor can there be two gods, or the son be another and strange god. For the first commandment does not suffer it, saying, "Thou shalt not have other gods beside me"; and Deut. 6:4, "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD," or God.

(24) Thus we have heard above [§ 9. 16]: Where the Scriptures speak of the two Persons of the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit, the third Person, is also with them, who does this through the

The prophets say that in this place it is thoroughly and powerfully proven and testified to a believing heart 1) that God, the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, is certainly one true God, and apart from Him no other God can be 2) and yet is three different persons, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; so that only the Son became man and David's son. And for this reason, no doubt, the people of Israel were so severely commanded that they should not worship more than One God, so that they would not be offended when Messiah came and preached and believed for God, just as if he wanted to teach against Moses more than One God, or a foreign God, but to keep their ears and hearts still, to be taught how the first commandment of One God was to be understood correctly and thoroughly. Follows:

[1 Chron. 18, 14.] And I will set him in my house and in my kingdom forever.

25 What is this? Here let us hear. Hans shall be and remain eternal, as it is also said above [§ 22], therefore the master must also be eternal, and have an eternal divine power. Here he speaks further to David: "The house, which my son and your son shall build for me, he shall also be the master of the house inside, as well as I. He shall be like me in every way. He shall be like me in one house. I will put him in it, and he shall have it as myself. Now we have heard that this house of God is greater, better, and more glorious than heaven and earth. Now if David's son Messiah is master and ruler of this house, he is surely also master and ruler of heaven and earth, and much more and better. For he who is the master of this house, like God Himself, is certainly much more, 3) also the master of heaven and earth, like God Himself; but no one can be, except the one and only God, Creator of heaven and earth. From this it follows that Messiah, David's natural son, must be real true God, and not a foreign God. For,

As I said, God does not allow a foreign god to be lord in his own house; he must and will have his honor and authority himself, and leave it to no one else. This should be clear enough that Messiah, David's son, is a lord and king in God's own kingdom, or equal to God; for it is certain that God speaks of Messiah there.

But if someone wants to Judaize, and these words "my house", "my kingdom", point to the temple in Jerusalem and to the people of Israel, he should do it without me for himself, because I know very well that God calls the temple his house, Is. 56, 7: "My house is a house of prayer", as Christ introduces this Matth. 21, 13. Luc. 19, 46. 2c, and Israel is called his kingdom, Ex. 19, 6: "You shall be my priestly kingdom" (but it says, "if you obey my voice and keep my covenant"). Also I know that God says Ezek. 18, 4. says: "The father's soul is mine as well as the son's soul." Yes, I know that the wine I drink and the bread I eat is also called his bread and wine; and what is there in heaven and earth that is not his? as he says Isa. 66, 1: "Heaven is my chair, the earth my footstool; what house will you build for me? Has not my hand made all this, and is all ready there?" that is, if I had not made heaven and earth before, where would you take lime, stones, wood, iron, and what belongs to the building? Is it not all mine before? Where did you get it? What did you work on it? Yes, who and white are you yourselves? Am I not your creator? So David also confesses in his beautiful praise, when he says about the supplies to build the temple, 1 Chron. 30, 11: "It is all yours, O Lord, and we offer you what we have received from your hands.

27 He also speaks of the sacrifice of this temple, Ps. 50:13: "What will you sacrifice to me? "Do you think I must eat beef and drink goat's blood?" Where did you get your sacrifices, ox, sheep, goats? Is it not all mine before? What are all the oxen, sheep, and all that go to 4) pasture on all the face of the earth? Have I them

1) "und bezeuget" is missing in the Erlanger.  
2) "GOtt" is missing in the Erlanger.  
8) Cruciger: rriulto plun's ipsa üoiuo. The Wittenberg and the Jena understood it the same way and therefore a comma after "much more". The Erlangen offers: "vielmehr auch" 2c.

4) Wittenberg and Jena: an.

Not created without all your help? Where would you take them as an offering to me, if I had not given them to you first? This is what is said: I must not have any of your sacrifices, and you must not think that you serve me with them, as if I had to have them and could not do without them; but this is the opinion that you should recognize and confess through such sacrifices how you have everything from me that you are and have, and thus honor, praise and glorify me [as] your God and Creator. Yes, for the sake of the cause I let it be called my sacrifices for a time. Where the cause is out, the sacrifice is nothing.

028 As I have called the temple my house, not that I should dwell therein, nor that ye should minister therein unto me: but for your sakes I have called it my house, that ye should pray therein, and praise me, and call upon me: for it shall not be my dwelling house, but your house of prayer; yea, it shall be called a house of prayer. Now for my sake it cannot be called a house of prayer, for I have no one to worship or call upon but God, whom I have no need of. Wherever my house is needed other than a house of prayer, it is a murderer's pit and not my house; as those who think they are doing me great service by building me a house want to be praised for it, and have the honor of such work and building, as if they had earned great favor with me. Then such a house must be destroyed, ruined and destroyed as the most shameful pit of murder, which is no longer my house, but the devil's own hell.

29. Now whoever, according to such a mind, wants to understand these words "my house", "my kingdom", as 26] said, of the temple and the people of Israel in this place, must also take it upon himself to prove with good, strong reason how the temple at Jerusalem and the people of Israel in the land of Canaan have always remained for and for, even now and until then, since the time of David, because the text here clearly states: David's house shall remain forever, and David's son, Messiah, shall sit in God's house and kingdom forever. We Christians must confess that we cannot prove this, as we know that God's house, the Temple at Jerusalem, was in ashes at 1500 years.

David's house and kingdom and the people of Israel have not been anything for 1500 years, nor have they had a regiment or kingdom in the land of Canaan, and we must stick to our previous understanding that the words "my house" and "my kingdom" must mean the eternal kingdom of God, where he wants to dwell and rule forever, which his son and David's son, Messiah, should build by his almighty divine power and wisdom. Let us hear David himself, how he understood these words. Thus it is written in 1 Chron. 18:16:

**When Nathan had spoken all these words to David, David the king came and sat before the Lord, saying, "What am I, O Lord God? And what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?"**

30 Here David indicates that he understood the words well, since God promised him through Nathan: "I will be his father, and he shall be my son; I will set him in my house, and in my kingdom forever." Therefore he says, "What am I? What is my house, that thou bringest me hither?" It is too high and too glorious a thing that you promise me, that my house, I, my son, should come to sit in your own 1) eternal kingdom, to be Lord and King? O Lord God, where are you taking me? He cannot tell for great wonder, and calls it "until then". Whither, whither, my dear God? If I (that is, my flesh and blood) am to sit like you in your eternal kingdom, then my flesh and blood, my son and your son, will have to be right true God, who sits like you. Ah GOtt, where are you taking me? Follows:

**V. 17. You have looked upon me as in the likeness of a man, who is God the Lord on high.**

Almost all other Hebrew scholars interpret much differently here; however, some, such as Bernhard Ziegler, 2) give me evidence that it may be

1) "own" is missing in the Erlanger. Cruciger: in illo tuo soñns  
ssrnpitsrno reZno.

2) Bernhard Ziegler, Hebrew professor at Leipzig. Walch, St. Louis edition, vol. XX, 2106, p. 18S. On October 10, 1543, he was promoted to DoctorDe Wette, vol. VI, p. 349.



and should be interpreted according to the Grammatica as I have now translated it. Herewith David clearly confesses that his son, Messiah, should certainly be a right man, in all form, manner and measure like another man, Phil. 2, 7, and yet above and on high, where no man-wise, but only God is and rules, he should be God, the Lord. This, I say, is clearly the opinion of David, spoken out in dry words. Therefore he says above [v. 14.], Whither, whither, dear GOD, dost thou bring me? And here: Why do you consider me unworthy, that my son should be king in your eternal kingdom? He understands well that in God's eternal kingdom, being king is not due to anyone but a true God. Since the Son of David is a man, and another person than the Father, who places him in his kingdom, and yet cannot be two, or more than one true God, David hereby concludes that his son, Messiah, must be a true, natural God, and yet not another God than the Father, but another person in the same unified, undivided Godhead, and the Holy Spirit, who speaks of the Father and Son as true God through Nathan and David, is the third person in the same unified Godhead.

This is the doctrine and faith of the New Testament, namely, that Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the Son of David and the Virgin Mary, is a true man, the natural and eternal Son of God, one God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and three distinct persons. Because David's words in this place gladly give such understanding, according to all kinds of Hebrew language, we Christians should neither seek nor respect any other understanding in it, but consider this [for] the only right understanding, all other interpretations for human futile conceit. The New Testament cannot be missing, so also the Old Testament, where it rhymes and is similar to the New.

33. may you ask here: If the words of David and Nathan so clearly give the article of the deity of Christ, how is it that neither the holy fathers, nor any other teacher, have seen or ever touched such a thing, and you new, young Hebrews

Why do the rabbis of the Jews not see it? Answer: The Hebrew language was little and poorly known after the time of the apostles. [The dear fathers and teachers were content with the New Testament, in which they have such things and all things abundantly and superfluously. But the prophets and apostles saw it well, as we shall hear hereafter. But that the rabbis do not see, it is quite true. 1) For he that is blind shall see nothing, as Isaias, Cap. 6, 10, saith of them, "With eyes that see ye shall be blind." Whoever has to learn from them will also become blind, certainly. Indeed, we ourselves would not see it either, if we "could not, enlightened by the New Testament, see rightly under the eyes of the Old. For without the New Testament, the Old is obscured, 2 Cor. 4:3, 4.

34) Behold our times, when we preach of the grace of Christ against the presumptuous works and holiness of our own, how many there are who see it, or receive it with earnestness? What is lacking? It is so brightly preached, taught, read, written, sung, painted, and practiced in all ways, that wood and stone should understand it, if they had a little sense: yet not pope, kings, princes, bishops, scholars, lords, nobles, citizens, peasants, see it, but pass by, blind with seeing eyes, deaf with hearing ears; for their heart is not at home, and stands elsewhere. So the prophets in their time prophesied of Christ clearly enough, that he should be God and Lord over all, as David does here. But few believed or respected it, the others were blind and deaf to it, followed their hearts and their conceit. It is called mystery, secret, and remains mystery. Whoever understands it and is serious about it, gives thanks to God, and does not turn to the other great heap of despisers.

35 Do you not think that Isaiah read this text of David with diligence, when he says, Cap. 9, 6. 7: "A child is born to us, a son is given to us, and his dominion is established.

1) Cruciger: iä sans rsets st msrito 6t - it certainly serves them right.  
2) Thus the Wittenbergers and the Jenaers. Erlanger: serious.

His name is called Wonderful, Counselor, God, Hero, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, that his dominion may be great, and there be no end of peace, upon the throne of David and his kingdom, that he may establish it and strengthen it with judgment and righteousness from henceforth even for ever"? Here Isaiah takes the word out of Nathan's mouth, when he prophesies of Messiah that he shall be an everlasting king and father in the kingdom of God, and he also calls him God: for the word El, according to the letter, means power; but when it is a proper name (as here), it is called God, through all Scripture, who alone has power; as both Jews and Hebrews must confess.

Isaiah agrees with David and the New Testament that Christ is an eternal king and true God; therefore his kingdom must be a divine, eternal kingdom on the throne of David 2c. For he especially moved the word "eternal kingdom", since God speaks to David through Nathan: "I will place your son in my kingdom forever", and feels well that this is spoken (as David speaks) of a man who must be on high El, that is, God. For to possess the eternal kingdom of God and to be king in it cannot be of a bad man, nor can it be a transient, temporal, earthly kingdom, which has an end, and the king must die with his children after him; but here the Son of David shall be an everlasting king in the everlasting kingdom of God, and, as Isaiah agrees, of peace no end; and he, the Son of David, the child that is born and given unto us, shall be an everlasting father and prince of peace, from henceforth even for ever. Therefore he must be God or El, who by his divine power can give and maintain such eternal peace.

37) Such eternity of the kingdom of Messiah is shown by Isaiah in more places than Cap. 51, 4. 5: "Take heed to me, 1) my people; hear me, my people. For from me shall go forth a law, and my judgment will I set for the light of the nations. My righteousness is near, and my salvation is gone forth," And soon.

Then, v. 6: "My salvation shall endure forever, and my righteousness shall have no end." This is the eternal righteousness, of which Daniel also says, Cap. 9, 24: "Seventy weeks are determined, that eternal righteousness should come," and is Messiah, as all ancient Hebrews understood it. "Eternal righteousness" but and salvation cannot be a bad man nor angel, but must be GOD Himself; and yet David's Son, natural man, and another person of Him who speaks of Him, calling Him "my salvation, my righteousness." The third person is the Holy Spirit, who speaks such things of the two. So the New Testament also calls him, 1 Cor. 1, 30.: "Jesus Christ became to us from GOD a wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." This rhymes with 2) Isaiah, and Isaiah with Paul.

38. item, Isaiah 60, 19. 20.: "The sun shall no more shine unto thee by day, neither shall the brightness of the moon shine unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God shall be thy glory. Thy sun shall go down no more, neither shall thy moon lose her light: for the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and the days of thy sorrow shall be at an end." Here it is clear that our eternal light is to be the Lord and our God Himself, and one Lord speaks of another; indeed, throughout the whole chapter it is not Isaiah who speaks, but the Lord, and says here: "The LORD shall be your everlasting light." Who is the Lord who speaks this? Without doubt God the Father. Who is the LORD of whom he speaks, "The LORD will be your eternal light"? Without a doubt GOD the Son, Jesus Christ. For here is written the great name of GOD, Jehovah, which we write in our Bible with these great letters, LORD, as distinguished from the other names. Who is it then that speaks these things through the tongue of Jehovah? Undoubtedly God the Holy Spirit, who speaks through the prophets, introducing the person of the Father, speaking of the eternal light, that is, of His Son, Jesus of Nazareth, David's and Mary's Son.

39. such an eternal light, yes, such a lord, can

1) "me" is missing in the Wittenberg, the Jena and the Erlangen. In the Latin it is expressed.

2) "with" is missing in the Erlanger.

Nor can he be a bad angel or a bad man. And in this Isaiah's prophecy agrees with the New Testament, because our Lord Jesus Christ often calls Himself a light, Joh. 1, 4. 5.: "The life was the light of men, and the light shone into the darkness, but the darkness did not understand it. Because this rhymes with the New Testament, Isaiah's prophecy should be understood joyfully, and not differently from Jesus Christ, who has not prepared a kingdom for us under this sun and moon, which is passing away, but wants to be our eternal light, sun and moon, life and salvation, as he says above, Cap. 51, 6: "Lift up your eyes to heaven, and look down on earth! Heaven shall pass away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die as nothing: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall have no end.

40 Dear, tell me, can this and the like sayings also suffer the Jews' great understanding of their Messiah, who is to be a mortal, worldly king at Jerusalem, on earth? because God here holds His Messiah against heaven and earth, and says: "(The) heaven shall pass away like smoke (that will not happen without fire, 2 Pet. 3, 12.), the earth shall decay like an old garment, men shall die away like nothing. But his salvation, which is near (he says), his righteousness," which has gone forth, "shall abide forever," and be an everlasting light; for he is the LORD himself, and your GOD. Here you see if Isaiah understood the words of Nathan, 1 Chron! 18, 13, where he introduces GOD: "I will be his father, and he shall be my son; I will set him in my kingdom forever." And David's words, 1 Chron. 18, 17. where he says: "You have looked upon me as in the likeness of a man who is God the LORD on high"; and 2 Sam. 7, 19.: "This is a manner of a man who is the LORD the LORD", ubi Latinus<sup>1)</sup> ) habet: *Ista est lex Adam, Domine Deus; et nihil significat* [where the Latin has: "This is the law of Adam, O HERR Gott", and gives no understanding).

41 Let us also see Daniel, who says

Cap. 7, 13. 14.: "I saw in the night vision, and behold, there came one in the clouds of heaven like the Son of man unto the Ancient of days, and was brought before him, and gave him power, and glory, and kingdom, that all nations and people and tongues should serve him. His power is eternal, which does not pass away, and his kingdom has no end." Christians can and do understand this saying, but let us also see how it rhymes with the New Testament. A man child he sees in the clouds; no doubt that his kingdom shall not be earthly, transitory, nor temporal, but heavenly and one, as he speaks, "The Ancient of days," that is, GOD the Father, "gave him dominion over all things, and his dominion shall be eternal, and have no end." This eternity or everlasting realm cannot be given to any bad creature, neither angels nor men, because it is divine power, and GOD's own power. What would or could God keep or have if He gave eternal power and eternal kingdom of Himself? He would keep nothing everywhere, and would himself come to nothing, because there is another who has the eternal power. There can be nothing above and apart from the eternal power. Eternal power comprehends everything and does not allow anything else or greater to be above it or outside of it; it must be God Himself and nothing else.

(42) Here the text of Daniel also gives the article of the Godhead in three persons, and of the humanity of the Son; for there must be another person who gives, and another who receives. Namely, the Father gives eternal authority to the Son, and the Son has it from the Father, and all this from eternity, otherwise it would not be an eternal authority; so the Holy Spirit is there who speaks it through Daniel. For such a high, secret thing no one could know, if the Holy Spirit did not reveal it through the prophets; as was often said above [§ 9. 11] that the holy Scriptures are spoken by the Holy Spirit. Besides, the Son is nevertheless also a man-child, that is, a right man and David's son, to whom such eternal power is given. So we see how the prophets well regarded and understood Va's word "eternal," since God speaks to David through Nathan: "I will place my son and your son in my eternal kingdom."

1) I,Ltinu8, that is, the Vulgate.

43) Here, Mrs. Klüglingin, 1) the reason, which is ten times wiser than God Himself, is upset and asks: How can God give His eternal power from Himself to another? What would he himself retain? Is it not said above [§ 12] that God says Isa. 42, 8: "I will not give my glory to another, nor my praise to idols"; especially he cannot give it to a man who has not been from eternity, like God, but began here temporally, was born, and is mortal; as we Christians confess and preach about Jesus, David's and Mary's son. The Jews, Mahomet, Turks and Tartars are such highly intelligent people, who can grasp the incomprehensible nature of God in the spoon or nutshell of their reason, and say that God has no wife, therefore he can have no son. Fie, fie, fie to you, devil, with Jews and Mahomet, and all those who are students of blind, foolish, miserable reason in these high things that no one understands but God alone, and how 2) much the Holy Spirit has revealed to us through the prophets.

44 We Christians, enlightened by the New Testament, can answer correctly, clearly and finely, thus: Christ our Lord has two births, or two natures in One undivided Person; for He is One Christ, not (as the mad spirit Nestorii deceives) two Cyristi. After the first birth he received, not temporally, but from eternity, from the Father the eternal power or Godhead, and the Father gave it to him wholly and completely, as he himself has it from eternity. He did not give it to him in such a way that he deprived himself of it or got rid of it, but he gave the same authority to the Son, and no other, which he had completely and totally from eternity and retains for eternity. For there are not two Gods, but both Persons are one Godhead, and is rightly said, Isa. 42:8: "I will not give my glory to another, nor my praise to idols." For the Son is not another God, nor an idol, but with the Father one, true, eternal God.

45 He himself speaks of this in John 16:15: "All that the Father has is mine. Does not say: The Father has nothing, I have it all alone; or: The Father has it all alone, I have nothing; but: The Father has it all; but the same "all" that he has, that is mine. This is plainly so much as said, that the Father and Son have one Godhead, and of the same all of the Father that is of the Son, the Holy Ghost also hath it; as he saith there, "He shall take it of mine." From which "Mine"? Undoubtedly from the Mine that the Father has. So the Holy Spirit takes from both your Father and Son the same complete whole Godhead from eternity. Item, John 5:26: "As the Father hath life in himself, even so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself"; and, v. 21:23: "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will; that they all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." All this is said of the first, eternal, divine birth.

46 After the other, temporal, human birth, the eternal power of God was also given to him, but temporally, and not from eternity. For the humanity of Christ has not existed from eternity, as the divinity; but, as it is counted and written, Jesus, the Son of Mary, is 1543 years old this year. But from the moment that Godhead and humanity are united in one person, the man, the Son of Mary, is and is called almighty, eternal God, who has eternal power, and created and sustains everything, per communicationem idiomatum, because he is one person with the Godhead, and also true God. He speaks of this in Matth. 11, 27: "All things have been given to me by the Father", Matth. last, v. 18: "All authority has been given to me in heaven and [on] earth." Which one: "To me"? To me, JEsu of Nazareth, Mary's son and man born. From eternity I received them from the Father, before I became man; but when I became man, I received them temporally after mankind, and kept them secretly until my resurrection and ascension, when they were to be revealed and transfigured; as St. Paul Rom. 1, 4, says: He is transfigured, or "proved a Son of God powerfully". John calls it "trans-

1) Wittenberger and Erlanger: "klüglinne"; Jenaer: Mglinge".

2) Wittenberger and Erlanger: "where much". Jenaer: how much". Cruciger: quantum.

cleansed" Cap. 7, 39.: "The Holy Spirit was not yet [there], because JEsus was not yet glorified."

(47) Behold now, whether Daniel speaketh not almost on the stroke, as did Isaias, of the Son of man receiving the everlasting kingdom from God, and as Nathan and David speak, that God would make David's son king in his everlasting kingdom; and that these things are spoken (saith David) as of a man who is God the LORD on high.

(48) Alas! that we Christians should recognize such unspeakable grace so abundantly, both in the New and Old Testaments, and not rejoice and give thanks as is fitting. It would not be a miracle if a Christian's heart thoroughly considered and grasped it, so that it would die of joy and come to life again of joy. What a wonder it is that God is man, speaks with us, lives, and dies for us! David is stunned and frozen with joy, he can no longer say: "What am I? What is my house that you have brought me there?"

49. all this is still spoken of the text 1 Chron. 18. on which, as above

17] the last words of David are based on, that Christ must be true God and man. And what more springs from such a text, we will see later (with God's help). For the prophets after David, and he himself also, took much from it about Christ, that he was God and man. As the 110th Psalm, v. 1: "The LORD hath said unto my LORD, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool." What else can 1) "sit at my right hand" mean but to sit like God, that is, to sit in God's eternal kingdom? For he sits not at his head, nor at his feet, neither higher nor lower; but at his right hand, like unto him, that heaven is as well his throne, and earth his footstool; as he saith Matt. last, v. 18: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth"; and Marc, 16th [v. 19]: "He is taken up into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God." And when he asks the Pharisees, Matth. 22, 43. ff.: "If Christ is the Son of David, how then does he call him in the spirit (that is, the

Spirit speaking through him) his Lord? saying, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand," they could not answer him.

50) So the Jews 2) cannot answer it even today until eternity; they blaspheme very much, only contrary to us Christians, with clumsy, malicious profanity, also against their own old rabbis and teachers. You may read Lyrar about this there. But we have the New Testament, which not only rhymes with this Psalm, and the Psalm is similar to it; in that we Christians (as has now often been said [§ 32]) have enough to draw the Old Testament to our understanding, and cannot lack it, but all other understanding must lack it. So Christ himself is there with his apostles, who testify and show us this understanding with rich words and works, and this psalm is also the Oerter one, since the three persons are proclaimed differently, in One Godhead; which alone is the understanding of the prophets and Christians, given by the Holy Spirit. Jews, Mahomet, reason shall know nothing of this. There is the Father, who says: "Sit at my right hand"; and is David's son, Christ, to whom he speaks such things.

51 Now the Father is not Christ, or the Son of David, and Christ is not the Father, yet he must sit at the right hand like the Father, having the same kingdom, authority, honor and everything. For God suffers no equal to sit beside Him in equal power and honor; therefore Christ, David's Son, must be right and with the Father a common God, sitting equal to Him; since no more than a common God must be; as the first commandment says, "Thou shalt have no other gods beside Me." So the Holy Spirit is also there, as the right one God, who speaks to us men through David and all the prophets, and reveals and teaches us all the truth of the Godhead; as David says: "The Spirit of the Lord has spoken through me," and Christ himself Matth. 22, 45: "How does David, through the Spirit, call Christ his Lord, if he is his Son?" Admittedly, without the Spirit he would

1) Erlanger: "can be called".

2) In the Erlanger: "They can" instead of: So can the Jews.

neither call it nor know it, as Christ would be his Son and Lord. The Holy Spirit, however, is not Christ the Son, nor the Father, and yet cannot be any other God. Thus it is evident that there is one God, and yet there are three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, from eternity to eternity.

52. Here someone wants to move why David says, "What am I? What is my house?" Item: "Thou hast looked upon me as a man that is on high GOD the LORD." But God did not say to him, "You shall be my son, and I will place you in my eternal kingdom." He said, "Your son shall be my son, and I will place him in my eternal kingdom." How then does David change the words of God, and interpret them to himself, as if he were the man who is God the LORD on high? Well, David is the father of this son (as you hear), and from his house and from his flesh and blood he shall come. Now it is in the nature of a father to rejoice in the glory of his son so high, and even higher than the son himself, to whom he grants all honor and good, and much more than to himself. Again, the scorn and disgrace inflicted on the Son is much more upsetting to him than it would be to himself. Therefore not only David, but also his whole house (as he says: "What is my house?") boasts of the glory, that from their flesh and blood such a son will come, who will sit at the right hand of God.

53 Thus one reads in the histories that a father, whom they call Chilo, died of joy, because he heard that his son had kept the victory in Olympus. 1) And a Roman woman, not knowing otherwise that her son had been slain by Hannibal at Cannae in the war with others, and he suddenly coming home healthy, when she looked at him, she fell down with joy and died. So David is so full of joy and spirit that he does not know how or what to say, and does not accept his son's honor, his flesh and blood, any other way than as if it had happened to him.

54] Moreover, such a son of David is still in his flesh and blood at this time, and there is nothing of it but himself, David, in his person and with his flesh and blood, from which the son was to come in the future. For this history and these words happened in time before Nathan, David's son (from which cord Christ came, Luc. 3, 31.), was born; indeed, his mother Bathsheba had not yet become David's wife, but was still Uriah's wife, a good while before the fall and adultery. Therefore [it is] not a shapeless speech of a father, when he praises and thanks GOD of his son's glory, with these or such like words, Oh dear GOD! What am I? What do you look upon me for, that you honor me so highly, and make of my flesh and blood such a lord? For it is I who am the glory and the joy, for it is my flesh and blood that is still in me and on me, but in the future [but] 2) shall be born.

55 Therefore also our Lord Christ is often called in the prophets by the name of his father David, Hos. 3:5: "After this the children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall honor the Lord and his mercy in the latter days. Here David is called our Lord Christ, and is placed in equal honor with God, and called Lord, whom they will seek and honor. It is one seeking, that they may seek and honor God and their King; just as with one faith we honor the Father and the Son, not with another faith the Father, and with another the Son. And here is the third person, the Holy Spirit, who speaks these things verbally through Hosea, and teaches us to believe.

56. item, Ezek. 34, 23. 24.: "I will raise up for them one shepherd to feed them, that is, my servant David, who will feed them and be their shepherd; I will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them." Here Christ is called David and God's servant, as he is also called Isa. 52, 13. "God's servant", and in 3) many places more. In addition Paul Phil. 2. makes a servant out of

2) This addition, which facilitates understanding, is found in the Wittenberg.

3) "an" is missing i" of the Jena and in the Erlanger.

1) That is, in the Olympic Games.

to him, who 1) yet always and always preaches a true God, since he speaks, v. 5-7: "Let every man be like Jesus Christ, who, though he was in the form of God, did not consider it a robbery to be like God, but expressed himself, and took on the form of a servant" 2c. Let us ask the apostle how he may speak so clumsily. If Christ is like God, how can he be a servant and in the form of a servant? If he is a servant, how can he be like God and in the form of God? But we Christians understand and know all these things well; but the Jews are confidently obdurate with this saying of Ezekiel, and want to be sure of their mind (I wanted to say madness); let them go.

57. item, Jeremiah 30:8, 9: "In that day, saith the LORD, I will break the yoke from off thy neck, and thy bands shall be rent; and they shall no more serve the strangers (or like aliens) within; but shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them." Here Christ is also called David, as the Jews, old and new, must understand this saying of Messiah, without that they do not understand the yoke and the bands rightly, want to make the prison of Babylon out of it. But the whole three chapters one after the other speak strongly of the redemption that Messiah is to do, that is, of the death and sins that the law brings upon us, of which Jews and reason know nothing. There is a reason for the Christians, and what has been Christian from the beginning of the world 2c.

(58) Nevertheless, with this saying Jeremiah makes this king of his, David, the right God, because he puts God and this David together in the same service and honor that the people of Israel should do to him. For if this David were not the right God, God would not place him next to Himself and say: "They shall serve their God and their king David"; for it is said: "You shall not serve any other god, but you shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him only", Deut. 6, 13, and 10, 20. And do the words of Jeremiah agree with the saying 1 Chron. 18, 11. 17.: "I will place your son in My eternal kingdom, who is a man, and at the same time I will place him on the earth.

above, on high, is God the Lord, who is honored and served like the Father. Here the Holy Spirit must be the third person, who speaks such things through Jeremiah, and teaches us to believe and understand them, and is one God, beside whom we honor and serve no other God.

(59) With this it should be enough of the text 1 Chron. 18, on which David's last words are based, namely, that Christ is God and man, born of David, that we now want to return to David's last words, to end them, in which he confesses Christ as his Son and praises him for his God, according to the saying [1 Chron. 18, 17.]: "Thou hast looked upon me as a man," qui superne vel in supernis, vel in excelsis est Dominus Deus, "who high above, or on high, is GOD the LORD." For that our Latin text says in vocativo, Domine Deus, gives no sense, as little as 2 Sam. 7, 19.: Ista est lex Adam, Domine Deus; which would be better: Ista est lex vel forma hominis, Domini Dei; seu, qui sit Dominus Deus etc. Enough said of that now. But because the matter is so good, and, unfortunately, we are the least of the prophets and apostles who take care of Christ, the crucified David and eternal God, we want, before we finish the last words of David, to continue talking about it, to strengthen us in our faith, to annoy all devils, Jews, Mahometists, Papists, and what is hostile to this son of David.

(60) And first of all, let us take Moses, the chief fountain, source, father, and master of all the prophets, before us, and see if he will let himself be made a Christian, and stand by us, because Christ himself baptized him, John 5:46, saying, Moses wrote of me. If he wrote of him, he certainly also prophesied and preached of him, and commanded all the prophets after him to write and preach of Christ; as they did with all diligence, so that even all the Jews, young and old, know to say that a Messiah was to come. But Moses is buried to them, so that they cannot know where he lies. Therefore we will send two faithful, certain legates or messengers.

1) Thus the Wittenbergers. Jenaer and Erlanger: to them.

2) letzten - - verabschieden.

They are called John Evangelist and Paul Apostle, and they shall seek him, find him, wake him up, and bring him here. What does it matter, they will meet and not miss! But lest you forget what I said above [Preface § 8]: I want to take care of that this time, where the Hebrew text gladly gives itself and rhymes with the New Testament, that such is and should be the one right understanding of Scripture; everything else, what Jews, Hebrews, and whoever they are, according to their destroyed 1) and mangled, forced grammatica, chat against it, shall certainly be vain lies to us.

(61) St. John begins his Gospel thus: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through the same, and without the same nothing was made that was made." These are the words of St. John, or rather of the Holy Spirit, who gives life to all things; now let us see if he can find Moses with this and raise him from the dead. For Moses heareth very softly, and cometh freely, and saith, Here am I. For even as thou, John, speakest of words, so have I spoken, and so speakest I, and thou takest the words out of my mouth. For so have I also written, in the beginning of my book, of the beginning of the creature [Gen. 1, 3. ff.]: "God said, Let there be light; and there was light. God said, Let there be a firmament among the waters. God said: Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into special places, that the dry land may be seen. God said: Let the earth bring forth grass and herbage. God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament, and let day and night be divided"; and so on.

Here Moses agrees with John that in the beginning of the creature there was a word, through which God spoke everything that is, created and made. And Moses does not lisp 2) or stammer here, nor are there any words.

dark, uncertain speeches; the Grammatica is also certain that where there is a speaker, there is a λόγος, word or speech. Whether now the Jews, heretics, Mahomet dream their own interpretation here, contrary to the Christian faith, there we ask nothing. We have the text and Grammaticam Mosis for us, which stands dry and clear, that in the beginning and apart from all creatures God has spoken, and there is one word, through which God speaks everything; as St. John writes to us, Joh. 1, 1. ff. Which gospel the dear fathers Hilarius, Augustine, Cyril 2c. have abundantly and powerfully acted upon, so that it is not necessary to write further about it now, their books are available. It is enough this time, that we see and hear here, how Moses rhymes with himself, so similar and even with John, that even the blind reason cannot deny it, but must confess according to the certain grammatica, that they both lead the same way and speech of the word, through which God created and made everything in the beginning.

63 For both Moses and John want to show how and by what instrument, or out of what God made such a great work, the whole world. But there is no tool, no wood nor stone, nothing at all, out of which the world was made; but by the Word alone were all things made. The Word, however, is not made, but it is with God in the beginning, when He made everything, as Moses says here: "God said, 'Let there be' this and that 2c. By the word, he says, all things came into being. Now, apart from the creature, nothing can be with God that is not God Himself; therefore, the Word must be God Himself, as great and powerful as God Himself, because all things are made by Him; and yet cannot be the person who speaks the Word. The speaker and the word must be two different things. Again, there must be, not two gods, because there is no more than one, right, true God, and there must be one Creator of heaven and earth, not two or three Creators or gods. Thus Moses testifies with St. John that God and the Word are certainly two distinct persons, and yet both are one Creator and God, inseparable in the one divine essence.

1) crushed - torn by dots. Cruciger: "x ipsorum puneti" et uxioibus irüsers oontortu. In English "och is the root word to stixptv - to perform in points. - Erlanger: zestiebt. - In the Wittenberg and in the Jena: "zestipten" and "zemartern".

2) In the old editions: lisbet.



64 So David read and understood Moses when he said Ps. 33, 6: "The heavens were made by the word of the Lord, and all his host by the spirit of his mouth. "Made" is the heaven and all that is in it and on it (he speaks). Dear, made of what? Out of nothing. By what? By his word, and by the spirit of his mouth. Doesn't David here also speak the same as Moses, and also wants to say with almost the same speech: God said: Let there be heaven, and there was heaven? But if heaven, 1) with all that is therein, was and is made by God's speaking or word, then without doubt the earth, with all that is therein, was and is also made by the same word. Now the Word is not heaven, nor earth, nor anything that is in it, or made with it by the Word. Therefore it must be God Himself, and yet another person of the speaker, who makes everything through the word, in some undivided essence, divine power, might and effect. But if we have the Word, we shall well find the third person, since David says here, "And by the spirit of his mouth all his host."

He says "made" only once: "The heavens were made by the word of the Lord, and all his host by the spirit of his mouth. 2) He calls three persons differently, namely the Lord, his word and his spirit; and yet he does not put more than One Maker, without any difference. It is all made. By whom? By One Maker, who is the Lord, Word, Spirit. The Lord does not make his own work special, the Word does not make his own work special, the Spirit does not make his own work special; all three distinct persons are one maker of every work; and every work is of all three persons, as of one maker or master. For as the Lord maketh heaven, so maketh the Word the same, and no other heaven; so maketh the Holy Ghost the same, and no other heaven; there is one that maketh it, and one that maketh it.

is one work that all three persons do. Again, as the Lord makes all the host of heaven by his Spirit (as the text says, "By the Spirit of the Lord is all the host of heaven made"), so the Spirit makes the same, and no other host of heaven; so also the Word makes the same, and no other host of heaven.

For this reason, a Christian is well advised, as Athanasius says in his Symbolo, not to mix the persons into one person, or to divide or separate the one divine being into three persons. For if I give a special work to each person from the outside, in the creature, where the other two should not have anything to do with it, then I have divided the one Godhead and made three gods or creators; that is wrong. Again, where I do not give a special distinction i) to any person within 3) the Godhead, or apart from and above the creature, which is not due to the other two, I have mixed the persons into one person; this is also wrong. Here belongs the rule of St. Augustine: Opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa, the works, which God has made from within the Godhead, are not to be divided, 5) that is, one should not divide the persons into the works, assigning to each one from without its different work; but one should distinguish the person from within the Godhead, and yet assign to all three from within each work without distinction.

67. so that I may give examples: The Father is my God and your God and Creator, who made me and you; the same work that I and you are, the Son also made, is both my God and your God and Creator as the Father. So, the Holy Spirit made the same work that I and you are, and is my God and your God and Creator, as well as the Father and Son. Nor are there 6) three Gods or Creators, but one God and Creator of us all. Here, with this faith, I keep myself

3) inside ----- inside.

4) "a special distinction" - a special peculiarity. Cruciger: st non Uisoomas Singrüns xersonas sinAulis suis aeu proxriotatikus.

5) In the Jena and Erlangen: "zeteiln"; in the Wittenberg: "to divide". The prefix "ze" is our "zer". Cf. h 60: "zestipt", "zemartert".

6) "it" is missing in the Erlanger.

1) The words: "and it became the sky? But is heaven" are missing in the original edition.

2) In the Wittenberg, Jena and Erlangen: "by the mouth of his spirit. In Latin, the scriptural citation is missing here.

from the heresy of Arii and his like, that I do not divide the one divine being into three gods or creators; but keep in the right Christian faith no more than the one God and Creator of all creatures.

68. Again, if I now go above and beyond the creation or creature into the intrinsic, incomprehensible essence of divine nature, I find, as the Scriptures teach me (for reason is nothing here), that the Father is another distinct person from the Son, in the one undivided eternal Godhead; his distinction is that he is Father, and has the Godhead not from the Son, nor from anyone; the Son is a distinct person from the Father, in the same one fatherly Godhead; His difference is that He is the Son, and has the Godhead not of Himself, nor of anyone, but of the Father alone, as eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit is a distinct person from the Father and the Son, in the same united Godhead; His difference is that He is the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son at the same time eternally, and having the Godhead not of Himself, nor of anyone, but both from the Father and the Son at the same time; and all this from everlasting to everlasting. Here, with this faith, I refrain from the heresy of Sabellii and his like, from Jews, Mahomet, and whoever else they are, who are smarter than God Himself, and do not mix the persons into one single person, but keep in the right Christian faith three different persons in the single, divine, eternal being, who nevertheless all three are one God, creator and agent of all things, towards us and the creatures.

69 All this is perhaps sharp or subtle to us Germans, and should remain cheaper in the schools. But because the devil stirs his tail in these last times, as if he would like to reawaken all kinds of heresy, and the world has become lustful and mad without it. Since we are tired of hearing new things, and weary of sound doctrine (as St. Paul prophesies in 2 Timothy 4:3), so that the devil's doors are open for him to lead in whatever he wants, it is useful and necessary that some, both laymen and scholars, especially pastors, preachers and schoolmasters, should also think of learning such necessary articles of our faith, and learn German.

talk. But if it be too hard for him, let him keep the catechism with the children, and pray against the devil and his heresy, against the Jews and Mahomet, lest he be led into temptation. Therefore, because we have come to this, we want to give those who like it more understanding of the article, that the one Godhead should not be separated, nor the persons mixed together, to strengthen and confess our faith.

(70) At the Jordan, when St. John baptized the Lord, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended bodily in the form of a dove, and the Father's voice was heard: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Luc. 3:22. Here the dove is a creature, which not only the Holy Spirit created, but also the Father and Son; as said that opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa: what is creature, God made Father, Son and Holy Spirit at the same time, as one God; nor is the dove called the Holy Spirit alone, or, as Lucas says, the Holy Spirit alone descended in the form of the dove, and in no way would the Christian faith suffer that you would say of the dove: This is God the Father, or this is God the Son; but you must say: This is God the Holy Spirit; although God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one God; that you quite rightly say of the dove: This is God, and is no other God; and yet wrongly say: This is God the Father, or God the Son; but you must say: This is God the Holy Spirit.

So the voice that speaks, "This is my dear Son," 2c. is a creature that not only the Father created, but also the Son and Holy Spirit, as said in Opera Trinitatis, etc., that apart from the Godhead all creatures are created at the same time by all three Persons, as by one God, and all three Persons are one God to the creature. And again, the creatures are one against the three persons, and not three works, nor is called and is the same voice of the Father alone; and cannot, as a Christian, say here of the voice: This is God the Holy Spirit, or: This is God the Son, but must say: This is God the Father; although God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Father, are one.

the Holy Spirit and God the Son and God the Father is one God; that you quite rightly say of the voice: This is God, and there is no other God; but wrongly say, This is God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit; but must say, This is God the Father.

(72) The same is to be said of the humanity of Christ, which is in itself a true creature, created at the same time by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and is not to be suffered to believe that the Father alone, or the Son alone, or the Holy Spirit alone, created this creature or humanity; but is an opus indivisum Trinitatis, a work which all three Persons created as one God and Creator of one work; as the angel Gabriel says to the Virgin Mary, Luc. 1, 35: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you." Not only is the Holy Spirit upon you (he says), but also "the Most High"; that is, the Father will overshadow you with his power, that is, through his Son or Word; also so "that which is born in you shall be and be called the Son of the Most High," that thus the whole Trinity is here as one Creator, and has created and made the one work, mankind, and yet the Person of the Son alone is united with it, and became man, not the Father, nor Holy Spirit.

73. and you cannot say of this man: This is God the Father; or: This is God the Holy Spirit; but you must say: This is God the Son; although God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is one God, so that you quite rightly say of the man: This is God, and there is no other God; but you are wrong to say: This is God the 1) Father, or God the Holy Spirit, but you must say: This is God the Son; as St. Paul Col. 2, 9. says: "For in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead," and yet the Father and the Holy Spirit are not deprived of the same Godhead, but are one God with the Son and the Man Christ. From this you see how the three divine persons are different, inwardly of the Godhead, to

and not to be mixed into one person, and yet not to separate the divine one being, or to make three gods; but outwardly, against the creature, to be one creator, so completely united, that also the creature, if the persons take on themselves differently, are of all three persons as one God's one work.

The doctors, especially Bonaventure, give a rough simile to understand such a thing. As: If three virgins put on a garment among themselves, all three of them attacking the garment and putting it on the third, and the third herself also attacking it in the same way: then all three put on the garment of the third, and yet only the third is clothed with the garment, and not the other two. Thus it is to be understood here that all three persons, as one unified God, created the unified humanity and united it with the Son in His person, that only the Son is man, and not the Father, nor the Holy Spirit. In the same way, one should understand the dove, which takes on the person of the Holy Spirit, and the voice, which takes on the person of the Father. Item, the fiery tongues on the day of Pentecost, in which the person of the Holy Spirit is revealed. Item, the wind, and what more is preached of the Holy Spirit, that he should do in Christendom or the Scriptures.

(75) Here the question arises: Why then do we say, or rather, why does the Scripture teach us to say, "I believe in God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth, and do not also call the Son Creator? Item: In Jesus Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Item: That the Holy Spirit gives life, and has spoken through the prophets. Here the persons are outwardly assigned their special different works, as they themselves are distinguished. This is perhaps too sharp for simple-minded Christians, who may stick to their simple-minded belief that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit One God 2c. But one must speak of this in Christianity, and learn to resist the devil and his heretics. First of all, it is 2) certain that God wants to be known by us here in faith, there

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1) "the" is missing in the Erlanger.

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2) "it" is missing in the Erlanger.

eternally in sight, as he is one God, and yet three persons; this is our eternal life, John 17:3. For this purpose he has given us his word and the holy scriptures, confirmed with great miraculous signs and works, that we should learn therein. For, if we were to know Him in this way, He would have to 1) truly teach us and reveal Himself to us and appear, so that we would not ascend to heaven on our own and find out what God is or what His divine nature is like. Well, for this he visibly needs his creature, as the Scriptures teach us, so that we may grasp it, for invisible creatures do not move our senses.

76 Accordingly, you must now view the creature in two ways. In the first way, as a creature or work in itself, absolute, so and so created or made by God. In this way, all creatures of God, that is, of all three persons, are one and the same work, without any difference; as has been said. For in this way they do not give us a different revelation of the three persons, because they are all the same work of the three persons, as of the one God. Secondly, you must look at them, not at themselves, absolute, but relative, according to their custom, as God uses them towards us. Here, God takes His creature, which has created all three persons, as a unified God, and needs it for an image or form, or shape, in which He reveals Himself and appears. Here are different images, shape, or revelation of the three different persons. So he needs the dove to be an image or revelation, in which the Holy Spirit reveals himself; and is a different image, which does not show the Father nor Son to us, but only the Holy Spirit, different. For the Father, Son and Holy Spirit wants the dove to show and reveal to us the Person of the Holy Spirit alone, so that we may be certain that God's one Being is certainly three distinct Persons from eternity. Therefore Lucas Cap. 3, 22: "The Holy Spirit descended in bodily form, like a dove."

(77) In the same way we speak of the Son, that he is revealed to us in mankind, or, as it were.

1) So the Jena and the Latin. Wittenberg and Erlangen: would have to.

St. Paul Phil. 2, 7. speaks in a servile form, grounded like another human being. And this form, or humanity, is not the image or revelation of the Father or the Holy Spirit, although it is the same creature of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, but it is a different form and revelation of the Son alone. For so it pleased God, that is, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that the Son through this form or shape of humanity would be revealed and recognized among men as a distinct person from the Father and Holy Spirit, in one eternal unified being of divine nature. The same is to be said of the Father, that he is revealed to us in the voice. This form or shape is not the Son's or Holy Spirit's form or revelation, but only the Father's, who in such different form has wished to be known to us as a distinct person from the Son and Holy Spirit, in one undivided divine being.

78 Take also from the Grammatica a rough example. When the priest baptizes, or absolves, and says, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." These words are all God's creation and work in our mouths (as well as we ourselves and what we have), and are not different from the Father alone, or the Son alone, or the Holy Spirit alone, but from all three persons, the one God's one creature. But according to the interpretation or revelation, you must not say that this word "of the Father" means all three persons, but differentially the Father alone; the word "of the Son" differentially the Son alone; the word "of the Holy Spirit" differentially the Holy Spirit alone, in one unified Godhead, which is revealed to us by such words or interpretation, that three different persons are in the unified Godhead. For he saith not, In the names, as of many, or as if every person had a distinct name and essence; but "in the name" (saith he) as in One name of One essence, and yet three distinct persons.

79] So you see that the creature is to be regarded in two ways, ut res et signum, that it is something for itself, given by God.

and is also used to show or teach something else that it is not itself. Smoke is a res, a thing by itself, and yet also a sign of another thing which it is not, but shows and reveals the same, namely fire. Of this St. Augustine writes much de doctrina christiana; but here, in this high matter, it is something more. For the humanity of Christ is not a bad sign, or a living form, just as the dove is not a living form, and the voice is not a living form or image; but the humanity, in which God's Son is revealed differently, is full, and united with God in One Person, who will eternally sit at the right hand of God in His kingdom, as promised to David, 1 Chron. 18, 12. 18, 12. The dove is a form, taken by the Holy Spirit for a time, to reveal itself; not united with Him in One Person eternally, but left again; like the angels take human form, appear in it, and leave again. So it is also done with the voice of the Father. For there is no promise that it should remain forever, but it is a temporal revelation.

80. Now, when we speak in child faith: "I believe in God the Father, Almighty Creator of heaven and earth," is not the opinion that the Person of the Father alone should be Almighty, Creator and Father, but that the Son is also Almighty, Creator and Father; the Holy Spirit also Almighty, Creator and Father; and yet not three Almighty, Creator, Fathers, but one Almighty, Creator, Father of heaven and earth, and of us all, just as the Father is our Savior and Redeemer, the Son our Savior and Redeemer, the Holy Spirit our Savior and Redeemer, and yet not three Saviors nor Redeemers, but one Savior and Redeemer. Just as the Father is our God, the Son our God, the Holy Spirit our God, yet not three Gods, but one God: so the Holy Spirit sanctifies Christianity, the Father also, the Son also, yet are not three saints or sanctifiers, but one sanctifier 2c. Opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa...

(81) But all this is said so that we may believe and recognize the three persons in the one Godhead, and not mix the persons, nor separate the essence. The distinction of the Father (as we have heard [§ 68]) is that he has the Godhead from no one, but has given it from eternity, through the eternal birth, to the Son. Therefore the Son is God and Creator, like the Father; but he has all this from the Father, not again, the Father from the Son. For that the Father is God and Creator, he did not get that from the Son; but that the Son is God and Creator, he got that from the Father. So the Father or the Son does not get from the Holy Spirit that he is God and Creator; but that the Holy Spirit is God and Creator, that he gets from the Father and the Son. So the word "God Almighty, Creator" is written for the Father, and not for the Son and Holy Spirit, to note the difference of the Father from the Son and Holy Spirit in the Godhead. Again, the difference of the Son from the Father and Holy Spirit, 1) of the Holy Spirit from the Father and Son; namely, that the Father is the origin or source (so it should be called, as the Fathers do) of the Godhead, from whom the Son has it, and the Holy Spirit from the Son and Father for ever; and not again.

82) Above such inward difference of persons is now the outward difference, since the Son and Holy Spirit is revealed inwardly. The Son in humanity; for the Son alone became man, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Mary the Virgin, suffered for us, died 2c. as faith teaches further. But that nevertheless rightly means: God died for us. For the Son is God, and is no longer another God, but more persons in the same Godhead. The Holy Spirit alone is manifested differently in the fiery tongues, gifts, various tongues and miraculous signs 2c., although mankind is made of all three persons, and the fiery tongues, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, of all three per

It The words: "in the Godhead. Again, the difference of the Son from the Father and Holy Spirit" are missing in the original edition.

The first is that they are the creature and the work of others, as has been said enough for this time. One has delicious books about this, St. Augustine, Hilarii, Cyrilli, and such articles have remained pure in the papacy and among the school theologians that we have no quarrel with them about this.

Here some are concerned whether they call the person of the Father when they pray "Our Father" or the divine being? It is no wonder that, in this whimsical, incomprehensible article, whimsical thoughts occur to a man, one of which sometimes fails, or a word fails. But where the foundation of faith remains firm, such splinters, shavings or straws will not harm us. But the reason for faith (as stated in § 66 ff.) is that you believe that there are three persons in the one Godhead, and that each person is the same one perfect God; so that the persons are not mixed, the essence is not divided, but the difference of the persons and the unity of the essence remain. For this is that the angels for ever cannot be satisfied (as St. Peter [1 Ep. 1, 12] says) with seeing and marveling, and are eternally blessed; and if they could see it to the end, their blessedness would also be over and have an end; as we also shall see this, and thereby be eternally blessed, as the Lord says Jn. 17, 3: "This is life eternal, that they may know thee, and him whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ." However, faith must hold to the word; reason can do nothing here, except to say that it is impossible, and contrary to itself, that three persons, each one a perfect God, and yet no more than a single God, and the Son alone a man; but to him who has the Father and Son, the Holy Spirit will well be known, from the Father and the Son.

84. so you have heard above [§ § 67. 80] that the Father is all our God and Father, the Son is all our God and Father, the Holy Spirit is all our God and Father; and yet is not more than one single God our Father. For the essence is undivided; therefore, whichever person you call, you have called the right one God in three persons, because each person is the same one complete God, and cannot err or fail in this. For Jesus Christ is not a

The Father and the Holy Spirit are not another God or Father or Creator, because the Father and the Holy Spirit are, even though they are another person. The Father and the Holy Spirit are also like that.

Therefore, it is not only wrong, but also impossible and void, that you would call the person of the Father, as the distinct person, Father, and not call the Son and Holy Spirit at the same time Father; for that would mean the divine essence separated, and the Son and Holy Spirit excluded. This is nothing. For according to such a way of personal fatherhood, the Father has no more than One Son, and the Son no more than One Father. He is not such a Father to you, and you are not such His Son; but this is the only Son from the Father forever, as the 2nd Psalm, v. 7, says: "The Lord said to me, 'You are my Son, today I have given birth to you'; but you are, according to your age, thirty, forty, fifty years, as long as you have been created and baptized, a temporal Son of all three Persons, One God. Quia opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa; sic cultus Trinitatis ad extra est indivisus; what God does to the creature, all three persons do without distinction.

For there is one divine essence of all three persons, and what we or the creature do to any person, we do to the one God, and to all three persons without distinction. For he is one God toward us, and in himself three persons distinct; as the Lord Christ himself says John 14:9, 10: "Philip, he who sees me sees the Father; how then do you say: Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" Joh. 5, 23. "They shall honor the Son, even as the Father." Joh. 10, 30. 31.: "I and the Father are One"; that is what we speak: One Thing, One Being, One God, One Lord. Here the Jews dug up stones and wanted to stone Him. Joh. 5, 17: "My Father works, or creates until now, and I also work"; therefore the Jews rather sought to kill him, that he not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was his Father, and made himself equal to God 2c., Joh. 10, 33. I will stop now, because I wanted to write a book, so I got into preaching:

Read the Gospel of John, which teaches us all these things abundantly.

Now we have Moses agreeing with St. John that there was a Word in the beginning by which all things were made, and that such a Word could not be a creature or made, and yet be something other, or another Person, than God, of whom such a Word is. For since it is not made, but all things are made by it, it must be God, Creator of all creatures, since it is certain that apart from the creature that is made, there can be nothing but God who makes it; and yet the Word, the God and Creator by whom all things are made, is other than the speaker, or who speaks such a word. Hereby Moses became our witness and a Christian, teaching the very thing that we Christians teach, namely, that God had a Word in the beginning by which all things were made, as John writes.

Now let us also hear the other legate, Saint Paul, recently greeting and calling Moses. Col. 1, 15. ff. he speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ thus: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn before all creatures. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are of the earth, visible and invisible; both thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and authorities; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all, and all things consist in him." These words could not have been spoken by Christ after mankind, that is certain; for he was not man before all creatures, but is Heuer 1543 year that he became man. And truly this is a mighty and clear saying, that Christ is an eternal God, Creator of heaven and earth, and that still today and forever all things exist, are preserved, or are made through Him, even all things that are high in heaven and earth, angels and spirits, visible and invisible. In this he agrees with John, when he says in Cap. 1, 3: "All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made." If Moses hears and confesses the words of John, he certainly also hears and confesses these words of Paul, and says: "Yes, my dear Paul, just as you and John say, so I also wrote that all things were created by the Word, Gen. 1, 3. ff.

89. further Paul says 1 Cor. 10, 4: "They drank of the spiritual rock that went with them, but the rock was Christ". If Christ was at that time the one who went with the children of Israel, and from whom they drank spiritually and were baptized spiritually, that is, if they had the same faith with us in the future Christ who has now appeared to us, then Christ must be the true eternal God. For one cannot believe in the angels, which is due to God alone, nor can they be our spiritual food; God Himself must be. Item, there 1 Cor. 10. he says, v. 9: "Let us not tempt Christ, as some tempted [him], and were slain of serpents." What is to be done here? Moses writes everywhere that it is the LORD Jehovah, the right one God, whom the children of Israel tempted, Ex. 17:2: "Why do you tempt the LORD?" 4 Mos. 14, 22. Says the LORD, "They have tempted me ten times." If it is the Lord, as Moses writes, how can it be Christ, as Paul writes? Now they must both write rightly; for the Holy Spirit is not contrary to Himself.

90. From this it follows tremendously and irrefutably that the God who led the people of Israel out of Egypt and through the Red Sea, guided them in the desert through the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire, fed them with the bread of heaven, and performed all the miracles described by Moses in his books; item, who brought them into the land of Canaan, and therein gave them kings and priesthood and all things, is the very God, and none other than Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary the Virgin, whom we Christians call our God and Lord, whom the Jews crucified, and still today blaspheme and curse, as Isaiah Cap. 8, 21: "In their fear they will curse their king and their God. Item, it is he who gives Mosi the ten commandments on Mount Sinai, and says Ex. 20, 2. 3.: "I, the LORD, am your God, who brought you out of Egypt; you shall have no other gods before me." Yes, JESus Nazarene, died on the cross for us, is the GOOD who speaks in the first commandment: "I, the LORD, am your GOOD." If the Jews and Mahomet should hear such, how they should rave! Nevertheless, it is true, and

must remain true forever, and he who does not believe it must tremble and burn forever.

91. for Moses stands clear, saying that by the saying, or word, of God all things were made; and David Ps. 33:6: "The heavens were made by the word of God. If the heavens are made by the word, then all other creatures are made by it; for he who makes one creature makes them all; he who does not make them all will not be able to make any. And so Moses and David agree with Johanne and Paulo, who also both say alike with them, "All things were created and made by the Word," or by Christ." Now if all things were made through him, and without him nothing was made, as the text of all four, Moses, David, John, and Paul, says; then under that which they call "all things" must be included, and not excluded, the exportation out of Egypt, and what more was done in the people of Israel; yea, all things that have been done everywhere from the beginning of creatures, are still being done, and will be done henceforth. For they are great and important words, saying, "All things were made by him." And as Moses says, "God said, Let there be; and there was." Although Moses does not name the Son, or Christ, according to the Grammatica, yet he names and confesses the saying, or Word, by which all things were made; so that he indicates that in GOD there is another who speaks, and another who is the Word, and yet is one Creator of all creatures. For something must also be reserved for the New Testament, in which the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are more clearly named, which 1) in the Old Testament God is called the Speaker, the Word, and the Spirit of the Lord.

Therefore the Jews, Turks and heretics do not help that they pretend to great devotion and boast against us Christians how they believe in the one God, Creator of heaven and earth, and also call Him Father with great earnestness, and yet it is nothing but vain, useless words, in which they use the name of God uselessly and misuse it against the other commandment; as Christ says John 8:54 to the Jews: "It is my Father who honors me, whom you say is your God, and you know him. 8, 54. to the Jews: "It is my Father who honors me, whom you say is your God, and you know him.

1) so. Trinity. Cruciger: yui, related a "f the previously inserted by him" vsus.

him not." Indeed, this rhymes very badly, calling the Father God, and not knowing who he is. For if you were to ask such a great holy 2) Jew, Turk, heretic, whether he also believes 3) that the same one God, Creator of heaven and earth (whose name they so devoutly praise and call Father, though all falsely), is also a Father, and has a Son apart from the creature in the Godhead? he would be terrified of great holiness, and consider such a thing an abominable blasphemy. If you ask further: whether this same God, Creator, Father (whom they thus call with their lying mouth), is also a son, and has a father in the Godhead? then he would plug his ears with great devotion, grit his teeth, 4) and worry that the earth would devour you and him. If you ask further: whether this same God, Creator, Father (as they boast), is also a Holy Spirit, and has the Father and Son, from whom he has his divine nature? then the most holy man would run away from you, as if you were the worst devil out of hell.

Here you see that they do not know what God is; and when they call Him: GOD, Creator, Father, they do not know what they say. For where God is not to be such a God (as the Scriptures teach us), who is a natural Father, a natural Son, and both have a natural Holy Spirit, in the one divine essence, God is nothing, and no God at all. Therefore, they have no God without taking God's name in vain and with sins, and invent for themselves their own God and Creator, who shall be their Father and they his children; take from him his natural fatherhood, his natural united son, and the natural Holy Spirit, that is, the whole right Godhead, and give him in exchange their vain dream and lies of God, Creator, Father; yes, such holy name of God they give to their dream and lies, that is, to the devil, who is their God and Father, a father of all lies; want to

2) Cruciger: vnläs sanotus 4uäsau8 stv. In the German editions: "such great saints, Jews" 2c.

3) In the German editions: "gleubet"; Cruciger: ersäatlls.

4) Cruciger: äsn titrus inkrsnäst---he would grind dtü teeth.



nevertheless be the dearest little children and greatest" saints.

94. For it has been decided, and thus God Himself has revealed Himself to us, that He is one God, Creator and Father of heaven and earth; and the same one God, Creator and Father of all the world, is a natural Father of one Son in the Godhead; and the same one God, Creator and Father of all the world, is one natural Son of the Father in the Godhead; and the same one God, Creator and Father of all the world, is a Holy Spirit, of the Father and Son in the Godhead. For the three distinct persons are one God, Creator and Father of all the world; and each person is the same complete one God, Creator and Father of all the world. And when you call upon Jesus Christ, and say: O my dear Lord God, my Creator and Father, Jesus Christ, you one eternal God! you must not worry 1) that the Father and the Holy Spirit will be angry about it; but realize 2) that whichever person you call upon, you call upon all three persons, and upon the one God; for you cannot call upon one person without the others, since there is a single, undivided divine essence in all, and in each person. Again, you cannot deny any person in particular, there are all three and the one God denied altogether; as 1 John 2:23 says, "He that denieth the Son hath not the Father."

95 Yes, I say, it is not wrong, but well done, if you call upon Jesus Christ in this way, just as the church also sings of the Holy Spirit: Veni Pater pauperum, come, you Father of the miserable. But it is better to keep the order of the persons, and not to despise, as the apostles do, and the church does according to their example, when they name the person of the Father in the invocation or prayer, as in the Lord's Prayer 2c. For he is the origin or fountain (as it can be called) of the Godhead in the Son and Holy Spirit, and the Son (when the Father is named) cannot be separated, but must be named at the same time.

and meant. So also, the Holy Spirit must be named and meant with the Father and the Son, because no person can be a special God apart from the other. Thus St. Paul [2 Cor. 1, 3] and St. Peter [1 Ep. 1, 3] say: "Praise be to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of all graces"; and he himself in the Gospel always prefigures the Father, and ascribes everything to him, and yet says, Joh. 5, 23. that they should honor the Son as the Father; item, Joh. 16, 15.: "All that the Father has is mine"; without the Father being the first person from whom the Son has it; and not again. But that some sins are committed differently against the Father, against the Son, and in the Holy Spirit, belongs to the revelation of the persons, not to the separation of the essence, of which a little has been said above, and more elsewhere,

(96) But how shall we do this, since St. John continues to write of the word, saying, "The Word became flesh. This will not rhyme with the word of which Moses writes, "God said, Let there be light"; or of which David says, "The heavens were made by the word of the Lord." So Moses, or the Word Himself (as we believe), commanded on Mount Sinai, Ex. 20:4, that no image or likeness should be made to Him, either in heaven or on earth; and John makes not an image, but a creature and man of it, saying [John 1:14], "The Word was made man." Paul does the same, and says [Rom. 1, 3. Gal. 4, 4.]: "He is the Son of David, or seed, born of a woman's image." Therefore Moses must speak of another word by which all things were created. By a man, who is himself a creature, nothing can be created. Also Paul and John are against themselves, that they make him a man, and yet say that all things were created by him.

97 Let us see if Moses can be found to say this. In Genesis 3:15 he writes that God said to the serpent: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. It is obvious that God is not talking here about a common serpent that lives in the grass or in the water.

1) Walch and the Erlanger: say".  
2) We have assumed with Cruciger "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" as subject to "recognize". He translates: st totin ciivinitntsin nAnosesrs st vslut nntsStari.

It is not a bad, silly snake that eats frogs, but the serpent, which at that time was a beautiful animal and had a high spirit with it, which could not only speak, but also speak of high, divine things and commandments, as if it had learned it in heaven, which is not given to any creature, except the angels and men, and thereby does such harm that it causes man to fall into sin and eternal death, through the most beautiful appearance of the divine name. This is not a bad, silly little snake that eats frogs, but devours the whole world. It is the sorrowful devil in the serpent, who brought death into the world through sin. God speaks of this death-slayer and sin-master and world-eater that his head shall be crushed, that is, his power, death and sin shall be destroyed, life and righteousness shall be brought back.

98 And the seed of the woman shall do this. And as he fell man by a woman, which came from man without a woman, so shall the seed, which shall come from woman without a man, fall him again. This seed of the woman will have to be a man and a son; for in the Scriptures "man's seed" is called the fruit which is a son of a man (as is known), and it is quite special in this place that this child or man is called "woman's seed". Otherwise "seed" is called everywhere the man's or father's seed, as, Abraham's seed, David's seed, and so on, through and through, in Moses and the prophets "seed" is called the man's seed; that Moses in this place reads just like Lucas and Matthew, that this woman shall be a virgin, who without a man shall become a mother of her own seed alone. And because this rhymes with the New Testament, we Christians, according to the established rule, should not allow either Jews or devils to have any other understanding.

99. Summa, this seed of a woman shall be a man, that is certain; in addition, he must truly be God, or Moses will be an idolatrous prophet of the devil. For he gives this seed the power that belongs to God alone and to no creature, namely, that he should put away death and the slayer, sin and God's wrath, and restore righteousness and life.

bring. Dear, this no angel, nor all angels together will not do; it must be a higher, mightier man than all angels and all creatures are. A damned idolatrous prophet (I still say once) must be Moses, if he gives such works, which strangle and overcome death and sin, 1) to make alive and righteous, to a woman's seed, which is a mere creature, and not itself the one God, who alone can make alive, 2) as Joh. 1, 4. says of the word: "In him was life."

100. Reason itself must confess that whoever can subdue death can also restore life; whoever can subdue sin can restore righteousness; since to take away death is no different than to restore life; to take away sin is no different than to restore righteousness, of which the serpent (the devil in the serpent) brought Adam and Eve, along with all their descendants and children of men, evil, and by his lies fell into sin and death; as the text clearly states Gen. 2, 17: "You shall not eat of the tree, or you shall die." Against this the liar and murderer says Gen. 3, 4: "You may eat from it, and you will not die, but you will become like God and know everything. That is (as said above [§ 97]) all about sins and death, which the serpent has created and caused. Therefore, the serpent's subversion must be nothing else than destroying his work and power; as Paul says that Christ destroyed death and brought life to light, 2 Tim. 1, 10. What Jews, Mahomet, and others here make up with their glosses, we pay no attention to. Moses agrees here with the New Testament, that is enough for us.

Adam and Eve also had such a mind, that the seed of the woman must be God, who should crush the head of the devil. For Gen. 4, 1. when Eve gave birth to Cain, she thought, perhaps because 3) the

1) Erlanger: overcome.

2) In the original is missing: can.

3) In the editions is so interpingirt, as we think for it, wrong: "thought she perhaps, because" 2c., because Luther says: "Such mind has Adam and Eve had", not: perhaps had. In Latin "perhaps" is not expressed.

firstborn man on earth, he would be the best, and thought he should be the seed of the woman, but she the mother, or the woman; therefore she says, "I have the man, the LORD"; as if to say, This will be the man, the LORD, of whom GOD has spoken, the woman's seed 2c. Call the child a man and HErrn, or GOtt; for here stands the great and own name of GOtt, Jehovah, which means nothing else but GOtt Himself alone in His nature or being; and XXX, which, where it stands alone, without a woman, does not mean badly a man-image, as all men are; but a Ausbund and distinguished man; as we Germans also say: This is a man! That wants to become a man! So Eva wants here: I have born a son, he will become a man, yes, he is the man, God Himself, who shall do it, and tread down the serpent, as God has spoken to us. How is it possible? how can it be possible for her to speak of her child in this way: I have the man, the Lord, when she had not understood the saying that the seed of the woman must be God, who should do what God had spoken?

She will not have understood it like this alone, but Adam will have talked with her about it long before, and will have practiced this saying among themselves, and will have comforted themselves against sin and death, which should be taken away by this seed, and the innocence and life of the lost should be brought back; otherwise they would have despaired. So God's will is not yet wise, that his outward word (like this) should be spoken in vain and not be understood by anyone; as he says Isa. 55, 11: "My word shall not return to me empty, but I will send it. Now there were only two people here, Adam and Eve, who could understand it, therefore they must have understood it fruitfully, blessedly and rightly, however, as we Christians, and before that all prophets have understood it.

103. In this the dear wretched mother Eve is lacking, that she thinks she is the woman, because there is no other woman on earth but she alone; and with great desire and longing she hopes that her son shall be the seed, the husband of Jehovah. This is too soon and too much hastened; but [she].

is not to be blamed that she would like to be rid of the sins and death, that is, of the devil soon. But God did not say to her: Your seed shall do it; also not to Adam: Your wife's seed shall be it, but reads to both of them their good text, which all human children still feel, until the end of the world. But to the serpent he turns, and says: I will again create for thee a tramp on the head, which shall be the seed of a woman; I will fell thee haughty, mighty, evil spirit by the son of man, that again all men shall run over thee and trample thee under their feet, as thou hast now trampled Adam and Eve under thee. This has done, is doing, and will do forever, our dear Lord Jesus Christ, with God the Father One Jehovah, Amen.

Here someone would like to say: How is it possible that neither a Christian nor a Jew has seen this in this place? Because the interpreters all do it differently. The Latin therefore: "I have received a man through God". 1) The other Hebrew thus: I got the man from the Lord. I do not ask now. I have above [Preface § 9] often conditioned, I want to have this time no master, but indicate my opinion in interpretation. If no one likes it, it is enough that [it] pleases only one. The Hebrew word XX is "the" or "the", and is an article accusativi, as all grammatici must confess. When Genesis Cap. 1, 1. says: "In the beginning God created XX heavens, and XX earth": that means in German: the heavens and the earth, and always so, in that and the following chapter. As "Adam recognized XX Heva, his wife". "Heva gave birth to XX Cain." Item, further she bore XXX Habel, his brother. Item, Adam begat XX Seth; Seth begat XX Enos; and so on. Just according to the manner Eve speaks here, since she had born Cain: XXXXXXXXX: I have got the man, the Lord. For she hopes (as said), Cain should be the seed, which was promised by God to crush the serpent's head.

105 And I know for certain, when the worst

1) Thus the old rationalists (e.g. Gesenius) and some newer Lutheran theologians, e.g. Köstlin, Martin Luther (3rd ed.), vol. II, p. 602, who calls Luther's translation and interpretation an "exegetical aberration".

Jews, who crucified Christ, or would be even worse than those, who would like to crucify him even now much more cruel; as one says of those, who crucified a cat in Hungary at Ofen the other day together with the Turks and carried it away, to mock God, our Lord Jesus Christ, with many shameful blasphemous words: such wicked, poisonous GOD and cat crucifiers, if they could believe, or had to confess (without faith) the truth of the language otherwise, they would say thus: Yes, you cursed goyim, if it were true that the seed of the woman was God and man, then we ourselves would well know that the text rhymes from the measure of his, since Eve speaks: "I have gotten the man, the Jehovah", and freely confess that the language gladly and finely gives that this son, the man and God, the Lord, would be. But what one interprets differently here, as: I got the man through the Lord, or from the Lord, or with the Lord, is a forced, naughty thing, and not the right kind and nature of language, nor can anyone else prove it. Yes, in this way the wicked people would have to confess. But since they cannot stand that God is man born of a female image, this text and the whole of Scripture must be wrong, or have them make another nose.

(106) In the same way, all other Hebrew scholars, if they look at the text correctly, would have to confess that this woman's seed is Jehovah, that is, God and man. For that this little word XX means "the" or "the", and is a nota accusativi, that is proven, convinced, known by all Hebrews, Jews and Christians in all grammars. But that it should also be ad, de, vel cum, of, or with, or through, is still unproven, and should probably remain unproven. For on the examples they lead from Rabbi Kimhi, or from Scripture, it can easily be said that the Hebrew language has never come up again, and the Jews cannot know virtutem omnium vocabulorum, sicut res ostendit; much less do they know vim phrasis, figurarum et idiotismorum; but they doubt, equivocir, grope, and seek, as an unlearned organist seeks the claves or organ pipes, and asks: Is it you, is it you?

For, as teachers of the Latin language write, it is much another thing to speak Latin, and to speak grammatically: so also it is much another thing to speak Hebrew, and to speak grammatically. Grammatically they may speak, but very unfinished; but Hebrew, pure, good, and finished speaking, is now impossible. Everyone learns German, or other languages, much better from oral speech, at home, in the marketplace, and in sermons, than from books. The letters are dead words, the oral speech are living words, which do not give themselves so actually and well in writing, as the spirit or soul of man gives them through the mouth. As St. Jerome writes of Demosthene and Aeschine in prologo, and of Livio: Habet, nescio quid, latentis energiae viva vox. Especially this is no good, since they pretend that XX may be called de, a, ab, that is, from; as: I got the man from the Lord; because the examples 1 Mos. 44, 4. 2 Mos. 9, 29.: Egressi XX urbe, and the like, do not do it; because one says quite well: Egressus urbem, aedificavit lapides in altare, but appositive.

But that Moses also writes, Gen. 5, 22. and 6, 9.: Enoch ambulavit nx Deum, Noha ambulavit XX Deum; that they interpret: Enoch and Noah walked with GOD; this is no good, and does not read. Where did they walk with God? Towards the morning or towards the evening? It should be: ambulavit Deum, in accusativo; as the Latin also speak so: Vixit Sardanapalum; qui Curios<sup>1</sup>) simulant et bachanalia vivunt; exiit patrem; sic: Noha ambulavit Deum, id est, divinam viam, duxit vitam divinam; gessit et fecit opus Dei. So also St. Paul speaks Gal. 1, 10.: An suadeo Deum, vel homines? id est: An doceo divina vel humana? Ibidem Cap. 2, 20: Quod vivo. Rom. 6, 10: Quod vivit, vivit Deo. Idem 1 Petr. 4, 6. this and all more I know the Hebrews; as, 1 Mos. 39, 2.: The Lord was XX Joseph, with Joseph. Here we Germans must say so, but it does not give the accusativum well, and yet is accusativi nota in Ebraeo; it shall remain so. That is enough of the saying, since

1) Ouilos Dsntatus, the "defeater" of Pßrrhus, known for his great temperance.

943 Eve, or rather Moses, agrees with the New Testament that this seed of the woman is Jehovah, and understood by her and Moses thus, otherwise they both might well have spoken it differently.

109) Here also belongs the saying of Moses, Gen. 22, 18, where God promises Abraham with an oath, saying: "In your seed all XXX (Gentiles) on earth shall be blessed. Here the word XXX is written so that the present Jews (are they otherwise Jews) may revile and curse us, precisely so that we may boast of this blessing that God promises to Abraham, saying, "All XXX shall be blessed in your seed"; but they, the circumcised saints, want us Gentiles to be cursed, and they alone to be the seed of Abraha. But because they curse the Gentiles, and are such a seed by which all the Gentiles are cursed, it is evident that they are not Abraham's seed, but the devil's seed. For it is God, whose judgment is right and certain, who says that Abraham's seed shall not curse the Gentiles, as they do, but all the Gentiles shall be blessed in him; as has been done for 1543 years, and will be done until eternity.

Now, this blessing is not a human blessing, as one blesses with words, or wishes good morning or evening, for man cannot bless in any other way. Nor is it a devilish blessing, so that sorceresses bless children, cattle and the like, that they may prosper and be protected from misfortune. Neither is it a Jewish blessing, which is to be powerful and do wonders through the Shamhaperes 1) and their sorcery, with letters and figures, or God's name tetragrammaton; as the Turks' blessing is also the devil's blessing and idolatry, since they bless each other with letters and words in the fight, against iron and all weapons. Neither is it a papal blessing, which charms the water and wax, that they should become holy water and Agnus Dei, and get and help many virtues above their natural virtue: but it is a divine blessing, which GOD alone

1) Bergleiche Luther's writing of the Shem Hamphoras, St. Louis edition, vol. XX, 2051, K 60. In K 146 of this writing, "Schamhafteres" is correctly found, while the editions here offer "Schemhaperes".

can and will give. Such a blessing is not a mere word that gives us good morning or wishes us good morning, and nothing follows from it, but gives and creates everything that it speaks. As Gen. 1, 28. God blessed all animals and men, and said: XXXX XXX: "Be fruitful, and multiply." There it does not remain with the bare word, but follows from it the work, namely that animals and humans became fruitful, and multiplied, until they filled the world. And such a blessing stands and continues until the end of the world. For by such we are what we are and have, in body, soul, goods, and all that is or will be.

So this divine blessing, promised in Abraham's seed, is also a real, actual, living blessing, which creates what it says or blesses. For it is promised and given against the curse into which the serpent has plunged us through Adam's disobedience and sin, and herewith the promise of the woman's seed is negated, and is now to be called Abraham's seed; as it became David's seed afterward, and finally the virgin's seed. Therefore, "blessing in the seed of Abraham" means as much here as it does above [Gen. 3:15]: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent," that is, it shall take away sin and death, and bring back innocence and life. For sin and death is the curse under which we would have to lie forever, unless we were blessed again through this seed, that is, made alive and righteous, holy and blessed. Yes, so we are blessed in this seed of Abraham; yes, we boast of the blessing of Goyim, and accept it by faith, are very hopeful, proud and splendid against the devil, his power, death and sin, and all that is more; thus we sing and say: In the seed of Abraham, David and Mary the woman, we have forgiveness of sins, remission of sins, redemption from sins, salvation from death and all evil: "For he is made unto us of God", 1 Cor. 1, 30, "our righteousness, our wisdom, our redemption, our sanctification", our blessing, our comfort, life and joy forever. Praise be to God for ever and ever, Amen.

112. now shall this seed of abraham sol-

If the God of God is able to give and create a strong and substantial blessing among the nations, he will not have to be a mere man who cannot say more than "Good morning" to us, which all men can do, but must be the true, natural, one God, who has such blessings powerfully in his hand. For, to abolish sin and death, to give righteousness and life, are not the works of men nor of angels, but only of the one, eternal, divine Majesty, Creator of heaven and earth. Again: If he is to be Abraham's seed, that is, his child and son, he must not be pure God, but a true, natural man, of Abraham's flesh and blood; that is, he must be both God and man in one person. Further: Because he is not the person who speaks to Abraham of the seed or this person: "In your seed shall all the Gentiles be blessed", he must be another, different person. For he who says to Abraham, "In thy seed," 2c., is not Abraham's seed, but speaks as of another, who is to be Abraham's seed. From this the difference of the two persons is derived, and yet the one, undivided God remains in his one divine being. Here the third person is found at the same time, who verbally expresses such things through Moses or angels from these two persons; as it is said above [§ 9 ff.] that the Holy Spirit is assigned the utterance of the verbal word, in which he is revealed to us differently; just as the humanity of the Son is different and its own revelation.

For us Christians, it is even more evident that the mother of this seed of Abraham must be a virgin, who should conceive and bear him without sin by the Holy Spirit. For if he was to be conceived by a man (like other Adam's children), he himself would also have to be conceived in sins, as the 51st Psalm, v. 7, laments of all men: "Behold, in sins I am conceived" 2c. According to the way he himself would need another seed, in which he would have to be blessed, that is, redeemed from sins and death, and would not be a blessing for us, nor be able to give us one. But from this saying we have St. Paulum a

rich preacher, especially to the Romans and Galatians, since he teaches Abraham's and David's seed in this masterly way, that it is not necessary for us Christians to go on about it this time; for it is our daily bread and constant preaching, reading and singing.

Now see if Moses is not a good Christian, who so beautifully agrees with St. Paul and the whole New Testament. Should not the cursing Jews and devil-seeds stone such a heretic, as they often wanted to do in the desert? Should he be their prophet and master? O he is not worthy, with such heresy, that a circumcised saint should hear him called with his most holy ears; his name must be cursed with the accursed goyim, to whom he proclaims such glorious, blessed blessings. Although he does not exclude them with the word "all Goyim", for the people of Israel are also often called Goy in the Scriptures; but they exclude themselves, as David prophesies about them Ps. 109, 17. 18.: "He does not want the blessing, so it will remain far from him; he wants the curse, it will also come to him. And put on the curse like a shirt (the next garment on the body), and it has gone into his inward parts like water (through blood and flesh), and like oil into his bones" (through marrow and legs). We Christians now well understand the word of Christ Joh. 5, 46.: "If you believed Mosi, you also believed me, because of me he wrote." Certainly written, through his whole book, where he speaks of God and of Messiah. Item, the word Joh. 8, 56.: "Abraham, your father, was glad that he should see my day, and he saw it, and rejoiced." Where did he see it? In this saying, when he heard how his seed should be God and man, who should bless all nations, redeem them from sin and death, and make them eternally alive, holy and blessed; just as David, 1 Chron. 18, 16, had the same joy when the same son was promised to him.

115 Let us hear another saying from Moses. Ex. 33, 19. 20. when God was angry with the people because of the golden calf, and was not willing to go with the people, nor to take care of them, but commanded everything to Moses and sent an angel to him, he would no longer speak to the people, but spoke only to Moses, who said: "Let your glory be to me.

see. The Lord answered: I will pass all my goodness before thy face, and I will preach in the name of the LORD before thee, and will be gracious to whom I am gracious, and will have mercy on whom I have mercy. And said, My face thou canst not see, for no man can see me, and live." Look at this text, regardless of what ravens 1) or Jews devil in it, whether it also rhymes with the New Testament according to the unadulterated kind of language. Here the Lord Mosi answers, since he desires to see his glory, and says: It cannot be. But nevertheless he promises Mosi that he will let all his goods pass before him. This is a person, the father, who speaks of his son (who is all his goods, through whom he made all things), whom Moses, that is, his regiment and people of Israel, shall see, not in glory, but in a passing over, here in temporal life. For Moses in these stories and visions is not the born Moses of his father Amram, a privatus Moses, but the appointed prophet and head of the people of Israel, to whom he gives the law.

Immediately after this another person says: "And I will preach before you in the name of the Lord. Here you hear that the Lord will preach before Moses, that is, before the people of Israel, in the name of the Lord. What is this said: I the LORD will preach in the name of the LORD? Must there not be two different persons? One Lord who preaches and one Lord in whose name the Lord preaches. Now this preacher, who is a Lord, must certainly become a man if he is to preach before Moses and Israel. For the ministry of preaching God has commanded men, as prophets and apostles, through whom he proclaims his word to us. But what the preaching is to be in the name of the LORD follows: "I will be gracious to whom I am gracious, and have mercy on whom I have mercy," that is, I will not preach as you, Moses, must preach. For you must preach the law, thus: I command thee this day to do and to keep this and that: if not, it shall not be well with thee. But I will preach thus

that in the sight of God the Lord no man is righteous or justified by the law, for no man keeps it as he ought, and is guilty of keeping it. Therefore your preaching makes vain and miserable people, showing them their sin, before which they cannot keep the law; therefore St. Paul calls it a ministry of sin and death, 2 Cor. 3, 6. Gal. 2, 16.

(117) But my preaching in the name of the Lord is thus: The Lord will do it himself, and his own merit and righteousness shall count for nothing, but he that shall have it shall have it by grace and mercy alone. He who seeks grace and mercy without merit shall have it. That is, "To whom I am gracious, I am gracious." So it is not said, "Whoever has the law or boasts of merit, I am gracious to him, but he who boasts of my graces, of him I am gracious to God. So that this saying goes primarily straight and mighty, not against the wretched sinners who are captive to the law, but against the stiff-necked, iron, brazen pride of their own righteousness. Behold, this is called preaching in the name of the Lord, that is, God wants to do what Christ preaches; but He preaches only grace, and says Joh. 7, 19: "None of you keep the law; and Joh. 8, 24: "If you do not believe that I am (that is, that I am the Jehovah, the First, the God Himself), then you must die in your sins." Joh. 1, 17.: "The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through JESum Christ."

Now hold such an opinion of the text of Moses in this place against the New Testament, and tell me if it does not rhyme with the same in a very fine, unconstrained, and very happy way, that one must neither force nor torture a word with strange glosses against its natural interpretation, but, as they read in the Hebrew language, so they agree with our Christian faith, which teaches us in the New Testament that Jesus Christ is Jehovah, God and man, and was preacher to the people of Israel; as St. Paul calls him Romans 15:8, minister circumcisionis, a preacher to the circumcised people of Israel; and he himself says Matthew 15:24. Paul calls him Rom. 15, 8, minister circumcisionis, a preacher of the circumcised people of Israel; and he himself Matth. 15, 24. says: "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of Israel"; he also forbade the apostles not to go among the Gentiles;

1) Erlanger: "Rabben." "Raben" - rabbis; cf. Walch, St. Louis Edition, Vol. XX, 2093, 2103.

and here he says to Moses: "I will preach before you. As if to say, "I will personally preach to your people alone, and to circumcised Israel, especially to the wretched, whom you have humiliated with the law; as Isa. 61:1 says, "He has sent me to preach the gospel to the wretched. So the gospel is nothing else but the word of Christ, the Son of God, in which he preaches to us all grace and mercy, in the name of God the Father, who sent him for this purpose, and does everything himself through him in us.

This is the transition before Moses and his people, in which he knew us and all God's goodness was shown to us, and yet the glory of his divine being was not merely seen, nor will it be. For this does not belong to this life, but when we have died, then it shall come to pass, as he says Ex. 33:20: "No living man shall see me." This does not mean that God will never see a man, but rather that the resurrection of the dead is promised, since we will see Him. Alone it is said of this life. "No man," he says, "shall see me and live," that is, man may see me, but he must not live, must die first, and come into another life; there it shall not be denied him. Then he will understand that I am merciful to him whom I have been merciful; and that I have not been merciful to him at all, either for his righteousness or for the works of the law.

120 I know that this Hebrew word preach can also mean to call, to name, to read; as also Lyra and Burgensis testify, according to which it has a different letter and a different one around it; but as it stands here, with the little word "in" [X], it is commonly called preach, Gen. 4, 26. 12, 8. 13, 4. And whether the rabbis or quarrelsome Hebrews do not accept this, I do not care; I am satisfied, as I have often said, when Mosi's word, after the good manner of the Hebrew language, so finely and gladly detaches itself and gives way to the New Testament from the rabbis' compulsory interpretation, that everyone must say (whoever knows the language, whether he is not already a Christian or not) that the word "in" is a Christian.

would be): Well, if the Christians' faith is right, then Moses truly had their way with these words; for the words rhyme nowhere so finely and surely as in the New Testament. And in this way I would gladly take the whole Hebrew Bible from the Jews, from their shameful, blasphemous glosses; but it is not one man's work, it is enough to show others, who are more learned than I, an example or my good will, that they do it more and better.

121] And this is what follows in this place [Ex. 33:21-23]: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, there is a place by me, where thou shalt stand upon the rock; and when my glory shall pass, I will put thee in the cleft of the rock, and will hold my hand upon thee, until I pass by. And when I remove my hand from thee, thou shalt see my hindmost, but my face cannot be seen." Here also two persons speak Jehovah. One speaks, "When my glory shall pass away"; this is the person of the Father speaking of the passing away of his glory, that is, of his Son; and he himself the Son speaks, "Let it be he that passeth away. All this is said of Christ, God and man, passed here on earth; as is heard above [§§ 115. 116].

The other thing, when he says, "There is a place with me," and what he says about the rock and his hand over Moses until he passes by, I understand to mean that God, for the sake of the future rock, Christ, still protected and preserved the people of the law, or Israel, under his patience, because they could not keep the law. In which way Paul speaks Rom. 3, 25, that the sin, which remained under the law with divine patience, was forgiven at this time, when Christ came with his passing away 2c. But after this transgression God has taken away the hand of such patience and protection of the rock. For the law is finished and fulfilled, [we] have no right to the patience or protection of the coming Christ. Yes, he is damned who still believes in Christ in the future and still wants to stand with Moses in the rock under God's hand. The rock and the hand are gone, we have the Lord and his transition, until which God's protection and patience should last. We see



now after him what he has made before us, 1) that is what is his hindmost, what he has left us behind, namely, that he died God and man for us and rose from the dead; and therefore may mankind be called his back or hindmost, in which we recognize him in this life, until we come there, where we shall also see his face and glory.

123) Moses makes the Lord such a preacher in the following 34th chapter, v. 5 ff: "And the Lord (Jesus Christ) came down in a cloud, and stood with him (Moses) there, and preached in the name of the Lord. And the LORD passed over before him, and cried (preached), O LORD God, merciful and gracious, patient, and [of] great 2) kindness, and true, who keepeth his kindness to a thousand generations, who forgiveth sin, iniquity, and transgression, before whom no man is innocent, who visiteth the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and fourth generations." Here the Latin Bible is wrong, whoever did it, which puts "Mosen" where "HErr" should stand. 3) [It] may have seemed unreasonable to such a master that the HErr should preach or call from the HErrn, which is better suited to Mosi. Burgensis also pleases me well, who holds that the text thus stands in the Hebrew: And the HErr went over before him and called (or preached) the HErrn HErrn GOtt, the 4) merciful, the gracious; in accusativo, or, as we say it in German: He preached of the HErrn HErrn GOtt. But it is and remains the same opinion; for it is the same in German, den HErrn, and von dem HErrn predigen.

(124) Well, this is also a bright text, that the Lord is a preacher, and preaches in the name of the Lord; there are two lords named, and yet they are not two gods nor lords; yes, the Lord, he says, preaches from the Lord, from the Lord, from the God; "Lord" is written twice, and God with it, of which there are three; nor do they have to be three gods. It is said above [§ 116 ff.] what it means,

The Lord preaches in the name of the Lord, namely, that Jesus Christ is this preacher, God and man, who was sent by the Father in the name of his Father and preached by his Father to Moses, that is, to the people of Moses, about all grace and mercy, so that no one can be justified by the law, because no one keeps it. He preaches the same sermon here in other words, saying: "The Lord comes to Moses and preaches. Why does he stand with Moses and not over him or far from him? The two preaching ministries, law and gospel, must be with each other, though the transactions are unequal. For Moses preaches of sins, and thereby kills; Christ preaches of grace, and thereby makes alive. But grace can create nothing where sin is not first revealed and recognized through the law. The Lord Christ himself says in Matth. II, 5 [15, 24] that he preaches the gospel to the miserable and to the lost sheep of Israel, that is, those who feel lost because of the law.

What does the Lord preach to Moses and before Moses? He preaches, he says, of the Lord God, gracious and merciful 2c. That is, that three persons are One God, before whom nothing is counted but merit from the law, which are nothing before him, and in truth are nothing; but only grace and mercy, goodness and faithfulness, who forgives sin, transgression, and iniquity, and no man is innocent before him. If then you want to call God by His right name, as it is written here, that He is a forgiver of sins, merciful and gracious, and no one is innocent before Him, you do not have to make much boasting about Him, whether you are Moses, John, or whoever you want; but you must say with St. Paul, Rom. 3, 23. All the world is guilty before God, and lack glory in God," or that they must not say they are innocent and righteous before God; otherwise, they will remain subject to the last part, where he says [v. 5]: He searches out the iniquity of the fathers to the fourth generation; as Christ also says Marc. 16, 16: He who does not believe is condemned.

126 And notice that it does not say here, as in the first commandment, Exodus 20:6, "He who shows mercy to the thousandth member, to them,

1) Cruciger: sn̄ts nos. Erlanger: "for".  
2) Erlanger: and large.  
3) In the Vulgate 2 Mos. 34, 5, reads: Oum̄yus äss̄snäiss̄st Domina"  
ps̄r n̄niom, st̄st̄it \*sum so, invosans nom̄sn Domini.  
4) "den" is missing in the Erlanger.

who love me, and keep my commandments"; but for this it is written, "There is none innocent before him," that is, no one loves him, nor keeps his commandments, without those alone who boast no merit; but believe and call God gracious and merciful, and a forgiver of sins, but confess themselves guilty, and pray in the Lord's Prayer [Matth. 6, 12.], "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." This means nothing else, but grace preached; not what we should do, as the Ten Commandments demand, and do not do; but what God wants to do with grace to us, and has done; as the New Testament teaches and testifies to us. Now we have the preacher who reveals himself to Mosi and prophesies what he wants to preach in the New Testament. And as he prophesied at that time with Moses, so we see it fulfilled in the New Testament, namely, that no one shall be justified and saved by his own righteousness, but only by the grace of God, which is preached to us through this preacher, his dear Son.

127 Now that Moses asks the Lord to go with him and not to let them go, and the Lord answers that he will go with them and do great miracles, he is reconciled with the people, renounces the covenant, writes other tablets, and briefly summarizes the Old Testament's commandments and service, how they should live and do. But of grace and forgiveness, as above [vv. 6, 7], there is nothing here. And the opinion is: Moses now has the comforting promise of the New Testament, since the Lord Himself wants to preach and rule; now he asks, because this people is commanded to him to teach and to rule until the New Testament, that the Lord be with him. For what shall I do? [Ex. 34:9, It is a stiff-necked wicked people. If you are not with us, forgiving sin and bearing it patiently until you yourself come and become a preacher of grace, we will be lost for hours. We must have your divine patience and protection in this regime, since we are to preach your law and yet will not keep it. And this is exactly what is said in the 33rd chapter, v. 22, about the protection and hand of God in the cleft of the rock.

128. for GOD answers and says

[Now I will do it, and will make a covenant with all thy people, and will do wonders which are not done in all the land, and among all the heathen: and all the people among whom thou art shall see the work of the LORD, how wonderful it is that I will do with thee. Watch and keep what I command you today 2c. This is all said of the Old Testament and Moses' people; as also follows of the casting out of the Amorites, Cananites, Hittites 2c. which was done in the Old Testament. And with diligence he avoids the word: "My people"; but calls them Mosi's people, "your people", and among whom you are. Yet, as I have promised, I will keep my hand over it, I will guard it in the rock, I will do great wonders that have never been done among all the nations. And it is true, read the Old Testament through and through, and you will see how many great miracles God has done in this people, from Moses to Christ, even though they are not his people, that is, not of grace, but of law; except for those who understood Moses and put their hope in Christ; the rest have been vain saints of works, and stiff-necked, glorified 1) lawmakers.

But notice how the text makes it clear that the Lord who speaks to Moses is Jesus Christ, the future preacher of the New Testament; for he also speaks differently of himself and of the Father, when he says Ex 34:10: "All your people shall see the miraculous work of the Lord," which I will do. Behold, it is the miraculous work of the Lord, of which he now speaks, and yet he will do it, which the Lord does; just as he also speaks John 5:19, "What the Father does, that also does the Son." Item, v. 17: "My Father works until now, and I also work." Item, v. 21: "As the Father raiseth the dead. As the Father raises the dead and brings them to life, so the Son also brings to life those whom He wills." This means that John is the same as Moses, and Moses is the same as John, and almost rhymes with the same word. Here are different two persons, father and son (like Jo-

1) Wittenberger and Jenaer: "rbumrettige"; Erlanger: ruhmredige. Cruciger: xsrsuisione xroxria" justioiav sibi xlaeentiuna.

2) "with" is missing in the Erlanger.

The Lord who speaks of the Lord and does the Lord's miraculous work (as Moses says) is one and the same, not two and the same work; therefore it must be no more than one Lord and God.

130. item, so further in the same place [v. 23.] the Lord speaks with Moses, and says: "Three times in the year every child shall appear before the ruler, the Lord God Israel." Here again the Lord speaks of the ruler, the Lord GOD Israel. For these are not the words of Moses, but of the Lord, who speaks to Moses, and commands him the Old Testament, which he wants to protect and bear with patience until his own future transition, as is said above 119) enough. Whether the ravens and the Jews interpret all this differently, and despise our understanding, that is right; God's enemy shall not see God's word. But what they spit here about this text is not worth that a sow or an ass should read, if they could read at all. Moses' face has horns, and shines too brightly that they cannot see into it; but we have Moses, that his words, unconstrained, natural in speech, so cordially and sweetly agree with the New Testament. And although he must rule the stiff-necked, wicked people of his time in the Old Testament, he also prophesies powerfully of Jesus Christ our Lord, that he is a true man, and with the Father and the Holy Spirit, in a distinct person, one true God, who does all that the Lord does. That is enough for us, we want to be called fools and unlearned in the Scriptures, and leave the Jews and Turks their high wisdom in their land of sleeping monkeys.

(131) Well, believe each one for himself what he will, I believe and know for certain that I and all Christians have Moses for us, and that he is a true Christian, yes, a teacher of Christians. [It does not hurt that he is still in his cap, and dressed in the Old Testament, as if he were not a Christian, like a pious monk, like St. Bernard, who walks as a monk, but is still in his faith a true, earnest Christian, who does not build, insist, and defy on his cap or order, like the rest of the crowd, but only on the grace of Jesus Christ; as he himself is.

often testifies. So Moses lets the other bunch boast of the law and circumcision, always goes along in such cap; but his heart, faith and confession is Jesus Christ, Son of God 2c. Now if we have Moses, that is, the master and ruler, then his disciples, the prophets, will fall to us with multitudes after him, for they believe, confess and teach nothing else that neither Moses, their preceptor, does.

But where shall we put them, the beloved guests? This booklet is too small, [I] cannot put them all in here, so Moses cannot come all the way in. So let us do this: Let us go to them and eat with them; they have the kitchen and the cellar better prepared than we, and they can give us plenty of food and dine wonderfully. That is, each one take the prophets before him, read them diligently, and notice where the Lord Jehovah, Jesus Christ, speaks differently, or where he is spoken of. For now you have heard that it is he who speaks to Moses on Mount Sinai, guides Moses and the people, and performs miracles. And though he is not the only one who does them, but the Father and the Holy Spirit do all and one work with him, yet he reveals himself with such speaking and doing that he is a distinct person from the Father, in the one divine essence. And indeed, whoever understands so much in the Scriptures (which not everyone respects) that he can notice where the person speaks one from the other, as if there were more than one, he has soon seen the difference which is the Father's or the Son's person. But if you have the difference of the Father and the Son, then the person of the Holy Spirit is also different.

As Psalm 2, 7: "The Lord said to me: You are my son, today I have begotten you. And here, in Genesis, Ex. 33, 19.: "The LORD preacheth in the name of the LORD." Gen. 19:24: "The LORD rained down brimstone and fire from the LORD." Here you see quickly that the LORD who rains is the Son, from the LORD, that is, from the Father; for the Son is from the Father, and not again. Hof. 1, 7: "Thus saith the LORD; I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and not by sword and bow" 2c. Zephaniah 3:9, saith the LORD:

"I will turn to the nations a clean lip, that they all may call or preach in the name of the LORD, and serve him with one shoulder." Ps. 45, 8.: "Therefore hath thy God anointed thee with the oil of gladness?"; and, v. 12.: "The king shall delight in thy beauty: for he is thy God, and thou shalt worship him." Jer. 23:5, 6: "In that day will I raise up unto David a righteous plant; and that shall be his name, that he shall be called, O LORD, which is our righteousness."

But if the person does not manifest himself differently by speech, so that there seems to be no more than one person, then you may keep the rule given above [§ 132], so that you do not do wrong when you point the name Jehovah to our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God. Of this take a fine example Isa. 50, 1: "Thus saith the LORD, Where is your mother's bill of divorcement, that I may leave her?" Here the Lord means the person of the Son, although he does not speak differently of his person, as Lyra and others also interpret it. And has pleased me many years ago, that Lyra goes out so freely, "Thus saith the LORD, that is, JESus Christ." But if one reads the whole chapter after this piece (for Isaiah does not speak a word here, but the Lord speaks everything), it is found that the person of the Son, Jesus Christ, speaks here, not only according to the Godhead, but also according to humanity. For he speaks Isa. 50, 6: "My back I have given to them that smote me, and my cheeks to them that reproached me; and I hid not my face from shame and spittle: for the LORD help me" 2c. Read the whole chapter and you will find that God is the Lord who suffers and has help from the Lord, that is, Christ is true God and man.

135 Such an example, since there is no clear difference of person, is taken from the epistle to the Hebrews, Cap. 1, 6, and speaks from the 97th Psalm, v. 7: "When he brings in the firstborn into the world, he says: And all the angels of God shall worship him. Here one sees no special sign that such a psalm is to be understood by Jesus Christ, God's Son, without it saying in the beginning: "The Lord has become King, the earth rejoices", which is a

Jew or spiritless man would not be allowed to be said of Christ. But the Spirit confesses that no person has become King except the Son; as the other Psalm testifies, v. 6: "I have set my King on my holy mountain Zion." 1 Chron. 18, 14: "I will set him in my kingdom forever." But that he is true God, this Psalm testifies, saying, "Let all the angels of God worship him"; Hebrew, then, "Worship him, all gods." "Gods" here cannot mean GOtt, who is not many, but only one GOtt; therefore he interprets it "angels." But he is the God whom they worship, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Therefore, those who understand this Psalm of Christ, as the epistle does, do not do wrong, although they do not see the difference of the person.

136. item, since the same epistle [Cap. 1, 10. 11.] leads from the 102nd Psalm, v. 26. 27: "You founded the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will pass away, but you remain. "2c. Nor does reason find any sign here that this was spoken and understood differently from Jesus Christ, as the epistle says, and would have found other brighter sayings in the Psalter; but he gives us such an example that we should look for Christ in the Scriptures, because he is certainly God and Creator, with the Father and the Holy Spirit; so that no one can do wrong who says of him that he is the one who created heaven and earth. But still we should diligently seek the different revelation of the person of the Son, and look at the words that give and reveal his person differently. Whoever does not have it better, let him accept this, which God promised David, 1 Chron. 18, 11, that his son Messiah should build God a house and be Lord and King in it forever, of which many psalms have been made.

This Psalm [Ps. 102, 14. f.] also prophesies of such a house and building, and anxiously asks that he will come and build Zion. This cannot be said of the fleshly Zion, which stood built then, which was not the house of God nor Zion, which David's son was to build and be king in it. Thus we have heard above [§ 23 ff.] that this builder and master of the house must be God.

and yet the Son of David. Therefore, the epistle leads this psalm right to the person of Jesus Christ, who is indeed One God and Creator with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, but with the building of God's house and kingdom is revealed as a different person than the Father. So also this is a different sign that Christ, the Son of God, is the seed of Abraham, through whom all the Gentiles shall be blessed and obey Him. Gen. 22:18, 49:10: "The Gentiles shall obey Shiloh," and Ps. 2:8: "Cry unto me, and I will give thee the Gentiles for an inheritance." This Psalm also speaks of such a kingdom among the Gentiles, and thus paints the person of the Son w.

Summa, there is One God, One Lord, One Divine Majesty, nature and essence of all three persons; but sometimes the person of the Father, sometimes of the Son, sometimes of the Holy Spirit is revealed. Whichever one is revealed, it is the one God in three persons, so that we may recognize the divine majesty correctly, and not, as Jews, heretics, Mahomet, blindly believe, as if God were nothing more than one person; God does not want that, but wants to be known, as He reveals Himself to us. And God is especially concerned with the revelation and knowledge of His Son, through all the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; everything is directed to the Son. For the Scriptures are given for the sake of the Messiah or the Seed of the Son, who is to restore all that the serpent has corrupted: to take away sin, death, wrath; to restore innocence, life, paradise and the kingdom of heaven. And just as the fall of Adam happened, that he pushed himself differently against the Son, and yet at the same time sinned against all three persons, as the one God, so God again let His Son alone and differently become man, so that Adam would be raised up again through the Son differently, against whom he had pushed himself and fallen, and yet such raising up or redemption of all three persons is one and the same, as the work of the one God.

139. For when the serpent, the devil, wanted to fell Adam, he incited him against the Son differently, saying: "You will become like God. This was the son's

Both the devil and Adam wanted to deprive the Son of His honor, for only the Son is like, or the image of the invisible God, Col. 1:15, and the image of His divine being, who is like the Father in One Godhead, Heb. 1:3. And the devil had previously done the same thing in heaven, and learned with his angels about the same image, the Son of God; he did not let it suffice that he was the most beautiful image of God among all the angels (yet not born from eternity, but created in the beginning), but also wanted to be the inward, natural image of God, equal to the Son; as the fathers wrote the saying Isa. 14, 12-14. under the name of the king of Babylon: "How art thou fallen, O beautiful morning star? who said in thine heart, I will go up to heaven, and be like the most high God." For this reason the person of the Son was manifested in a different way, and became man, so that we, who had stumbled and fallen against His divinity, might rise again in Him through His humanity. So then, all Scripture, as I have said, is all Christ, Son of God and Son of Mary; all is to do with the same Son, that we may know Him differently, and thus see the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, eternally. To him who has the Son, the Scriptures are open, and the greater and greater his faith in Christ becomes, the brighter the Scriptures shine for him.

**[Of both natures in Christ.] 1)**

If then you believe and understand that Christ is truly God and man, as the Scriptures teach us, see to it, and learn further to be sure that you do not separate the person of Christ, nor combine the two natures, or the divine and human natures, into one being, but distinguish the nature here, and keep the person one.

141. for here also many clever ones have come up against each other, that they either want to make Godhead and mankind One Nature, or else two persons, as Nestorius and Eutyches with their equals; but the Jews

1) This superscription is found in the Wittenberg and Jena editions.

and Turks are excellently high and over high in spirit here, and consider us Christians to be great fools. If he is God (they say), how can he die as a man? for God is immortal. If he is a man, how can he be God's son? for God has no wife. Here it goes, as one speaks: Money has honor, said the frog, and sat on a penny. Here the high, high, even higher, and most highly intelligent people, the Turks, Jews, teach us that God cannot die and has no wife; how would or could we poor Christians know such a high thing more and more, if it were not shown to us mad geese and ducks by such exceedingly high masters that God has no wife and cannot die? It would be no wonder that, where a Jew or Turk walks, the earth under him would become so joyful before such a high spirit that it would leap over the sky with him, and the sky would likewise fall down before such great wisdom, with stars, suns and moons, at the feet of the Jews, Turks, or in the abyss of hell, for it is, indeed, an incomprehensible wisdom that God has no wife, nor can he die. O Lord God, Christians know nothing of this! Who would order God a wet nurse? Where did he want to get a maid? Who wanted to bury him? Who wanted to whistle and dance at his wedding? Who wanted to hold his soul masses? 2) Fie on Christians for worshipping a mortal God and making a married man out of him! Blessed, blessed are Mahomet and Rabbis, who teach us much better. Fie, fie you nonsensical Mahomet! should you be called a prophet, you who are such a rude fool and ass?

Let these miserable fools depart, and think themselves wise, until they have had enough; but hold fast the Christian faith, which teacheth us by the Scriptures, that JESUS CHRIST is truly God, and the Son of God, and also truly man, the Son of David, and the Son of Mary; yet not two sons, or two men, or two persons; but one only Son, and one only Person, of and in two distinct natures, the Godhead and the Man-

heity. For as above, in the article on the Godhead, you must be careful not to combine three persons into one person, nor to separate the essence or nature into three gods, but to keep three different persons in one divine essence: so here again you must be careful not to divide or separate the one person into two persons, or to combine the two natures into one nature, but to keep two different natures in one unified person. And just as the two natures unite in one person, so also the names of both natures unite in the name of the one person; which is called in Latin *communicatio idiomatum vel proprietatum*. Thus, man is called and is born of the Virgin Mary, and crucified by the Jews; the same name shall be given to the Son of God, and say: God is born of Mary, and crucified by the Jews; for God and man are One Person, and not two sons, one of God, the other of Mary; but is one Son, of God and Mary.

143. Now if you were to say, as Nestorius did, that God, or Jesus, the Son of God, was not born of Mary, nor crucified of the Jews, but only man, the Son of Mary, behold, you make two persons, and separate the one person, that there is another person who is born and crucified, and another person who is not born nor crucified, and thus each nature becomes for itself a distinct person, and two distinct sons; which is as much as that God did not become man, but God remains for Himself a separate person from man, and man for himself a separate person from God. This is no good, this does not suffer the Scripture, which speaks Joh. 1, 14.: "And the Word became flesh." Luc. 1, 35.: "That which is born in you shall be called the Son of the Most High, the Son of God." And the infant faith says: "I believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Mary of virgins" 2c., does not say that the Son of God is another, but the same who is born of Mary and becomes her son.

144 Again, if you would say, as Eutyches did, that the man JEsus, Mary

1) Erlanger: that the.

2) Wittenberg and Erlanger: still hold.

Son, is not the Creator of heaven and earth, or is not the Son of God, whom one should worship; as also recently a mad spirit pretended great grudges, how dangerously we Christians lived, that we worshipped a creature for God; the nonsensical fool reads no scripture nor books, but dreams out of his own mad head of such high things, and is a self-growing master klügel: Behold, here the person is separated again, and two persons are made out of one. Nestorius separates the persons in such a way that he tears mankind from the Godhead, and makes every nature a special person, so that man alone is especially crucified. Eutyches, on the other hand, separates the Godhead from mankind, so that he also makes every nature a special person, so that God should be worshipped as separated from mankind. But the Scriptures and the faith speak thus: When we worship the man born of Mary, we do not worship a separate man who is a separate person in himself, without God and apart from God, but we worship the one true God, who is one God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and one person with mankind.

(145) He who does not have this understanding must err in the Scriptures, and cannot be trusted anywhere. For in the Scriptures Messiah is called God's servant, Isa. 42, 1. "Behold, this is my servant in whom I am well pleased"; and on the 53rd, v. 1 [Cap. 52, 13.]: "Behold, my servant shall go wisely"; yes, he is called "a worm, and not a man," Ps. 22, 7. 22, 7. And, more gruesome, he is called a poor sinner, Ps. 41, 5. "I said, Lord, be merciful to me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee." Ps. 69, 6: "God, you know my foolishness, and my debts are not hidden from you." Item, v. 10.: "The reproach of them that reproach thee is upon me." Ps. 40:13: "Sorrows have surrounded me without number; my sins have taken hold of me, that I cannot see; theirs is more than the hair of my head, and my heart hath forsaken me." Here reason, Jew and Mahomet cries out over us Christians: How can such be understood by God? How can God be a servant? How can he be a wretched sinner? Help God,

What nonsensical, mad, monstrous people we Christians are before such high, wise, holy people, who worship no creature, but only the one God.

It is true that reason does not find this in its Bible, that is, in the smoke hole, or in the land of the sleeping monkeys. Neither do the Jews find it in their Bible, that is, in the Talmud, among the Säupirzel, as they study their Schamhaperes inside. Mahomet also does not find it in his Bible, that is, in the whore bed; for therein he has studied the most; as he boasts, the disgraceful filth, that God (the devil) has given him so much strength of his body that forty women may not be enough for him to bed. 1) Yes, just as he studied in the same bible, in the whores' flesh, so also his chaste book, the Alkoran, is luscious and tasty; he has sought and found the spirit of his prophecy in the right place, in the Venus mountain. Who then studies in such books, what wonder is it that he knows nothing of God, nor of Messiah; if they know not what they speak or do?

We Christians know (praise and thanks to God for eternity!) that Messiah is God's only eternal Son, whom He sent into the world to take our sin upon Himself, to die for us, and to overcome death for us; as Is. 53, 6. 10. clearly says: "We all went astray, but God laid all our sin upon Him, and He gave His life as a guilt offering" 2c. Therefore we sing and boast with all joy that God's Son, the right one God with the Father and Holy Spirit, became man for us, a servant, a sinner, a worm; God died, God bore our sin on the Cross, in His own body; God redeemed us by His own blood. For God and man are One Person; what man does, suffers and speaks here, that God does, suffers and speaks; and what God does and speaks, that man does and speaks, who is one Son, God's and Mary's, in One undivided Person, and two different natures. The devil, and his fornicator and whore-hunter Mahomet, and his shame-haperists, the Jews,

1) Compare "Brother Richard's Laying of the Atcoran," Walch, St. Louis Edition, vol. XX, 2239, § 72.

may be angry at this, blaspheme, curse (who can't leave it); but all together they shall tremble in the abyss of hell eternally for it, rattle their teeth and howl, there shall not belong long(whether God wills), amen.

148. Here I will stop this time to speak of these high articles from the Old Testament, for I hope that our Hebrew scholars are hereby admonished enough that they should take the Old Testament from the rabbis wherever they can, regardless of their interpretation, glosses, or grammars, because the rabbis themselves often do not know each other in this, where they are at home, and like to equivocate the vocabula and sentences to their great intellect, since the letter likes to rhyme with the New Testament, and it is certain that Jesus Christ is the Lord over all, to whom the Scriptures should bear witness, as they alone are given for his sake. This time I did not want to lead much to the New Testament, because in it everything is clear (that is why the Jews do not accept it), now at 1500 years; and especially in the Gospel of John, where almost above the other word (as one speaks) Jesus is preached as God and man, in one person. The same John, together with other apostles, evangelists, and many thousands of their disciples, were also Jews, or Israel and Abraham's seed by blood, as well and much purer and more certain than these present Jews or Israel are, whom no one knows who they are, or where they come from.

If we want to believe the Jews or Israel, then we should believe these Jews and Israel, who for 1500 years have publicly ruled the church throughout the world through their gospel, have overcome devils, death and sin, have interpreted the scriptures of the prophets, and have always performed miracles for and through their disciples. I say that we should believe such true, known Jews and Israelites more cheaply than we should believe the false, unknown Jews or Israelites, who for these 1500 years have done no miracle, interpreted no scripture of the prophets, perverted everything, and in the light have publicly done nothing, but in their corner, like the children of darkness, that is, of the devil, have vainly blasphemed, cursed, murdered and lied against the true Jews and Israelites.

(That is, against the apostles and prophets) have practiced, and still practice daily: that they may be proved to be neither Israel nor Abraham's seed, but poisonous, devilish enemies of the right of Israel and Abraham's children, and thieves, robbers, and transgressors of the holy Scriptures. Therefore, as of public thieves, one should again take the Scriptures, where the Grammatica gladly exists, and rhymes with the New Testament; as the apostles give us examples abundantly enough.

150 I will therefore return to the last words of David, as I began this booklet, and tie the little wreath together with the end and beginning, for I have rambled enough. Others can and will (I hope) do better, and search diligently for the Lord Christ in the Old Hebrew Testament, for he can be found gladly in it, especially in the Psalter and Isaiah. Try it according to the rule given above [§ 32 f.], and you will believe me and thank God. Now, I have begun this booklet in such a way that David's last words should be interpreted and understood according to Christian understanding, in this way:

**V. 1-3. David the son of Jesse spoke; the man assured of the Messiah of the God of Jacob spoke sweetly with Psalms Israel: The Spirit of the LORD has spoken through me, and his speech has been through my tongue; the God of Israel has spoken to me, the refuge of Israel has spoken, the righteous ruler among men, the ruler in the fear of God.**

151 Three speakers are here (as said above [§ 11]), the Spirit of the Lord, the God of Israel, the hoard of Israel; and yet is one speaker. But by the third, which is, by the "Hoard of Israel," it is written, "The ruler among men, the ruler in the fear of GOD." This ruler is Messiah, as the Chaldean text also gives. Now in the Hebrew it hangs on one another, namely, "The stronghold of Israel, the righteous ruler, theruler in the fear of GOD." But it is certain that XXXXX XXX is called the Hori Israel, and is God Himself; and yet is also Messiah, the man and ruler in the fear of God. "Ruler" here is Hebrew XXXX, which does not mean HErr, like Gott HErr



but as men are lords and reign; and where God is so called, thou mayest boldly understand Jesus Christ there. As when Gideon speaks Judges. 8, 23: "I will not be your lord, neither shall my son be your lord, but the LORD shall be your lord." Ps. 22, 29.: "The LORD has a kingdom, and he rules among the nations." Ps. 59, 14.: "The God of Jacob is ruler in all the earth." So also Psalm 8, 7, speaks of Christ: "You will make him ruler over the work of your hands; you have put everything under his feet", which is just as much as David says here that he is "the guardian of Israel" (that is God) and "righteous ruler" (that is man) over everything that God has made. That is, to be like God, and yet also to be man.

He calls him a "righteous ruler. This is not speaking of worldly, temporal righteousness, of which David otherwise made a beautiful psalm, namely the 101st psalm, "Of grace and justice I will sing", but of the eternal righteousness, which Messiah brought into the world, and redeemed us from sins, and made us righteous. For, as follows, he speaks of the eternal covenant that God established with David's house, as Isaiah also understands it in the 55th chapter, v. 3: "I will keep you faithful to the grace promised to David"; and Ps. 89, 3, 5: "An everlasting grace will be established, and you will keep your truth faithful in heaven." For this, worldly righteousness is much too small, which, where it is best (which seldom happens), hardly preserves outward peace, resists murder, robbery, adultery, theft, etc., for with this one is nowhere righteous before God, although He rewards them temporally and gloriously with riches, honor, power, happiness, etc., which before God are bad, small, perishable rewards, which He also gives to His enemies more abundantly than to His dear children, who have a better reward to hope for, of which the world knows nothing.

Therefore the Rabbis and their followers have no understanding, because they think that David was said to be righteous and to live godly, because he was set up as a king and ruler. No, it is another man, this ruler in righteousness and godliness. David has by his regiment

Not one man made righteous and godly, not even himself, not even Moses with his law, Rom. 3, 10. 24. but are all made righteous and godly through this ruler Messiah and shepherd of Israel, Jehovah Christ; as also Zechariah Cap. 9, 9, says: "Rejoice, O daughter of Zion, behold, your King comes to you meekly, a righteous man and a Savior, riding on an ass" 2c. And Paul 1 Cor. 1, 30. 31: "He is made unto us of GOD wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: that whosoever shall boast (as it is written), let him boast of the LORD," and not of our own righteousness, wisdom 2c. For this is his dominion. For this reason he is set up as Lord, to do such works among men, to make them righteous, and to restore them to godliness, innocence and obedience, from which we fell in paradise through the serpent's wiles. It is not necessary to speak of this righteousness and fear of God here; it is our daily sermon how we are justified and saved in Christ alone, by pure grace. Follows: 1)

**v. 4. and as the light of the morning, when the sun goes out in the morning without clouds, when from the brightness after the rain the grass grows out of the earth.**

He compares the reign or kingdom of Messiah, who is to restore and establish righteousness and the fear of God, to the beautiful, lovely nature of winter; for winter, because the sun departs from us, covers the earth with frost, ice, and snow, so that all trees become bare, all plants dull, and nothing grows green, nor blossoms, nor bears fruit, and everything is to be seen as a dead world. But when, toward summer, the sun comes to us again, the earth is refreshed, everything grows green and blossoms, everything springs up beautifully, everything becomes new, and the world is alive and joyful again. For all people, even the pagans, consider the Lenzen the merriest part of the year, as Virgilius writes: *Tunc formosissimus annus;*<sup>3</sup>) and considers it that the world is

1) "Follows" is missing in the Erlanger.

2) Wittenberger and Erlanger: as. In this reading, the subject of the sentence would be missing, and "the world" would have to be added.

3) VirK. Vneotioa, Del. III, 57: *Huoo ki-ooctsvt Silva*, *vluro lormosissimus annus*.

in the month of Lenzen, which is in accordance with the Holy Scripture, because Moses sets April as the first month of the year. So the reign and kingdom of grace is also a happy, joyful time, in which Messiah makes us righteous and godly, so that we grow green, blossom, smell good, grow and become fruitful. For he is the sun of righteousness that comes near to us again, as Malachi Cap. 4:2, "The sun of righteousness shall rise for you who fear my name, and salvation shall be under his wings." Therefore he also wanted to rise bodily from the dead in the spring or April, in the merry time, and to begin his reign, even though he was born in winter, that is, because of our sin he gave himself to all kinds of sorrow and death of Adam, and thus endured the hard winter for 33 years.

(155) For as the prophet David signifies the blessed time of grace through Lenzen, which appears to us through Messiah his son, so he indicates that the winter signifies the antitype, namely, the time of disgrace under original sin, which we have through Adam's fall. And God has thus in His creation presented sin and grace to us for eternal remembrance until the last day (when other years, earth and heaven will be), so that they are preached to us daily and yearly through winter and summer, when we have ears to hear and eyes to see. According to this spiritual interpretation, Adam was first in the beautiful Lenzen (since he was also created bodily<sup>1</sup>) in Lenzen, in the beginning of the year), but soon brought the spiritual winter upon himself through sin, which Christ, the dear sun, drove out again, and began Lenzen. And so it goes: He who lives in the winter never dies; he who dies in the winter never lives; that is: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved, he who does not believe will be condemned" [Marc. 16, 16.]. For to him the sun escapes, to him the sun rises, of which David prophesies here.

156 Not only that of winter and summer David means, but rather and closer

This mystery, that Messiah's rule should not be like Moses' rule. Mosi's rule is the rule of the law, which not only does not take away sin, but also increases it, that is, reveals how great and abominable it is, and punishes it, thereby frightening man, and (to speak so) making him hostile to God's judgments and His law, by which he is condemned and killed in his sin. This is Mount Sinai, where it thunders, thunders, rains, and earthquakes, as if heaven and earth were about to fall, and the sun is hidden much deeper behind the dark clouds, whether it is in the season of lightning or in winter, when it sometimes shines brightly, but the sun's power is too far away from us. For the Gentiles so live without law in the unknown sins of winter, much safer are neither God's people, who must suffer thunder and lightning even at the time of the leniency of the law. For where the sun, Christ, does not shine brightly, there also the spring is not merry, but Moses makes it with the thunder of the law all frightened and quite deadly. So the weather in the sky is also an eternal prophet, so that sometimes the law also hastens us in our conscience, who are nevertheless in the time of grace.

But here, in Messiah's time, when he himself shall reign to make us righteous and blessed with grace, it will be as pleasant as the best time of the year, when before day there is a pleasant, warm rain, that is, the comforting gospel is preached; and immediately thereafter the sun, Christ, rises in our hearts, through right faith, without Moses' clouds, thunder, and lightning. There it grows, it greens, it blossoms, and the day is full of joy and peace, the like of which the whole year does not have. For here it is said: Winter, clouds, thunder, sin, death and all terror overcome, and a beautiful, joyful Easter day kept until eternity. Behold, this is called the reign of David, his Son Messiah, like a day in the spring, when it rains early, and the sun rises most lovely, and makes green and flourishing,

1) Erlanger: lovely. Wittenberger and Jenaer: bodily. Cruciger: vnrxorslitvr.

2) In the original: bodily.

smelling, and everything lively and cheerful. Ask yourself if it is not the best and happiest time of the year. Follows:

**V. 5. For my house is not so with God; for he hath made me a covenant for ever, and all things are well ordered and kept.**

158. it is said from 1 Chron. 18, 16. that these words: "My house is not so with God", should mean so much: "Oh, what am I? what is my house, against God?" Indeed, there is not such a house worthy of such unspeakable honors with GOD, from which Messiah, the XXXXX XXX, GOD's son, the righteous ruler among men, shall be born. And hereby David falls down in great humility and wonder that from his flesh and blood such great things shall come.

The other piece, of the eternal covenant and the house of David, I have dealt with quite enough in the booklet of the Jews, 1) and have thus given others cause to go further and better. The following two words, XXXXX and XXXX, well ordered and kept, are set with diligence, for teaching and comfort. For when you look at the histories, you will think that God has forgotten his covenant and has not kept it. The house of David and his descendants are so chaotic, disorderly and strange. It has not been kept alone until Messiah, but everything has remained well and in its order, against all devils and men. And no man hath been able to change it, nor to restrain it, but hath left it to go and stand, a scepter of Judah, as it is promised, until Messiah.

160 But according to Messiah, his kingdom, the church, is outwardly to be seen, much more desolate and disorderly, that there is no more torn, miserable, null regiment or dominion, than the Christian church, Christ's dominion. Here tyrants rend it and [make] it desolate with fire, water, sword, and all power. Here, the red spirits and heresies are tearing it apart and destroying it. So do the false Christians with their evil life, as if there were no more shameful, disorderly rule on earth. And all of these are working away, or rather the wicked

Spirit by them, that Christ's reign should be nothing, or ever a miserable, disorderly thing. And Summa, Christ poses as if he has forgotten his rule, and is nowhere home, that here neither XXXXX nor XXXX is seen by reason; nor is it called XXX XXXXX and XXXX.

XXXX, everything well ordered and kept. Though we see it not, yet he seeth it that saith, High, Cap. 8:12: "My vineyard is before me." Matth. 28, 20.: "Behold, I am with you to the end of the world." Joh. 16, 33.: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Nevertheless, we see that always remained and remains a people who honor the name of Christ, have His word, baptism, sacrament, key and spirit, even against all the gates of hell. Follows:

**To whom all my salvation and doings are, that nothing grows.**

161. He wants to say: I am also a king and lord, above all kings, ordered by God, have waged many wars, have had great fortune, victory and salvation by God's help and miraculous deed, have also done much in the regiment, have ruled well, have set up and established the kingdom well, have administered justice, and have also suffered much because of it; but such my kingdom, rather the kingdom of all kings on earth, compared to this rule of my son Messiah, the XXXXX XXX, is nothing but a dry branch, which has never grown or been founded. For I and no king have conquered the victory against death, sin, hell, the devil and the world; neither has ours done so in his reign, that he made the people righteous, godly and eternally blessed. We are poor, meager, scanty lords in our regiment; but my son Messiah, the XXXXX XXX, that is the man who has obtained the victory over sin, death, the devil, hell, the world and everything, who has a regiment in which he does and accomplishes this, that he makes all his own eternally righteous and blessed; that is, green, flourishing, fruitful, and that can never wither away.

162) I have translated the word XXX "to do" according to the example of Solomon, Ecclesiastes 3:1: "To every thing there is a season, and to every thing that is done there is an hour. For this is how one speaks German: You must do something.

so that you do not walk idly, but do something to nourish yourself. Thus "to do" is called all kinds of state in which one exercises oneself in this life; and the philosophers also call it placita, proposita, instituta, because it pleases one to do this and another to do that. For it really means to have a liking or will, desire, inclination for a thing; for he who has no will for it does not do it, or does it in such a way that it would be as good as undone.

**v. 6. 7. But Belial are all like thistles cast out, which cannot be caught with hands; but he that shall attack them must have iron and spears in his hand, and shall be burned with fire in the tabernacle.**

Here he prophesies about the Jews who would not accept such a Lord and Messiah, and calls them or, as we are used to, Belial, which means useless or harmful in German. According to the outward rule, they are called useless, bad boys who like to do harm. But David is speaking here in the spirit of the kingdom of Christ, where it has this way that those who are hostile to the kingdom of Christ, as Jews, heretics, pagans, are considered the most useful. For even now the Jews, Mahomet, Pabst, and the red spirits make themselves believe that they are doing vain service to God, where they can harm the true Christians. These do not want to be called, but only the most useful. Thus says Jeremiah Cap. 23:32 of the false prophets: "Their usefulness is of no use to this people," that is, they 1) are the most harmful, precisely because they want to be the most useful. Summa, the Christians are Belial's and the devil's children, but these alone are God's children; what they do is right until God casts them out and burns them with the fire of His wrath; as we see in the present Jews what a terrible fire of divine wrath has come upon them.

164. he compares them to thistles in the grain

in the field, which, in my opinion, Christ the Lord calls Matth. 13, 25. zizania, which we have translated "weeds". St. Ambrose in Hexa. says: Ex tritici semine degenerans in proprium genus, which we call trespens. But Christ speaks of an aergern, which one separates from the grain in the harvest and burns with fire, and almost needs the same words as David, who also separates his thistles and burns them with fire. Therefore zizania will be here, which means David, the large, evil, thorny thistles, or the other thistles, which our farmers call great graet, which one separates with scythes, sickles and rakes or spit wood in the harvest, because with hands no one can attack them both, and serve nowhere but into the fire; but trespens are needed for the cattle. So the stubborn Jews are such evil, thorny thistles and mad graetes that they have not been and still are not to be converted by any good deed or miracle of God, but have been cast out by the Romans' iron and spears, and burned with their city in their own dwelling, even with bodily fire. Above this they still burn in themselves, where they are in misery, with spiritual fire of divine wrath. Thus David proclaimed his destruction and final ruin to this people, because they did not want this king, as the Lord prophesied Luc. 19, 43, 44, and Dan. 9, 26, Zech. 14, 2.

Herewith I will have translated and interpreted the last words of David according to my own sense. God grant that our theologians may confidently study Hebrew, and bring the Bible home to us again from the wanton thieves, and do everything better than I have done; that is, that they do not give themselves captive to the rabbis in their tortured grammatica and false interpretation, so that we may find and recognize the dear Lord and Savior brightly and clearly in the Scriptures.

To Him be praise and glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever, Amen.

1) "they" is missing in the Wittenberg and in the Jena.

S) Wittenberg and Jena: must separate out.

**End of the third part.**